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Caila Nguyen

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Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Students with Disabilities at Western New  
England University

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A Doctoral Experiential Capstone Project

Presented to the Faculty of Western New England University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Entry-Level Doctorate

in

Occupational Therapy

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by

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July 2022

Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Students with Disabilities at Western New  
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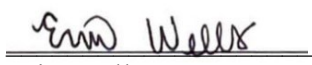
A Doctoral Experiential Capstone Project

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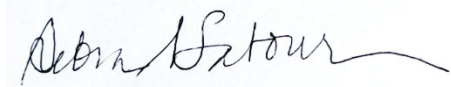
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### **Abstract**

This research study focuses on the student population with a diagnosed disability of Student Accessibility Services at Western New England University. Through a mixed method study (quantitative and qualitative), data was obtained using google survey about stress experiences on a college campus and coping mechanisms used. Students with diagnosed disabilities were found to be experiencing stress relating to academics and social factors. The 12 student participants had varying diagnoses: autism spectrum disorder (ASD), Attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder (ADHD), Anxiety, Depression, Dyscalculia, Tendonitis, and Post-traumatic stress disorder. Using a Likert scale, the stressful experiences with the highest percentages (very stressful and extremely stressful) were making friends, romantic relationships, school performance, seeking counseling and academic support, taking tests and loud noises. The coping mechanisms most used were exercise, seeking a friend, seeking family support, walking away from the situation, seeking accommodations, headphones to cancel out noise, and listening to music. However, 66.7% of individuals registered with SAS utilize avoidant coping versus 33.3% who utilize active coping. Overall, students presented with difficulty in self-advocating for mental health concern which leads to a decrease in quality of life and well-being, lack of appropriate social support can be detrimental to mental health, and complex processes to help with academic success can add to a student's present stress load.

### **Introduction/Background**

The transition from high school to college can be difficult and stressful. The demands of college are not only academic, but consist of social, emotional, and organizational demands as

well (Gunin et al., 2021). Students with diagnosed disabilities or mental health disorders do not receive appropriate and consistent support. The correlation of success from a student's perspective consists of academic and non-academic factors. In autistic adults, research shows that there are increasing rates of co-occurring diagnoses such as depression, anxiety, and suicidality, specifically for those enrolled in post-secondary education (Gunin et al., 2021). The prevalence for individuals with ASD for having depression and anxiety is approximated to be 23-27%. One study found that 53.6% of students have thought about suicide and within the same group, 40% of those students have contemplated it (Gunin et al., 2021). There is a need for direct solutions to combat or mitigate stress and improve mental well-being in this type of environment.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) aims to remove barriers and provide appropriate accommodations to best support the student's environment to help with their success in a college. Some different types of accommodations could be extended test time, reduced distraction free environment, note-taker, assistive technology and much more. The original proposed population was students with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder at Student Accessibility Services (SAS). After amending the IRB, the population switched to students with all different types of disabilities.

Homing in on all disabilities and being on site, a couple of frameworks shaped the course of this study. The person-environment-occupation-performance (PEOP) model applies perfectly to the overall goal of SAS - removal of barriers in an individual's environment to promote maximum potential of occupational participation. The PEOP model focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. With that in mind, eliminating barriers, finding appropriate supports, modification of the individual's environment and tasks will optimize occupational performance

(Baum et al., 2015). Occupational therapy can also help provide holistic interventions catered to an individual's needs and interests to help improve their overall well-being and health (AOTA, 2020). Research has shown that unattended stress can significantly affect academic and social areas of young adults with ASD. This model was very prevalent and meaningful when there were 1:1 session with students who needed help in academic occupations.

Another framework that applies is RE-AIM. This type of planning and evaluation model aims to address five different dimensions of the individual and setting-level of outcomes that are significant in the impact and sustainability of a program - reach, effectiveness, adoption, implementation, and maintenance (Kwan et al., 2019). At a setting level (SAS), this office has approximately 450 students currently registered. The effectiveness of this site is determined through the appropriate accommodations provided to each student in hopes to assure academic success. The adoption aspect is represented through the four staff members capable of implementing different roles/tasks the office does (e.g., proctoring final exams, welcome meetings, incoming calls, and emails and much more) Tynisha Henderson-Mitchell has the education, knowledge, and experience to work with this subset of students within a post-secondary education system. All implementation of the SAS process goes through Tynisha or is communicated with her. The maintenance aspect, in which a program or policy becomes institutionalized, is shown through the upholding and existence of this office (Kwan et al., 2019). On an individual level (e.g., research study), only the reach aspect can be determined which is an absolute number of 12 participants.

Through research, there was a discovered need for students with diagnosed disabilities for direct solutions to help with stress. Most students transferring from high school into college, come with an IEP, 504 plan, neuropsychological evaluation, or even doctors' notes. Academic

occupations will not be the only problems students come in contact with – socialization, organizational, or emotional factors will need to be addressed. In relation to stress, fostering self-determination and self-regulation will be key components to help combat stress experiences.

### **Doctoral Experiential Project Overview**

The DEx project setting is at Student Accessibility Services of Western New England University (WNE). This specific office supports students with diagnosed disabilities and provides appropriate accommodations to best support the students in their college environment. The most important aspect is to understand all the factors contributing to the impact of their disability – identification of barriers, strengths, understanding of diagnosis and much more. There is a specific process that a student must go through to be granted accommodations, however, the hopes of the process will encourage individualization and self-advocacy of their needs. The research topic of stress experiences and coping mechanisms was thoroughly investigated with an understanding that academics is not the only stress students experience in pursuing a post-secondary education (PSE). Through different experiential activities, it provided a new perspective on how SAS can get involved on campus to help students, represent the importance of this office, and promote inclusivity and accessibility on campus. The scholarly components research more in depth the population and the needs of the studied population.

### **Experiential**

The first experiential product was the May Mosaic (Appendix A). This event was held by SAS near finals week to provide students with an opportunity to self-regulate through a holistic intervention like painting. The paints were put together to create a mosaic that represents the WNE community. The second experiential component was attending the summer orientation and registration event (SOAR) as graduate students of SAS and the OTD program on campus. This

helped to establish connections with students and parents to emphasize the importance of obtaining accommodations prior to starting the academic year but also representing the OTD program and what we are capable of. During this process, a presentation was created to explain the process of applying for accommodations (Appendix B).

The next experiential component was establishing a OTD volunteer program (Appendix C) in collaboration with this office. This program will provide an opportunity for OTD students to work with students on campus in different aspects of their college career like executive functioning, organizational skills, additional supports, self-advocacy in emails and in person to professors or socialization opportunities. Utilizing an OT lens in this environment allows for the opportunity of learning different diagnoses, impact of the disability, appropriate accommodations and identification of personal barriers, strengths, and how to scientifically and creatively problem solve to help their needs.

Experiential components that can be grouped together as everyday office roles were 1:1 session with students, welcome meetings, and review of documentation, proctoring final exams, and advocating for student's accommodation rights with faculty members. A student is protected under the ADA law, section 504 of the rehabilitation act. A student has a right to utilize their accommodations as long as they have been approved through the process and with supporting documentation. Review of documentation provides an understanding of the student's needs. The welcome meeting that comes after are important because this provides the student with the opportunity to advocate for their needs in depth so that they are able to successfully thrive in this environment. Students that come for 1:1 session are often struggling with academics but there are students who are struggling in multiple areas like organizational and emotional stressors. Often times, faculty members can be stuck in a Socratic way of teaching. However, this doesn't



mean that you can deny a student their accommodations. Arrangements have to be made to best support all parties involved. The student's needs and well-being must be at the forefront when deciding.

The professional development (Appendix D) experiential component provides opportunities to learn and get to know each other a little more in an office space. Through these meetings, there is an emphasis on honest and open communication, leadership roles, team-effort, fostering a safe and welcoming environment, policies, and considering all main parties involved with the office.

The final experiential component was researching equipment and programs needed for an ideal accessible room for SAS (Appendix E) to function at its maximum potential. This type of assignment required researching at least three different vendors with appropriate desks, sound noise machines, chairs, headphones, assistive online programs, and other equipment. As an institution, we want this institution to consider all types of students with disabilities that may come onto our campus and so that we can be best prepared to support them.

## **Scholarly**

### **Problem statement**

Most young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are starting their transition into higher education at either a two year or four-year college. However, this type of environment requires the student to be independent and be able to balance increased tasks demands, both inside and outside of the classroom. Other areas include social, emotional, and organizational factors. It has been stated in research that to be successful in higher education, two main skills needed are self-determination and self-regulation (Gunin et al., 2021). A high load of tasks demands can lead to dysregulation due to an increased chance of experiencing

stress and not knowing how to cope with it. Research shows that autistic adults enrolled into higher education have high rates of co-occurring diagnoses like depression, anxiety, self-injury, and suicide (Gunin et al., 2021). The prevalence of depression and anxiety among this population is about 23-27%. More than half of these students have thought about suicide, and 40% have contemplated acting upon these thoughts (Gunin et al., 2021). Suicidal ideation is often perceived as inevitable for this population (Camm-Cosbie et al., 2019) which is a sign that there is a significant gap in care that needs to be addressed. Mental health is not taken seriously enough and especially with having a diagnosis of ASD. This population is less understood, and research is limited. To mitigate stress experiences, an individual must be capable of recognizing and utilizing effective coping strategies to respond to stress.

