

Student Mental Health and Well-Being

POLICY

Policy #:	ACA-SS-POL-119		
Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrative	<input type="checkbox"/> Board
Effective date:	January 23, 2025		
Approved by:	Suzie Addison-Toor Vice President, Student Success	College Council	
Last revision:	January 22, 2025		
Next scheduled review:	June 2026		

1. Purpose/Rationale

Georgian College is dedicated to fostering the mental health and well-being for all students within our college community. This policy aligns with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act, 2024*: Minister's Directive on Student Mental Health, pursuant to the *Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act* (MTCU Act), and outlines the mental health programs, services, and supports available to students at Georgian College.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all full time, part time domestic and international students enrolled in credit programming at Georgian College.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Mental Health	The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stressors of life, realize their abilities, learn well, and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental Health & Well-being [MHWB] Student Portal	<p>Georgian College offers an electronic student portal where you can find information about Mental Health and Well-Being (MHWB) support and services. This portal provides resources and support for domestic, international, and Indigenous students, ensuring that all students have access to crucial information about well-being.</p> <p>The portal includes crisis services for urgent / immediate situations, access to professional counselling services, and well-being resources to support ongoing, holistic student mental health and well-being.</p> <p>Campus-specific contact information is available for services at both community and college campuses.</p>
Well-being	Well-being is a state of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.
Flourishing / Thriving	Five key components that contribute to student success in a postsecondary environment: engaged learning, academic determination, diverse citizenship, positive perspective and social connections.
Stepped Care Model	Stepped Care is a system of delivering and monitoring mental health treatment so that the most effective, yet least resource intensive treatment, is delivered first, only “stepping up” to intensive / specialist services as required and depending on the level of patient distress or need.
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act [AODA]	AODA is a law that sets out a process for developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards.
Ontario Human Rights Code [OHRC]	OHRC is a provincial law that gives everybody equal rights and opportunities without discrimination in areas such as jobs, housing and services, including educational services.
National Standard for Mental Health and Well-being for Postsecondary Students	A set of flexible, voluntary guidelines to help postsecondary institutions support the mental health and well-being of their students developed through the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Key outcomes include raising mental health awareness and decreasing stigma, providing safe and healthy institutional environments, improving opportunities for student success and flourishing and promoting life and resiliency skills.
Student	Full time, part time domestic and international applicants and students enrolled in credit programming enrolled at Georgian College.

4. Policy Statement

Georgian College believes that mental health is important for everyone, and includes one’s emotional, psychological, and social well-being. To that end, the College is committed to providing a broad range of holistic services that support the mental health, academic success, and well-being of all its students through expanding opportunities for connection, engaged learning, cultural needs, and personal growth. These efforts are aimed at creating a thriving and inclusive college community for all students, including diverse and underrepresented groups. More information about Georgian’s mental health and well-being supports and services can be found on Georgian’s [MHWB student portal](#).

This policy adheres to the principles outlined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990* (OHRC), and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). It is further informed by best practices, including the *National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Postsecondary Students* and guidelines from the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health (CICMH). These resources provide a framework to ensure that mental health support at Georgian College is comprehensive, accessible, and inclusive.

4.1 Guiding Principles

4.1.1 The College will establish and communicate specific policies, programs and services that support the mental health of all its students.

4.1.2 Georgian student mental health policies, programs and services will be built to support and inspire a thriving college community where everyone feels seen, heard, and knows they belong.

4.1.3 Georgian student mental health policies, programs and services will encourage a holistic approach to mental health by expanding opportunities for connection, engaged learning, cultural needs and appreciation, and personal growth.

4.1.4 Georgian student mental health policies, programs and services will be collaboratively developed and in alignment with diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging guidelines, accessibility standards and anti-oppressive and culturally respectful best practices.

4.1.5 Georgian College leads with a life promotion perspective always and endeavors to provide quick response to urgent student mental health needs and situations.

4.1.6 Efforts shall be made to increase education and awareness of mental health protection, risk factors, recognition and crisis response, and early intervention through coordinated support for all students, especially for those identified as at-risk.

4.1.7 Georgian College will adhere to *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA), ensuring that all personal health information related to mental health services is securely collected, managed and only accessible to authorized individuals.

4.1.8 Georgian will maintain confidentiality by sharing information only if it is supported by informed consent or where required by law or other college policy or procedure relating to the health or safety of persons in the college community.

4.1.9 Georgian will remain committed to continuously improving its student mental health support efforts, including broad communication and transparency of mental health-related policies, programs and services.

4.2 Accountability

4.2.1 To ensure accountability, in accordance with Georgian's Policy Development and Review Framework Policy, Georgian will review this policy to ensure efficacy and updating.

4.2.2 To ensure transparency, this policy will be posted on the Georgian College [Mental Health & Well-being](#) webpage, and a copy will be made available to anyone who requests it.

4.2.3 A portion of student ancillary fees contribute to the provision of student mental health and well-being services.

5. Annual Reporting

5.1 Georgian College is required to provide the Board of Governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The report will include quantitative and qualitative data regarding the usage of mental health and well-being services at Georgian.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1.1 The Vice President, Student Success, is required to provide the Board of Governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of its policy. The annual report must also be made publicly available on the dedicated webpage and submitted to the Minister by January 31 of each year, beginning January 2026.

5.1.2 The Vice President Academic is responsible for ensuring faculty are aware of student mental health policies, services and resources that support student well-being.

5.1.3 The Well-being Services department is responsible for providing a range of in-person and virtual student mental health and well-being programs, resources and services, which are easily accessed on the [Mental Health & Well-being at Georgian College](#) student webpage.

5.1.4 The Well-being Services department also supports enhanced mental health awareness and literacy to employees and faculty that can be easily accessed through the [Mental Health & Well-being for Georgian Employees](#) webpage. Various professional development opportunities are offered that include classroom or departmental training, certifications, as well as resources outlining college and community mental health services.

7. References

World Health Organization

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2020). National standard for mental health and well-being for post-secondary learners.

<https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/what-we-do/children-and-youth/studentstandard/>

Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities. (2024). Strengthening Accountability and Learner Supports Act. <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-166>

Schreiner, Laurie, A. (2010). *The Thriving Quotient: A New Vision for Student Success*. About Campus, May-June. American College Personnel Association and Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

8. Appendices

[Mental Health and Well-being for Students](#)

[Mental Health and Well-being Strategic Plan](#)

[Who to Call?](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)

[AODA and Accessibility at Georgian College](#)

9. Related Procedure(s)

Accessibility Procedure

Violent Threat Risk Assessment

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement

Contact	Email
<i>Danielle Mink, Director of Well-being</i>	<u>Danielle.mink@georgiancollege.ca</u>
<i>Suzie Addison-Toor, Vice-President of Student Success</i>	<u>Suzie.addisontoor@georgiancollege.ca</u>