BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY | HEALTH AND WELLNESS

HEALTHY CAMPUS INITIATIVE
CREATING, PROMOTING AND SUPPORTING STUDENT HEALTH

Through collaborative efforts across Binghamton University divisions, the Healthy Campus Initiative strives to cultivate a culture that is supportive of individuals and groups in pursuit of their optimal potential.

B-HEALTHY: CHOOSE WELL, BE WELL

Binghamton University recognizes the impact a favorable state of wellness can play in an individual’s overall success, both academically and personally. Students with a positive, flourishing health status have a greater ability and readiness to learn and fully engage in educational experiences inside and outside the classroom.

The Healthy Campus Initiative originated from the President’s strategic planning Roadmap, and takes an ecological approach to address campus health issues at individual and community levels.

The goal of B-Healthy is to create an environment and identity that encourages and supports healthy living. Improving the health and well-being of our community and its members improves students’ capacity to learn; reduces some of the high-impact impediments to academic performance including stress, sleep difficulties, anxiety and illness; improves student retention by improving coping strategies and psychological health; and sets the stage for lifelong healthy living.

Developing initiatives to reach students throughout their college years

- Partnership for Healthier America (see back for details)
- Admissions pedometer programs to introduce Healthy Campus principles to prospective students and families
- Healthy Campus messages are incorporated into freshman and transfer Orientations
- Plus1 campaign to add one healthy option —a wellness meal; fruit, veggie or whole grain; or water — a day
- Mileage markers, hiking trails and bike paths installed across campus to encourage physical activity
- Mental Health Advocate Certificate Program

AMONG THE TOP 25
HEALTHIEST COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Binghamton University is among the nation’s top 25 healthiest college campuses according to Greatist, an organization whose mission is to “help the world think of health in a healthier way” by publishing “award-winning, crazy-sharable articles” about being healthy, happy and empowered.

When putting together its list of the healthiest colleges, Greatist looked for schools that go above and beyond to create an environment where students have access to an array of healthy food, top-notch fitness facilities, and robust medical and mental health services.

OTHER AWARDS

2015 Outstanding Student Affairs Program in the category of Student Health, Wellness, Counseling and related by the State University of New York

2015-16 NASPA Excellence Awards Bronze Certificate in the category of Student Health, Wellness and related
Wellness Enhancement Scholarships

For some individuals, it may be a hardship to earmark funds to support healthy lifestyle choices despite the interest or need. Health and wellness activities may be viewed as a fiscal luxury, not a necessity. The creation of a Wellness Enhancement Scholarship would provide funds to support healthy living choices. Funds could be made available to both individuals and groups seeking assistance for:

- A full or supplemented fee for a fitness center membership or wellness class registration
- Long term nutritional counseling to support a variety of concerns from weight management to food intolerances or eating behavior concerns
- Participation in a smoking or tobacco cessation program
- Groups wishing to conduct a wellness related program to benefit other students on campus
- Mental health concerns not covered by insurance (i.e. off campus counseling)

Web-based Health Risk Assessments

Health and wellness based technology can be useful in both delivering information efficiently, and helping individuals evaluate and effectively track their progress and goals. An interactive, personalized, web-based platform will allow students to input their biometrics, health activities and practices, to receive specific feedback and guidance on possible modifications to support optimal health. Another benefit of this type of system is meaningful, real time data for practitioners. Data can be retrieved in aggregate to provide a snapshot of the health status of our students. This information can help to provide evidence-based programming and selection of resources. Overtime, our goal is to be able to document a progressive improvement in health sustaining behaviors resulting in improved health status.

Alternative Physical Activity Options

Learning time and lifestyle management skills are large tasks in college. The academic demands of college can prevent some students from engaging in physical activity as frequently as they would like to, or know they should. A number of research studies support the notion that physical activity breaks can lead to increased energy, attention span and reduced fatigue. We would like to add an area on campus to include FitDesks, or exercise desks. These are stations which incorporate a stationary exercise bike with a table top to hold a laptop and/or books. In the right environment, students could accomplish both academic work while attaining some physical activity.

PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHIER AMERICA

The PHA is devoted to working with the private sector to ensure the health of our nation’s youth by solving the childhood obesity crisis. First Lady Michelle Obama serves as honorary chair of the PHA.

Its latest initiative is a partnership with 26 colleges and universities, including Binghamton University, aimed at making our nation’s campuses healthier by adopting guidelines around food and nutrition, physical activity and programming.

Binghamton Univeristy guidelines include:

- Provide healthier food and beverage services in campus-operated dining venues every operational day
- Promote water consumption on campus
- Encourage student physical activity/movement through facilities and programs on campus during the academic year
- Implement an integrated, comprehensive wellness program for individuals on campus that is provided annually

As part of PHA, the University is required to complete 23 guidelines over a three year span. To date, we have completed seven, with another 10 on target for the end of the 2015-16 academic year.