### **Literature review**

There is vast research on the impact of stress on the mental health and well-being of young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). However, there are limited studies that analyze coping strategies or appropriate supports utilized in relation to stress experiences for this population. This literature review will explore present research and information about the impact of Autism Spectrum Disorder, current stressors experienced in post-secondary education, supports in place, barriers currently, coping strategies utilized in relation to stress and the role of occupational therapy in mental health.

### **Characteristics and prevalence of individuals with ASD**

Autism Spectrum Disorder is defined as a life-long neurological disorder that affects social interaction, communication, learning, and behaviors. This would include restricted interests and repeated behaviors, and symptoms that affect their functionality in different areas of

life such as school or work (NIMH, 2022). There are young adults with ASD that are starting to transition into higher education or a post-secondary program. From current research, approximately 17% of young adults with ASD are enrolled in a four-year college (Pectu et al., 2021) and 32.2% at two year or community colleges. In general, transitioning into a college environment and adulthood requires a proficiency of social, emotional, and organizational skills. Other important skills to have to be successful are self-determination and self-regulation. Self-determination is the ability to make choices and manage own life. Self-regulation is the ability to manage emotions, thoughts, and/or behaviors. Focusing in on self-regulation, the utilization of effective coping strategies to regulate stressful experiences is a topic that needs to be addressed. Difficulty regulating negative emotions and utilization of harmful regulatory strategies could make it hard to adapt to situational exposures – an influx of stressors and transitions (Gunin et al., 2021).

### **Stress and Mental health**

Mental health, injury to self, and suicide for individuals with ASD are crudely understood and not researched enough (Cassidy & Rogers, 2017). In autistic adults, research shows that there are increasing rates of co-occurring diagnoses such depression, anxiety, and suicidality, specifically for those enrolled in post-secondary education (Gunin et al., 2021). The prevalence for individuals with ASD for having depression and anxiety is approximated to be 23-27%. One study found that 53.6% of students have thought about suicide and within the same group, 40% of those students have contemplated it (Gunin et al., 2021). The following diagnoses along with stress have been shown to interfere with the chances of success in college along with difficulty in the identification and access of supports these individuals would need. In smaller studies, autistic

college students have report stress experiences such as depression, anxiety, social isolation, and marginalization in their college journey (Gunin et al., 2021).

### **Utilization of coping strategies**

Coping mechanisms or strategies is defined as the cognitive and behavioral ability to manage stressful experiences (Dachez & Ndobu, 2018). In this population, active coping strategies like problem focused-coping and emotion-focused coping have been identified. Problem focused coping is the aim to solve the problem. Emotion-focused coping is to manage the negative emotions caused by the stressful situation and applying meaning to the stressor. In a qualitative study, it was found that adults with ASD would use several coping strategies like seeking support from their friends and family, engaging in interests or leisure activities, normalizing view of ASD (self-identity), and applying meaning to specific events (Dachez & Ndobu, 2018). Other positive coping strategies are relaxation and meditation techniques, taking breaks, and participating in socialization to help alleviate stress.

However, other research has shown that inappropriate coping strategies like avoidant and self-blame were utilized. These types of coping are connected to lower mental health which decreases quality of life and well-being in adults with ASD (Khanna et al., 2014). A possible explanation for harmful or inappropriate coping strategies is the idea of autistic burnout, or chronic exhaustion and reduced stimuli tolerance, as a result of the inability to cope with long periods of stress (Raymaker et al., 2020).

### **Current needs, supports, and barriers for autistic students**

In academic institutions, there are programs offered to help with academic success offer supports for executive functioning skills. This includes working with students on time

management for assignments or exams. However, there is a need for non-academic supports in the post-secondary journey like socialization and mental health. In current research, it has been found that some students perceive their success to be correlated to both academic and non-academic factors. Their academic success is affected by the non-academic factors such as social challenges (Accardo et al., 2018; Ashbaugh et al., 2017). A specific solution aimed to address this barrier is social support which has been seen as a protective factor against depressive symptoms and mental health challenges like suicide attempt (Hedley et al, 2017). This includes peer mentors or organization of extracurricular events. Also, there is a reported shortage of equipped professionals with the knowledge and skills, lack of appropriate assessment tools, and therapy to support this population of individuals. Due to the lack of support, it has been associated with an increase chance of mental health conditions (Cassidy et al., 2018). There are very few solutions currently to directly address mental health issues which correlates to a gap in care for this population of students.

### **Role of Occupational Therapy & Summary**

From the current research, identification of stressors, impact of ASD and coping mechanisms are understood but non-academic barriers are still present. Utilizing the PEOP model and an occupational therapy lens, we can better understand this population in their natural environments, what occupations they may enjoy or do, and how they perform as an individual in response to stressful events (Cole & Tufano, 2008). PEOP model focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic factors that may affect occupational performance. With that in mind, eliminating barriers, finding appropriate supports, modification of the individual's environment and tasks will optimize occupational performance (Baum et al., 2015). Occupational therapy can also help

provide holistic interventions catered to individual's needs and interests to help improve their overall well-being and health (AOTA, 2020). Research has shown that unattended stress can significantly affect academic and social areas of young adults with ASD. Using a qualitative approach, we can find ways to minimize the stress and advocate for individuals with ASD through self-awareness of their symptoms, triggers, and promoting self-regulation techniques (Jalaba, 2022).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this research project is to promote accessibility and inclusivity on campus for students with diagnosed disabilities. This research will provide insight not only on academic needs but the process in getting support for other needs like social or emotional experiences. After IRB approval (Appendix F) and with the information collected, a wellness intervention is then created and provided to students registered through this office to help combat stress either through suggested coping mechanism or information on additional supports on campus at WNE.

### **Methodology**

#### **Setting**

Participants will be completed a google form survey in the comfort of their own home or space.

#### **Study Design**

This study will be a mixed method study containing quantitative and qualitative questions. The survey will be conducted with participants only once. The objective of this interview is to find out how students with diagnosed disabilities react to stress experience and what coping mechanisms they utilize in response to the event.

**Population/Sampling**

The first population was students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. After Amending the IRB (Appendix G), the sample size of this population became students with diagnosed disabilities and are registered with Student Accessibility Services. Participants will be chosen based on convenience sampling through Tynisha Henderson-Mitchell, director of SAS. The inclusion criteria for this study includes participants being between the ages of 18-25, having a diagnosed disability and are registered with SAS. The exclusion criteria include individuals under or over the age of sampling population required, no access to technology, and not registered with SAS.

**Data Collection Method**

The recruitment process will happen through voluntary interest and a recruitment email (Appendix H) along with a follow-up email (Appendix I) will be sent by Tynisha to obtain participants. The consent form will be state in the google form and the participant must consent (Appendix J) before proceeding forward with the survey. The content of the survey will be anonymous and will be stored on a password protected computer for three years' maximum. Participants will be asked a set of questions through the google survey (Appendix K) relating to their diagnosis (optional), stress experiences, coping mechanisms and advice for other students.

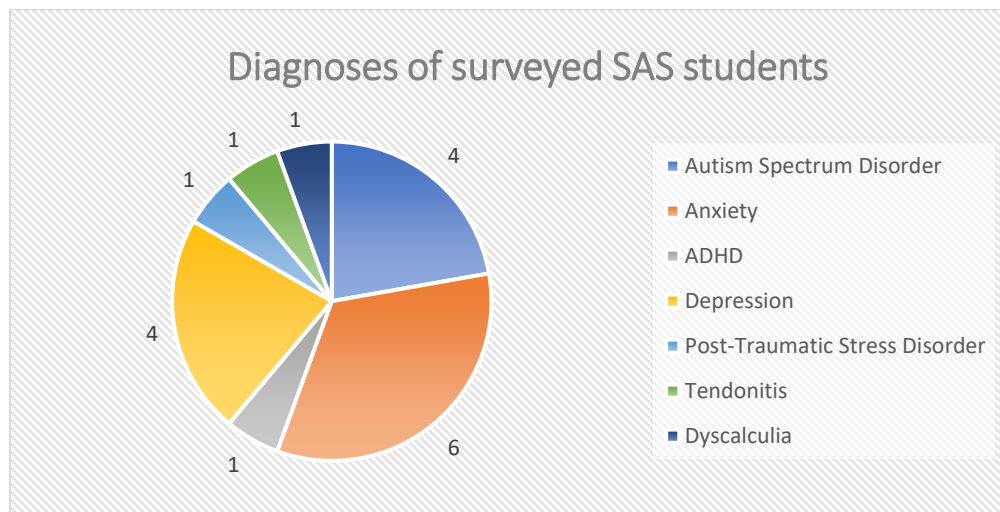
**Data Analysis Plan**

Quantitative data from the rating scale questions will be analyzed by the researchers using excel. Qualitative data will be coded by the primary researcher (Erin Wells) and the secondary researcher (Sally Nguyen). These codes will then be analyzed and condensed into relevant themes. All data will be stored on the password protected laptops of the primary and secondary

researchers and in locked cabinets. The data will be stored for at least three years before being permanently deleted.

### Results

After recruitment emails and follow up emails, there were a total of 12 participants. The diagnosis question of the survey was optional. The following diagnoses of participants was a combination of diagnosed disabilities or mental health disorders (Figure 1). Some of the participants may have had more than one diagnosis.



*Figure 1. the diagnoses of the 12 participants registered with SAS*

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From the survey, participants were provided a definition of stress and answered the following question: “how well would you say you handle stress?” The results show that 66.7% handle stress somewhat well, 25% expressed handling stress not very well, and 8.3% said they handle stress very well (Figure 2).

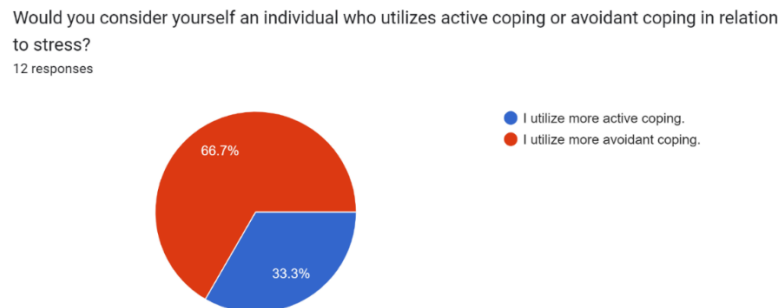




*Figure 2: student's perception of how well they handle stress*

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In relation to stress, the participants were asked to identify whether they utilized active coping more often or avoidant coping. 66.7% utilized more avoidant coping strategies and 33.3% utilized active coping strategies (Figure 3).



*Figure 3: active coping versus avoidant coping percentages*

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Utilizing a Likert scale for different stress experiences, each participant was required to answer whether each experience was not stressful, somewhat stressful, neutral, very stressful, and extremely stressful (Figure 4). From the table, the highest percentages, and the most stressful experiences re shown below: making friends (42% - very stressful), romantic relationships (33% - not stressful and extremely stressful), school performance (42%- very stressful), budgeting and money (25% - neutral, very stressful, and extremely stressful), seeking counseling for mental

health reasons (25%), seeking academic support (33%), taking tests (58%), and loud noises (42%).

Stress Experiences	Not stressful	Somewhat stressful	Neutral	Very Stressful	Extremely stressful
<b>Making friends</b>	17%	33%	8%	42%	0%
<b>Romantic relationships</b>	33%	17%	8%	8%	33%
<b>School Performance</b>	8%	17%	17%	42%	33%
<b>Budgeting/Money</b>	8%	17%	25%	25%	25%
<b>Having Roommates</b>	42%	0%	8%	8%	42%
<b>Homesickness</b>	33%	17%	17%	25%	8%
<b>Participating in a school event</b>	8%	67%	0%	8%	17%
<b>Seeking counseling for mental health reasons</b>	17%	25%	17%	25%	17%
<b>Seeking academic support</b>	33%	8%	17%	33%	8%
<b>Transitioning from high school to college</b>	25%	17%	25%	25%	17%
<b>Taking tests</b>	0%	17%	8%	17%	58%
<b>Loud noises</b>	25%	8%	17%	8%	42%

Figure 4: quantitative data of stress experiences

Participants of this survey were then provided an opportunity to talk about their different stress experiences (e.g., open ended question) which was then categorized into three domains: academics, social, and emotional experiences. This is evidence that stress isn't only related to academics in a post-secondary education setting (Figure 5).

<b>Academics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigation of course requirements</li> <li>• Academic probation</li> <li>• Seeking academic support or accommodations</li> <li>• Test-taking</li> <li>• No access to technology</li> </ul>
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<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abandonment of friends</li> <li>• Staff to student relationship</li> <li>• Having a roommate</li> <li>• Events on campus like SOAR</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suicide ideation</li> <li>• Physical symptoms exacerbating from a panic attack</li> </ul>

Figure 5: personal stress experiences of the participants

The other big component of this research was understanding what types of coping mechanisms the participants used in response to stressful experiences. The coping mechanisms with majority vote were exercise, seeking advice from a friend, seeking family support, walking away from the situation, seeking academic support, and headphones to cancel out noise (Figure 6).

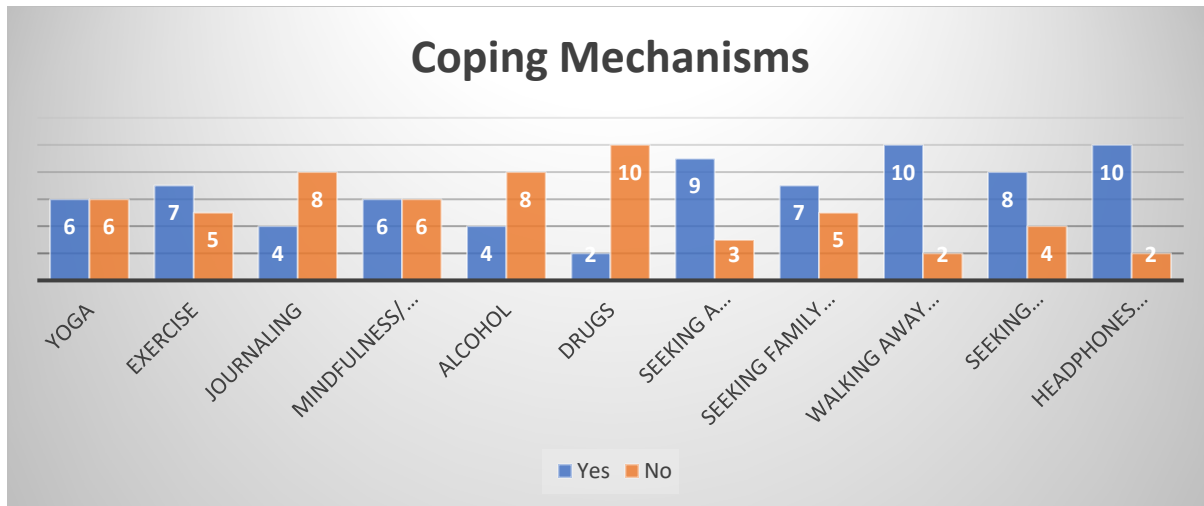


Figure 6: 11 possible choices of coping mechanisms

The chart above does not fully encompass all the different ways to cope with stress. The participants were provided an opportunity to recommend how else they may cope with stress other than the mechanisms already mentioned. The overlapping coping mechanism in the qualitative responses was listening to music (Figure 7).

Other ways of coping	# of people out of all the responses
Listening to music	4
Going for walks	1
Taking a shower	1
Playing with an animal/pet	1
Eating	1
Poetry	1
Therapy	1
Sleep	1

*Figure 7: other ways to cope with stress*

This table analyzes type of coping style they used in response to “difficulty handling stress, related to their experience at WNE” question, which was made optional. It was evident that four out of 12 participants utilized avoidant coping strategies and one out of 12 participants utilized active coping. Some of the participants either didn’t answer or didn’t answer thoroughly enough to determine coping style (Figure 8).

	Responses	Type of coping in response to stress, if applicable
1	A time I had difficulty handling stress was when I was writing the final paper for the ENGL 133 class I took last semester. I did not understand the assignment being asked and I was under severe stress trying to understand what was being asked. I was under so much stress that I completely failed the assignment and had to retake the class this semester.	<b>Avoidant coping – didn’t ask for help – behavioral</b>
2	I tend to leave my work for the last minute, and with that sometimes accompanies copious amounts of stress. It always works itself out, however it has gotten to a point where I did not feel comfortable asking for help because I allowed myself to wait too long to do so.	<b>Avoidant coping – behavioral</b>
3	I did not realize one day that I had held in my anxiety for a long period of time instead of dealing with it like I used to and had an anxiety attack	<b>Avoidant coping – behavioral</b>
4	moving in and out of my dorm, dealing with specific individuals on campus, communicating with my professors for help	N/A
5	I would barely eat or sleep. I had to go on medications for my anxiety and to help me sleep.	<b>Active coping for anxiety specific – problem focused</b>

6	Freshman year was the hardest year. I had not yet learned any coping skills.	<b>No coping skills</b>
7	First semester I ignored homework to reduce stress.	<b>Avoidant coping – behavioral</b>
8	Dealing with SAS for much-needed accommodations.	N/A
9	Nightmares about not having any friends	N/A
10	Every time.	N/A
11	No answer	N/A
12	No answer	N/A

*Figure 8: qualitative responses of the participants with difficulty handling stress*

Participants were then asked to describe a situation where they handled the stress in relation to their experience at WNE. This question was made optional. Out of 11 responses, 9 participants showed that when it came to stressful experiences they would utilize active coping strategies more often like emotion-focused, problem-focused or support seeking in comparison to avoidant coping, which can be seen behaviorally or cognitively (Figure 9).

	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Type of coping in response to stress, if applicable</b>
1	After receiving a poor grade on a math exam I remember being stressed and anxious about how much it would affect my overall grade. But with the help of my fiancé I was able to calm down through playing games on Oculus Quest 2 and relaxing.	<b>Active coping: Support seeking and emotion focused coping</b>
2	When I have found myself struggling with a class or academic related issue, I rarely hesitated to reach out to professors to help guide me through these issues to resolve them as efficiently as possible.	<b>Active coping- Support seeking, problem-focused</b>
3	Exam season and projects are stressful but I have found better organization and time management for classes and their work has helped the most.	<b>Active coping- Problem-focused</b>
4	I feel like law exams are really difficult and each semester I have gotten better at figuring out how to study and still have a life.	<b>Active coping- Problem-focused</b>
5	I was very stressed about going to a WNE event, so I brought someone I felt comfortable around with me	<b>Active coping- Support seeking</b>

6	I would distract myself with talking to my roommate's, watching a movie, or watching videos on YouTube	<b>Avoidant coping (cognitively) and active coping - support seeking</b>
7	being in my room alone with quiet time really helps. and having understanding people willing to help.	<b>Avoidant coping – behavioral and active coping – support seeking</b>
8	I sought family support over the phone since they live very far.	<b>Support seeking</b>
9	I dropped a course I was failing in because it was online	<b>Avoidant coping - behavioral</b>
10	Getting ready for SOAR + stressing about making friends	N/A
11	I honestly don't think I've ever handled it well.	N/A
12	No answer	N/A

Figure 9. Qualitative responses of participants that handled stress well

The figure below provides a visual representation of how coping styles are separated and the various types between active and avoidant (Figure 10).

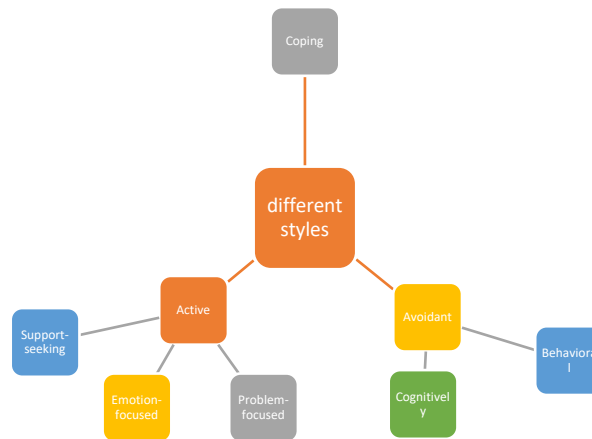


Figure 10: Active versus avoidant coping diagram

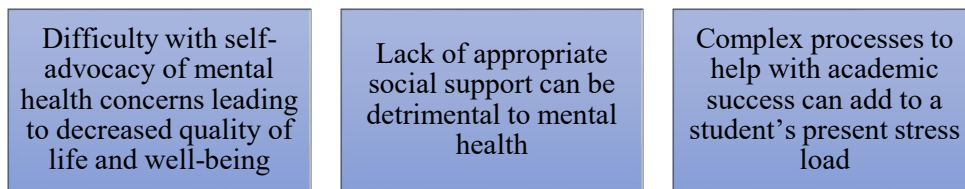
Gaining insight in more ways can only be beneficial to the study. The participants were asked at the end of the survey if they had any advice for other students (figure 11).

<b>Advice 1:</b> If you plan to go to SAS for accommodations, make sure you're willing to take a ton of time out and go back and forth multiple times. Only for the accommodation to have a high chance of not being approved. Multiple doctor's notes and medical records don't help much at all either.	Complicated processes can add to a stress load
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<b>Advice 2:</b> Advocate for yourself. Don't be afraid of conflict or reprisal. Being scared and not speaking up will make the problem build up and happen to other students. Learn to have a voice and being comfortable with being uncomfortable.	Importance of self-advocacy
<b>Advice 3:</b> The biggest advice I can give to any other student is invest in a great pair of headphones and a weighted blanket as well. In the long run it can be one the most comforting things to have when going through an anxiety attack.	Your well-being is an investment & utilize meaningful coping strategies
<b>Advice 4:</b> Don't let anxiety take over you. Talk about it with friends, distract yourself with watching a funny movie and remind yourself that you can do anything if you believe in yourself	Seeking support to help with your well-being
<b>Advice 5:</b> Never be afraid to ask for help. As long as you're asking for help from the right people, the people who genuinely want good things for you, nothing bad can come from it.	Seeking support to help with your well-being
<b>Advice 6:</b> Talk to a counselor, talk to your friends, don't try to get through it on your own - you can't.	Seek support to help with your well-being
<b>Advice 7:</b> I'm not gonna be the pot that calls the kettle black	N/A
<b>Advice 8:</b> drop course that have F's six weeks in.	N/A
<b>Advice 9:</b> Find someone you feel safe with	Seek support to help with your well-being

*Figure 11. Advice for other students*

The qualitative responses of stress experiences were then coded into themes. The following three main themes determined from the participants were (figure 12):



**Discussion and Recommendation**

In a college institution, the most prevalent type of support would be geared towards academic which are provided throughout campus. However, the student perception of success in a PSE setting must address academic and non-academic factors (e.g., socialization and mental

health) (Accardo et al., 2018; Ashbaugh et al., 2017). Referring back to the results, students with diagnosed disabilities have expressed concerns relating to academic, social, and emotional situations. A continuous use of harmful coping strategies like self-blame and avoidant coping can lead to a decrease quality of life (QOL) and well-being (Khanna et al., 2014). From the results, participants often utilized avoidant coping when it came to difficult situations. Students should be educated on positive coping strategies or directed toward support that can help them manage stress. Active coping was more prevalent when it came to handling stress well and it was evident that it led to better results for the participants. However, there are not enough direct solutions to address mental health concerns for this population of students. Currently, research suggests that the solution to mitigate depressive symptoms and mental health challenges is social support and effective coping skills (Hedley et al., 2017). Based on the “advice” section from survey, majority of students agree with finding a social supportive figure, self-advocacy, and meaningful coping strategies to help with stress and/or mental health issues.

The current barriers as shown through research are that there is a lack of equipped professionals, assessments, and tools to best serve population. Sometimes, there can be long and complex processes to attain certain support which add to a student’s stress load. Another particular barrier is the individual’s choice to not self-advocate or doesn’t attempt to solve or manage the stress which can cause more harm (Poppen et al., 2016).

Current limitations of this particular research study were that population size does not represent all students registered with SAS and this office can’t directly address mental health concerns. Through a collaborative process, this office can send a student to either the health and wellness center or counseling to resolve stress experiences that are more serious.



## **Implications to OT and SAS**

Academically, utilizing an OT lens, we can help to eliminate barriers, find appropriate supports, and modify the student's environment to optimize performance (Baum et al., 2015). We are able to provide holistic interventions to cater to specific needs and interests. Additionally, it is important to foster self-advocacy in students to help minimize stress; through self-awareness of symptoms, triggers and promoting self-regulation strategies (Jalaba, 2022). Although SAS is focused on removing academic barriers, there is a collaborative process between offices on campus. Mental health concerns reported through this office can be sent to the appropriate office to further support students (e.g., counseling or health services).

The next steps would be to continue utilization of wellness toolkit (Appendix L). In addition, future OT students collaborating with SAS through the creation of the volunteer program can add to the resource or provide additional supports on campus to help ease the stress of students coming through this office.

## **Learning Outcomes**

The learning plan and evaluation objectives were used to track the student's progress throughout this Doctoral Experiential Project (DEx). During the 14 weeks of DEx, the student documented activities/tasks which served as evidence in correlation to each of the objectives. The site mentor, Dr. Erin Wells, and faculty mentor, Tynisha Henderson-Mitchell, both approved of this document. This confirmed that each task would represent one of the objectives. The student also participated in multiple scheduled meetings with both mentors to seek feedback on different research components. Another aspect of meeting frequently was to make sure the research process was smooth and efficient.

The design and implementation of the research study correlated to the twelve learning objectives. Throughout the course of the research process, there has been an understanding of the role of accessibility services in supporting students with diagnosed disabilities in a PSE setting like WNE. This knowledge was gained through the scholarly and experiential components. The maintenance of the SAS office, professional development through staff meetings, the startup of an OTD volunteer program with SAS, advocacy for more active involvement of this department on campus (e.g., SOAR), and collaboration with multiple campus departments (e.g., student involvement, res-life), and along with other experiential tasks became a collective representation that the student has gained exponential growth in clinical and professional skills which will lay the fundamental groundwork and contribute to their practice as an occupational therapist.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A. May Mosaic – stress relieving event for finals








### Appendix B. SOAR presentation created for SAS about registration process (full access through e-portfolio)



Appendix C. OTD Volunteer Program

<div data-bbox="380 363 626 636" style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>OT student volunteer orientation</b></p> <p>By: Sally Nguyen and Hannah McGrath</p> </div>	<p><b>Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Accessibility Services</li> <li>• Expectations of role</li> <li>• Intrusive advising model</li> <li>• Campus resources</li> <li>• Tips &amp; Tricks</li> <li>• Few things to remember</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Accessibility Services</b></p> <p>Location: Herman 105          Director: Tynisha Henderson-Mitchell          Assistive Technology Specialist: Sandie Cardinale          Phone number: 413-782-1258          Email: <a href="mailto:Accessibility@wne.edu">Accessibility@wne.edu</a>          Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM          Website Link: <a href="#">SAS</a></p>  <p>Main goal: To remove <i>academic barriers</i> for students with a disability to be successful in a college environment</p>	<p><b>Student population</b></p> <p>"In collaboration with faculty and staff from across campus, SAS coordinates accommodations for students with documented disabilities related but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learning disabilities</li> <li>• attention deficit disorder</li> <li>• mobility and physical impairments</li> <li>• autism spectrum disorders</li> <li>• chronic medical or psychiatric conditions</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, SAS supports students who are blind, have low vision, or are deaf or hard-of-hearing."</p>
<p><b>Important forms to review</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <a href="#">SAS intake/registration form</a> - serves as a means to self-disclose and describe firsthand how a student's disability impacts them in the educational environment.</li> <li>2) <a href="#">Note taker request form</a> - for each course and each semester</li> <li>3) <a href="#">Test Request form</a> - law students are not allowed to utilize this form, they go through a different protocol. This form indicates the student would like to take an exam, assignment, or quiz within the private space of SAS</li> <li>4) <a href="#">Semester accommodation request form</a> - identification of their registration with SAS and a listing of academic accommodations they are currently receiving to their professors</li> </ol>	<p><b>Connection to OTD</b></p> <p>We have a unique knowledge base of how illness, injury, or developmental disabilities affect participation and ways to address cognitive, physical, sensory, and psychosocial challenges through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging development of self-determination and self-advocacy (personal and disability related needs, strengths, weaknesses, and useful and meaningful supports)</li> <li>• Educating students on the development of productive habits &amp; daily routines (e.g. to promote effective organization, time management, and social interaction)</li> <li>• A Collaborative process - This involves the student, family, student accessibility services, and other providers. Together we are able to develop reasonable and appropriate accommodations that may be needed to access or participate in academic, community living, or vocational environments and activities.</li> <li>• Helping students with disabilities understand their rights and responsibilities (e.g self-disclosure, academic accommodations, and access to other supports)</li> <li>• &amp; much more!</li> </ul> 



<h3>Expectations of this role</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 15-25 hours out of your semester             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 hour of direct student support per week (in-person at SAS office)</li> <li>- SAS team meetings (for discussing progress/questions/concerns) times TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>- How will you support the student?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Each individual student will have different needs ...</li> <li>- Organization/time management support/strategies</li> <li>- Executive fx/academic strategies or assistance (help starting a long assignment, study for a big exam, etc.)</li> <li>- Support for self-advocacy (communications with faculty, etc.)</li> <li>- Be aware of other campus resources and how they can be accessed - in order to refer students as appropriate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<h3>Expectations of this role</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With both students and SAS team to navigate student challenges</li> <li>- Updates on progress, questions for how to support them, etc.</li> <li>- Any outside communication should be done through SAS phone (e.g. texting)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Confidentiality **             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SAS places high importance on confidentiality of student information</li> <li>- You will be asked to sign a confidentiality form</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Documentation             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- After each session you will be asked to send a short session note to Tynisha</li> <li>- review/describe what was covered and share anything of importance that may have come up</li> <li>- NO names, student's initials only</li> <li>- Basically write a nice soap note</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<h3>Expectations of this role</h3> <p><u>Mandatory Reporters **</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Should be familiar with this</li> <li>- If a student comes to you with something concerning, please <b>take immediate action</b> - don't just text Tynisha</li> <li>- Use your judgement and the available resources             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WNE counseling center → <a href="#">counseling services web page</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phone: 413-782-1221 (regular office #), 413-310-5389 (urgent/crisis situations)</li> <li>- Location: Center for Health and Wellness, Center for Sciences and Pharmacy Rm. 235</li> </ul> </li> <li>- WNE campus safety → <a href="#">public safety web page</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phone (emergency number): 413-782-1411</li> <li>- Location: next to CAHLC, across from Berkshire Hall, on Golden Bear Way</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<h3>Intrusive advising model</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intrusive advising is a preemptive/proactive approach to working with students.</li> <li>• Anticipate and look for issues, concerns, roadblocks... anything that could potentially get in the way of a student functioning in the course and being successful (rather than waiting for problems to happen and reacting).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Goal is to help student feel cared for by the institution</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>This approach can work with any student relationship on campus (not just advisors)</b></li> <li>• Also encourages reaching out due to positive occurrences, such as strong grades or important dates.</li> <li>• Want to be intrusive without intruding - be warm, friendly, ask questions about all aspects of campus life, as everything can impact academics/participation.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Make appropriate referrals to campus resources</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<h3>Campus resources</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing support services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Director: Christine Crutchfield</li> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:christine.crutchfield@wne.edu">christine.crutchfield@wne.edu</a></li> <li>◦ Location: Herman 107</li> <li>◦ Link: <a href="https://www1.wne.edu/writing-and-reading/writing-support-services.cfm">https://www1.wne.edu/writing-and-reading/writing-support-services.cfm</a></li> <li>◦ Hours:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Monday - Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Friday 10:00- 4:00 Sunday 5:00-11:00</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Reading support services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Director: Linda Oleksak</li> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:loleksak@wne.edu">loleksak@wne.edu</a></li> <li>◦ Phone number: 413-782-1691</li> <li>◦ Link: <a href="https://www1.wne.edu/writing-and-reading/reading-support-services.cfm">https://www1.wne.edu/writing-and-reading/reading-support-services.cfm</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Math Center</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Interim Director: Gail Hayward</li> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:ghayward@wne.edu">ghayward@wne.edu</a></li> <li>◦ Location: Herman Hall 303</li> <li>◦ Hours:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Sunday 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm, Mon-Thur 10:00 am - 8:00 pm, Friday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>D'amour Library</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:dcedf@wne.edu">dcedf@wne.edu</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>    	<h3>campus resources continued ...</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Residence life:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Location: 2nd floor of campus center</li> <li>◦ Phone number: 413-782-1317</li> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:residence@wne.edu">residence@wne.edu</a></li> <li>◦ Hours: M through F - 8:30 AM through 4:30 PM</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Student success center</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Location: Campus Center 137</li> <li>◦ Phone number: 413-796-2027</li> <li>◦ Hours:                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Mon-Thurs 8:30am - 7:00pm Fri 8:30am - 5:00pm</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Office of student involvement and leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Location: 1st floor of Campus Center</li> <li>◦ Phone number: 413-782-1203</li> <li>◦ Email: <a href="mailto:studentactivities@wne.edu">studentactivities@wne.edu</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Tips and tricks

**Executive functioning strategies:**

- 1) Creating a manageable routine
- 2) Organizing tasks/homework by due dates either using an agenda or phone calendar
- 3) Simplifying assignments by breaking down the tasks
- 4) Creating short term goals

**Time management skills:**

- 1) Create a to-do list of priorities for the day - ranking the tasks
- 2) Understand their best productivity time - morning, mid-day, & night
- 3) Using a timer
- 4) Remove distractions
- 5) Emphasize on not multitasking
- 6) Emphasize on taking breaks and going back to a task - we're human!



### A few things to remember ...

- Willingness to serve - this is a service/volunteer opportunity to establish meaningful connections with other students who need our help
- Don't let the students flounder – if you don't know how to help, ask questions!

### Documentation example

1 hr session with student D.E. (2-3pm)

- Student requested help with organizing work schedule and starting a paper. Assisted with setting up planner, including due dates and blocks of time to work. Assisted with creating outline of paper utilizing rubric provided by professor. Student will prepare a rough draft to review together at next session. Referred to writing center for further grammar help.

Short note, describing what was worked on during session

- If you made referrals to other resources, mention those
- Anything else you think is important to mention...

Using your time to help others is very appreciated!



Appendix D. Professional Development

King County

Posted on November 21, 2019  
by Lilia Cabello Drain

**Focus on values: We**

Session 1: Led by Tynisha Henderson-Mitchell on "One purpose, one mission"

The Do's and Don'ts of Creating a Positive Work Culture

mccormickgroup.c...

Communication-S...

Session 2: Led by Sally Nguyen on Positive office culture and communication

[www.glassdoor.com/employers/in-the-workplace/](http://www.glassdoor.com/employers/in-the-workplace/)

Session 3: Led by Hannah McGrath on Transparent communication

Session 4: Led By Sandie Cardinale on SAS team effort and case scenarios

Appendix E. ideal SAS room (sample from Excel document)

Category: Testing Stations					
Subject/Item	Vendor	description	price	Misc. SAS Info	Additional Notes
Vendor 1	school outfitters	height adjustable study carrel	\$299.88	1	looks light weight
Vendor 2	schools in	hi-lo adjustable study carrel	\$419.95	3	might be heavy
Vendor 3	school room dividers	movable wall panels can be	pricing guide: <a href="https://www.screed.com/">https://www.screed.com/</a>	2	Note

Category: Moveable Tables					
	Vendor	Description	Price	Misc. SAS Info	Additional Notes
Vendor 1	Worthington table/desks	sets of desk that fit together to form a table	\$1,263.95	1	N/A
Vendor 2	School Speciality neoshaped desks	Individual desks with same shapes	\$189.71	2	22-30 in (height adjustable)
Vendor 3	Poppin Series	Privacy screens are movable	\$6,738.00	3	Can attach a power strip to provide outlets

Appendix F. Original IRB document

<p>8. Recruitment of participants (Check all that apply.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Unpaid classroom volunteer    <input type="checkbox"/> Paid classroom volunteer</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unpaid nonclassroom volunteer    <input type="checkbox"/> Paid nonclassroom volunteer</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____</p> <p>9. Expected participant duration and compensation.</p> <p>Expected Duration (e.g., total hours and length of involvement (days, months) per participant):</p> <p>15-20 minutes</p> <p>Expected participant compensation (Check all that apply.)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No compensation    <input type="checkbox"/> \$\$ compensation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____</p> <p>If applicable, please specify \$\$ rate _____</p> <p>10. Location of the research (Check all that apply.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> On-campus    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Line    <input type="checkbox"/> Off-Campus</p> <p>Please specify site (e.g., Springfield campus, Southborough, specific off-campus location)</p> <p>Google forms</p> <p><b>NOTE: If off-campus locations are included, please attach a signed permission from a responsible individual (e.g., business owner, school superintendent, principal) for each location.</b></p> <p>11. Will the participants be exposed to more than minimal risk?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> <p>If "Yes" please elaborate in the space below.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>12. Attach copies of consent and assent procedures. Consent forms are required if more than minimal risk is involved. Both consent and assent forms are required for any research involving minors. Please see <a href="http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html">http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html</a> (Refer to 46.101.)</p>	<p>13. Procedure(s) used to ensure that participants are aware of their right to refuse to participate in the study, of the behavior they will be asked to manifest and any possible discomfort they may experience, and of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Participants will be informed of their right to refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty. The consent form (Appendix B) states "Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason."</p> </div> <p>14. Confidentiality and anonymity of information obtained (Check all that apply.)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participants' responses will be anonymous. (Data are collected in a way that no one (including the researcher) can identify the individual associated with any particular result or response, e.g., a survey with no names or other identifying information.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Participants' responses will be confidential. (Records are maintained in a way that ensures only the researchers have access to any information or results linked to a specific individual.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____</p> <p>15. Does the research involve the use of deception?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> <p>If "Yes" please elaborate in the space below, describing the deception used and providing a justification of the need for deception.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>16. Does the research involve debriefing of participants?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p>												
<p><b>WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) SUBMISSION FORM FOR PROPOSAL TO USE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH FWA00010736 Last Modified June 23, 2016</b></p>	<p>4. Nature of the Research and Expected Benefit:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>The purpose of this research study is to understand different areas of potential stressors and the coping mechanisms utilized by young adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder at Western New England University. The goal is to analyze what causes the individuals stress and understand their chosen coping mechanisms. The benefit of participating in this one time online survey is an increase in understanding the different types of stress experiences for this specific population of students and their choice of coping mechanism (s) in response to that stressful event. This information will then be presented to the director of SAS in order to better support these students.</p> </div>												
<p>Information regarding the annual meeting schedule of the Institutional Review Board, submission deadlines and requirements, and contact information may be found on the IRB section of the Academic Affairs website located at:</p> <p><a href="http://www1.wne.edu/academic-affairs/">http://www1.wne.edu/academic-affairs/</a></p> <hr/> <p>Date of Application: (MM/DD/YYYY) <input type="text" value="04/12/2022"/></p> <p>1. Responsible Project Investigator: <input type="text" value="Erin Wells OT, OTD, MSOT, OTR/L"/> Phone No.: <input type="text" value="(413) 796-2110"/></p> <p>Address (Campus address, including box #, if available): <input type="text" value="1215 Wilbraham Rd, Springfield, MA 01109"/> E-mail: <input type="text" value="erin.wells@wne.edu"/></p> <hr/> <p>2. Investigator (e.g., Graduate Student): <input type="text" value="Sally Kim Nguyen, OT/s"/> Phone No.: <input type="text" value="(413) 875-5734"/></p> <p>Address (Campus address, including box #, if available): <input type="text" value="1215 Wilbraham Rd, Springfield, MA 01109"/> E-mail: <input type="text" value="sally.nguyen@wne.edu"/></p> <hr/> <p>3. Title of Project: <input type="text" value="Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder"/></p>	<p>5. Anticipated Duration of the Project</p> <p>From MM/YYYY: <input type="text" value="April 2022"/> To MM/YYYY: <input type="text" value="April 2023"/></p> <p><b>NOTE: Any research project that continues for longer than one (1) calendar year requires that an application be submitted annually for renewal.</b></p> <p>6. Is this a request for renewal? <input type="radio"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="radio"/> No</p> <p><b>NOTE: If "Yes" please attach the original proposal and committee approval form plus one (1) copy of this proposal and proceed to question number 20.</b></p> <p>7. Type of research participant (Include all that apply.) <b>Indicate the approximate number in each category.</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Undergraduate WNE student (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/></td> <td style="width: 33%;">Undergraduate WNE student (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/></td> <td style="width: 33%;">Graduate or Law WNE student # <input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>WNE employee (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/></td> <td>WNE employee (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/></td> <td>Minor not otherwise specified (less than 18) # <input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Off-campus participants (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/></td> <td>Special population (e.g., prisoner, pregnant, disabled) (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/></td> <td>10 undergraduates 18+ at WNE with Autism Spectrum Disorder <input type="text"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (specify including age and #) <input type="text" value="18-25 years old"/></td> <td colspan="2"></td> </tr> </table>	Undergraduate WNE student (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	Undergraduate WNE student (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Graduate or Law WNE student # <input type="text"/>	WNE employee (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	WNE employee (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Minor not otherwise specified (less than 18) # <input type="text"/>	Off-campus participants (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	Special population (e.g., prisoner, pregnant, disabled) (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	10 undergraduates 18+ at WNE with Autism Spectrum Disorder <input type="text"/>	Other (specify including age and #) <input type="text" value="18-25 years old"/>		
Undergraduate WNE student (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	Undergraduate WNE student (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Graduate or Law WNE student # <input type="text"/>											
WNE employee (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	WNE employee (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Minor not otherwise specified (less than 18) # <input type="text"/>											
Off-campus participants (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	Special population (e.g., prisoner, pregnant, disabled) (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	10 undergraduates 18+ at WNE with Autism Spectrum Disorder <input type="text"/>											
Other (specify including age and #) <input type="text" value="18-25 years old"/>													

If "Yes" please provide an explanation in the space below describing how (e.g., spoken, with written statement) and when the participants will be debriefed. If "No" please provide an explanation of why debriefing is not necessary.

No debriefing is necessary because the survey is anonymous and no identifying information will be collected.

17. Is the proposed research consistent with the Belmont Principles and the American Psychological Association's\* ethical principles concerning research with human participants?  
 Yes  No

18. In the space below, please provide a brief description of the methods to be employed in the research, including a description of the participants and how you plan to recruit them, the materials to be used, and the research procedure(s).

The participants will include students aged 18-25 at Western New England University who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Exclusionary criteria includes any students without an ASD diagnosis or who are not aged 18-25, or anyone aged 18-25 with a diagnosis of ASD who is not currently receiving services from Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at Western New England University. Participants will be recruited using convenience sampling through their involvement in SAS. The director of SAS, Tynisha Henderson, will email students who meet the inclusionary criteria (Appendix A) to provide information regarding the study. After one week, a reminder email will be sent by Tynisha Henderson (Appendix C). The participants must review and complete the consent form (Appendix B) within Google forms before advancing on to the survey. If they do not consent, the survey will end. Participants will complete a one time, online survey (Appendix D) of 11 questions, consisting of both open ended and Likert rating scale questions regarding stress experiences and coping mechanisms currently being utilized. The survey should require 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey will be open for two weeks before being closed. Quantitative data from the rating scale questions will be analyzed by the researchers using Google forms. Qualitative data will be coded by the primary researcher (Erin Wells) and the secondary researcher (Sally Nguyen). These codes will then be analyzed and condensed into relevant themes. All data will be stored on the password protected laptops of the primary and secondary researchers and in locked cabinets. The data will be stored for at least three years before being permanently deleted.

19. Are you applying  Yes  No for an exemption?

**NOTE: If "Yes" please submit the Exemption Code # in the space below, citing your specific reason. For a listing of reasons, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html> (Refer to 46.101.)**


46.104.d.2.i  
 The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot be readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

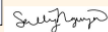
20. I certify that I have read the the Belmont Principles (<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>) and the American Psychological Association's\* ethical principles concerning research with human participants (<http://www.apa.org/ethics>). I will adhere to the policies and procedures explained therein. Should changes in the procedure or consent form described above (or in related documents) become advisable, I will submit them to the IRB for approval. I understand that the responsibility for the ethical conduct of the study rests with the responsible faculty investigator. I agree to report any participant's complaints that may arise to the IRB.

**NOTE: It is strongly recommended that all researchers consult the education training materials available on human subjects research protection at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp>**

(\*Departments or Colleges/Schools that have established their own Human Subjects Committee may substitute the appropriate professional organization's ethical guidelines for research after approval from the IRB.

All applications should be submitted electronically. An electronic signature can be used or alternatively, in addition to the electronic copy, a hard copy with a written signature can be scanned and emailed/mailed. If a full review is required, ten (10) signed copies must also be submitted in hard copy.

1. Responsible Project Investigator's Signature:  Date:

2. Investigator's Signature, if Different:  Date:

**You may not begin conducting any aspect of the proposed study until such time as you have received written approval for the proposal.**

Appendix G. Amended IRB document

**WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) SUBMISSION FORM  
FOR PROPOSAL TO USE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH  
FWA00010736  
Last Modified June 23, 2016**

Information regarding the annual meeting schedule of the Institutional Review Board, submission deadlines and requirements, and contact information may be found on the IRB section of the Academic Affairs website located at:  
<http://www1.wne.edu/academic-affairs/>

Date of Application:   
(MM/DD/YYYY)

1. Responsible Project Investigator:  Phone No.:

Address (Campus address, including box #, if available):  E-mail:

2. Investigator (e.g., Graduate Student):  Phone No.:

Address (Campus address, including box #, if available):  E-mail:

3. Title of Project:

4. Nature of the Research and Expected Benefit:

5. Anticipated Duration of the Project  
From MM/YYYY:  To MM/YYYY:

**NOTE: Any research project that continues for longer than one (1) calendar year requires that an application be submitted annually for renewal.**

6. Is this a request for renewal?  Yes  No

**NOTE: If "Yes" please attach the original proposal and committee approval form plus one (1) copy of this proposal and proceed to question number 20.**

7. Type of research participant (Include all that apply.) **Indicate the approximate number in each category.**

Undergraduate WNE student (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	Undergraduate WNE student (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Graduate or Law WNE student # <input type="text"/>
WNE employee (18 years old or older) # <input type="text"/>	WNE employee (less than 18 years old) # <input type="text"/>	Minor not otherwise specified (less than 18) # <input type="text"/>
Off-campus participants (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	Special population (e.g., prisoner, pregnant, disabled) (specify including age and #) <input type="text"/>	10 undergraduates 18+ at WNE with disabilities
Other (specify including age and #) <input type="text" value="18-25 years old"/>		

8. Recruitment of participants (Check all that apply)

Unpaid classroom volunteer  Paid classroom volunteer

Unpaid nonclassroom volunteer  Paid nonclassroom volunteer

Other (Please specify)

9. Expected participant duration and compensation.

Expected Duration (e.g., total hours and length of involvement (days, months) per participant):

Expected participant compensation (Check all that apply)

No compensation  \$\$ compensation

Other (Please specify)

If applicable, please specify \$\$ rate

10. Location of the research (Check all that apply)

On-campus  On-Line  Off-Campus

Please specify site (e.g., Springfield campus, Southborough, specific off-campus location):

**NOTE: If off-campus locations are included, please attach a signed permission from a responsible individual (e.g., business owner, school superintendent, principal) for each location.**

11. Will the participants be exposed to more than minimal risk?  
 Yes  No

If "Yes" please elaborate in the space below.

12. Attach copies of consent and assent procedures. Consent forms are required if more than minimal risk is involved. Both consent and assent forms are required for any research involving minors. Please see <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html> (Refer to 46.101.)

13. Procedure(s) used to ensure that participants are aware of their right to refuse to participate in the study, of the behavior they will be asked to manifest and any possible discomfort they may experience, and of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

14. Confidentiality and anonymity of information obtained (Check all that apply)

Participants' responses will be anonymous. (Data are collected in a way that no one (including the researcher) can identify the individual associated with any particular result or response, e.g., a survey with no names or other identifying information.)

Participants' responses will be confidential. (Records are maintained in a way that ensures only the researchers have access to any information or results linked to a specific individual.)

Other (Please specify)

15. Does the research involve the use of deception?  
 Yes  No

If "Yes" please elaborate in the space below, describing the deception used and providing a justification of the need for deception.

16. Does the research involve debriefing of participants?  
 Yes  No

If "Yes" please provide an explanation in the space below describing how (e.g., spoken, with written statement) and when the participants will be debriefed. If "No" please provide an explanation of why debriefing is not necessary.

No debriefing is necessary because the survey is anonymous and no identifying information will be collected.

17. Is the proposed research consistent with the Belmont Principles and the American Psychological Association's\* ethical principles concerning research with human participants?

Yes  No

18. In the space below, please provide a brief description of the methods to be employed in the research, including a description of the participants and how you plan to recruit them, the materials to be used, and the research procedure(s).

The participants will include students aged 18-25 at Western New England University who have a disability. Exclusionary criteria includes any students who are not aged 18-25, no diagnosed disability, or are not currently receiving services from Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at Western New England University. Participants will be recruited using convenience sampling through their involvement in SAS. The director of SAS, Tynisha Henderson, will email students who meet the inclusionary criteria (Appendix A) to provide information regarding the study. After one week, a reminder email will be sent by Tynisha Henderson (Appendix C). The participants must review and complete the consent form (Appendix B) within Google forms before advancing on to the survey. If they do not consent, the survey will end. Participants will complete a one time, online survey (Appendix D) of 12 questions, consisting of both open ended and Likert rating scale questions regarding stress experiences and coping mechanisms currently being utilized. The survey should require 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey will be open for two weeks before being closed. Quantitative data from the rating scale questions will be analyzed by the researchers using Google forms. Qualitative data will be coded by the primary researcher (Erin Wells) and the secondary researcher (Sally Nguyen). These codes will then be analyzed and condensed into relevant themes. All data will be stored on the password protected laptops of the primary and secondary researchers and in locked cabinets. The data will be stored for at least three years before being permanently deleted.

19. Are you applying for an exemption?  Yes  No

**NOTE: If "Yes" please submit the Exemption Code # in the space below, citing your specific reason. For a listing of reasons, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html> (Refer to 46.101.)**


46.104.d.2.)  
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot be readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

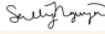
20. I certify that I have read the the Belmont Principles (<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html>) and the American Psychological Association's\* ethical principles concerning research with human participants (<http://www.apa.org/ethics>). I will adhere to the policies and procedures explained therein. Should changes in the procedure or consent form described above (or in related documents) become advisable, I will submit them to the IRB for approval. I understand that the responsibility for the ethical conduct of the study rests with the responsible faculty investigator. I agree to report any participant's complaints that may arise to the IRB.

**NOTE: It is strongly recommended that all researchers consult the education training materials available on human subjects research protection at: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp>**

(\*Departments or Colleges/Schools that have established their own Human Subjects Committee may substitute the appropriate professional organization's ethical guidelines for research after approval from the IRB.

All applications should be submitted electronically. An electronic signature can be used or alternatively, in addition to the electronic copy, a hard copy with a written signature can be scanned and emailed/mailed. If a full review is required, ten (10) signed copies must also be submitted in hard copy.

1. Responsible Project Investigator's Signature:  Date

2. Investigator's Signature, If Different:  Date

**You may not begin conducting any aspect of the proposed study until such time as you have received written approval for the proposal.**

**Appendix H.** Recruitment email

Dear Students,

My name is Sally Kim Nguyen and I'm an Occupational Therapy Doctorate student at Western New England University. I'm currently looking for participants who are in the age range of 18 through 25 years old, have a diagnosed disability, registered with SAS, and access to a computer or phone. The purpose of this research study is to explore stressors of young adults with a disability and how they manage their stress using a qualitative survey. The goal is to analyze what causes the individual stress and how they choose to cope with it. This survey will be anonymous and no identifying information will be collected. Tynisha Henderson is sending you this information to participate in this online survey for a research based on stress experiences and coping mechanisms of young adults with a disability. The goal is to potentially make resources of coping strategies to provide to SAS.

Participation in this study would involve:

- A time commitment of 15-20 minutes
- Answering questions regarding stress or responses to stress, which may be uncomfortable to discuss for some

For more information about this study, please feel free to contact me by phone at 413-875-5734 or email at [sally.nguyen@wne.edu](mailto:sally.nguyen@wne.edu) or Tynisha Henderson at [Tynisha.henderson@wne.edu](mailto:Tynisha.henderson@wne.edu).

Thank you,

Sally Kim Nguyen OT/s

Primary investigator

Western New England University

If you would like to participate in the survey, please continue to the link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3u78TW97wtrExe9z8-iSpmgFPc3a2b43zKH0msVHlqoPaUA/viewform>



**Appendix I.** Follow-up email

Dear students,

Just checking in. My name is Sally Nguyen and Tynisha Henderson sent out an email invitation to you to participate in a survey last week titled “Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Students with Disabilities at Western New England University.” This is a one-time online survey that should take 15-20 minutes to complete. The data collected may be used to create resources for Student Accessibility Services when students are experiencing stress and they will have access to different coping strategies provided through this office.

For more information about this study, please feel free to contact me by phone at 413-875-5734 or email at [sally.nguyen@wne.edu](mailto:sally.nguyen@wne.edu) or Tynisha Henderson at [Tynisha.henderson@wne.edu](mailto:Tynisha.henderson@wne.edu).

Thank you,

Sally Kim Nguyen OT/s

Primary investigator

Western New England University

If you would like to participate in the survey, please continue to the link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3u78TW97wtrExe9z8-iSpmgFPc3a2b43zKH0msVHlqoPaUA/viewform>

**Appendix J. Consent form**

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey titled “Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Students with Disabilities at Western New England University.” The purpose of this research study is to have a better understanding of stress experiences and coping mechanisms used by students at Western New England University (WNEU) students with a diagnosed disability between the ages of 18-25. The goal is to understand what you perceive as stress, what your own individual stressors are, and how you would choose to cope with it. This is a research project being conducted by Sally Kim Nguyen, an occupational therapy doctorate student at WNEU College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. This one-time online survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

**BENEFITS**

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us understand stress experiences and coping mechanisms used by WNEU students with ASD. From the data, resources may be created which students can eventually access through student accessibility services. You will receive no payment for participating in this study.

**PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty or compromising your services from SAS. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

**RISKS**

The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal. You may feel a little uncomfortable answering personal survey questions.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your survey answers will be sent to a link through google forms where data will be stored in a password-protected electronic format for *at least three years*. Google forms does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

**CONTACT**

You have the right to ask questions about this research study before, during, or after the research. If you have any questions about the study at any time, please contact Sally Nguyen, research investigator at [sally.nguyen@wne.edu](mailto:sally.nguyen@wne.edu) or via telephone at 413-875-5734. You may also choose to contact the following faculty advisor: Erin Wells at [erin.wells@wne.edu](mailto:erin.wells@wne.edu) or via telephone via 413-796-2110. The following IRB member(s) are also available for contact at: Diptiman Bose at [diptiman.bose@wne.edu](mailto:diptiman.bose@wne.edu) or via telephone 413-796-2442 and Jessica Carlson at [jcarlson@wne.edu](mailto:jcarlson@wne.edu) or via telephone 413-796-2325. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Western New England University Institutional Review Board.

**ELECTRONIC CONSENT:** Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older
- You have a diagnosed disability
- Registered with Student Accessibility Services

Agree

Disagree

**Appendix K.** Google survey form (can access the survey using the link from previous appendix)

## Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms

### of Students with Disabilities at Western New England University

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey titled "Stress Experiences and Coping Mechanisms of Students with Disabilities at Western New England University." The purpose of this research study is to have a better understanding of stress experiences and coping mechanisms used by students at Western New England University (WNEU) students with a diagnosed disability between the ages of 18-25. The goal is to understand what you perceive as stress, what your own individual stressors are, and how you would choose to cope with it. This is a research project being conducted by Sally Kim Nguyen, an occupational therapy doctorate student at WNEU College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences. This one-time online survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

#### BENEFITS

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us understand stress experiences and coping mechanisms used by WNEU students with a disability. From the data, resources may be created which students can eventually access through student accessibility services. You will receive no payment for participating in this study.

#### PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty or compromising your services from SAS. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

#### RISKS

The possible risks or discomforts of the study are minimal. You may feel a little uncomfortable answering personal survey questions.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

Your survey answers will be sent to a link through google forms where data will be stored in a password-protected electronic format for at least three years. Google forms does not collect any personal identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

#### CONTACT

You have the right to ask questions about this research study before, during, or after the research. If you have any questions about the study at any time, please contact Sally Nguyen, research investigator at [sally.nguyen@wne.edu](mailto:sally.nguyen@wne.edu) or via telephone at 413-875-5734. You may also choose to contact the following faculty advisor: Erin Wells at [erin.wells@wne.edu](mailto:erin.wells@wne.edu) or via telephone via 413-796-2110. The following IRB member(s) are also available for contact at: Diptiman Bose at [diptiman.bose@wne.edu](mailto:diptiman.bose@wne.edu) or via telephone 413-796-2442 and Jessica Carlson at [jcarlson@wne.edu](mailto:jcarlson@wne.edu) or via telephone 413-796-2325. This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Western New England University Institutional Review Board.

**ELECTRONIC CONSENT:** Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the "Agree" button indicates that:


**Appendix L. Survey information and wellness/coping toolkit (the rest can be accessed in e-portfolio)**

Nguyen 3

### STRESS EXPERIENCES

Stress is defined as the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with emotional or mental pressure.

The stress experiences from survey responses mostly encompassed:



<b>Academics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navigation of course requirements</li> <li>Academic probation</li> <li>Seeking academic support or accommodations</li> <li>Test-taking</li> <li>No access to technology</li> </ul>
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abandonment of friends</li> <li>Staff to student relationship</li> <li>Having a roommate</li> <li>Events on campus like SOAR</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suicide ideation</li> <li>Physical symptoms exacerbating from a panic attack</li> </ul>

After coding all this information, three main themes were identified:

1. Difficulty with self-advocacy of mental health concerns leading to decreased quality of life and well-being
2. Lack of appropriate social support can be detrimental to mental health
3. Complex processes to help with academic success can add to a student's present stress load

Nguyen 4

### IDENTIFICATION OF COPING STYLES

Coping mechanisms or strategies is defined as the cognitive and behavioral ability to manage stressful experiences (Dachez & Ndobu, 2018). There are two different styles of coping that an individual will usually engage in: active versus avoidant.

**Active coping**

**Problem-focused:** an aim to solve the problem

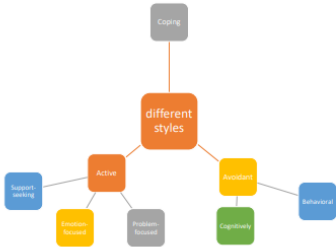
**Emotion focused:** an attempt to control negative emotions and to apply new apply new meaning to stress experience

**Support-seeking:** finding an outside figure to help reduce stress

**Avoidant coping**

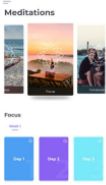

denying, minimizing, or otherwise avoiding dealing directly with stressful demands

Examples: turning to alcohol or drugs, walking away from the situation, self-blame



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graph TD
    Coping --> Active
    Coping --> Avoidant
    Active --> SupportSeeking[Support-seeking]
    Active --> EmotionFocused[Emotion-focused]
    Active --> ProblemFocused[Problem-focused]
    Avoidant --> DenialMinimization[Denial/Minimization]
    Avoidant --> Behavioral
            
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<p style="text-align: right;">Nguyen 7</p> <p><b>2. Guided meditation</b>  <b>Type:</b> Relaxation</p> <p>What is this: this activity allows the individual to calm down and relax. This can help with heightened emotions, inability to focus, or to sleep. It allows for more self-awareness and self-observation in the areas like decision making or communication. In the case of depression and anxiety/stress, it can help ease emotions and create more positive thinking. For trauma and substance use, it can help create more self-awareness and observation of present time to focus more on current positive situations and better decision making.</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Look up a video for meditation or download an app and follow along</li> <li>- Flat surface like a yoga mat or bed</li> <li>- Isolated environment (your room)</li> </ul> <p><b>Instructions:</b> (Depends on the video/app)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Make sure app or video is ready to be played and nearby.</li> <li>- Pull out yoga mat or be on any flat surface like a bed.</li> <li>- Follow the video or app instructions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> This app is called meditation &amp; relaxation. You can choose different categories of meditation like focus, bedtime, relaxation, or happiness.</p> 	<p style="text-align: right;">Nguyen 8</p> <p><b>3. Yoga</b>  <b>Type:</b> Relaxation and exercise</p> <p>What is this: This is a physical exercise to help connect the body, mind, and the surrounding environment– it strives to help our body relax, control breathing, and helps to encourage positive thinking.</p> <p><b>Materials:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Yoga mat</li> <li>-May be done at a class or done at home following along to a video</li> </ul> <p><b>Instructions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Turn on a video or prepare to listen to an instructor</li> <li>- Find an environment, you feel comfortable in and can lay out a yoga mat.</li> <li>- Begin the exercise along with the video or instructor.</li> </ul> 
<p style="text-align: right;">Nguyen 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Social</b></p> <p><u>Having a bad roommate-</u> things to ask yourself:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this a healthy environment for you?</li> <li>2. Is it affecting you emotionally and/or physically?</li> <li>3. Have you tried communicating your concerns with your roommate on multiple occasions?</li> </ol> <p><u>Additional support – talk to the professionals on campus</u></p> <p><b>Residence life</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Location: 2nd floor of campus center</li> <li>o Phone number: 413-782-1317</li> <li>o Email: <a href="mailto:residence@wne.edu">residence@wne.edu</a></li> <li>o Hours: M through F - 8:30 AM through 4:30 PM</li> </ul> <p><u>Want to engage in activities on campus?</u></p> <p><b>Office of student involvement and leadership</b> (call and ask how you can be an active community member)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Location: 1st floor of Campus Center</li> <li>o Phone number: 413-782-1203</li> <li>o Email: <a href="mailto:studentactivities@wne.edu">studentactivities@wne.edu</a></li> </ul> <p>Potential clubs/interests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Arts</li> <li>2) BOLD Media</li> <li>3) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</li> <li>4) Honor Societies</li> <li>5) Special Interest</li> <li>6) Student Senate</li> <li>7) Professional and Departmental</li> <li>8) Recreation</li> <li>9) Residence Life</li> <li>10) Spiritual Life</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: right;">Nguyen 14</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Emotional</b></p> <p>If you have tried the recommended techniques from this document and you felt it didn't work, let's proceed with the next questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Have you tried problem solving it on your own? Any solutions?</li> <li>2) What triggered the emotion(s)?</li> <li>3) How does it make you feel?</li> <li>4) Have you tried engaging in interests or activities you personally enjoy?</li> <li>5) Have you tried talking to a friend or finding a supportive figure on campus?</li> <li>6) Are you considering suicide from this stressful experience? (Please find help)</li> </ol> <p><u>Offices to go to for help:</u></p> <p><b>Center for Health and Wellness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health service</b></li> <li>• Location: Center for Sciences and Pharmacy</li> <li>• Room: 235</li> <li>• Hours: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM (after hours for emergency or urgent calls)</li> <li>• Phone number: 413-782-1211 or 413-519-4055 (urgent medical concerns)</li> <li>• Email: <a href="mailto:healthservices@wne.edu">healthservices@wne.edu</a></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Counseling</b></li> <li>• Location: Center for Sciences and Pharmacy</li> <li>• Room: 235</li> <li>• Same day or Urgent appointments offered – <a href="#">Link</a></li> <li>• In person or telehealth (30-minute sessions)</li> <li>• Phone number: 413-782-1211 or 413-310-5389 (urgent or crisis situations)</li> <li>• Email: <a href="mailto:Counseling.services@wne.edu">Counseling.services@wne.edu</a></li> </ul>

