

UNC Asheville community combats anxiety and depression

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Layne Pierce said he understands the stresses of the university environment intimately.

"I've seen people breaking down over assignments," said Pierce, a senior English teacher licensure student. "I've seen people just push themselves to the limit and freak out because they feel like they have to do this."

The 21-year-old said he struggles with anxiety and depression like many students on campus, and while the university does not cause his mental health issues, it sometimes exacerbates them.

"I've watched people have panic attacks in front of me and not sleep for days," Pierce said. "I've been guilty of that myself."

Melissa Himelein, professor of psychology and director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, said the ability of anxiety and depres-

sion to undermine students' efforts are sometimes underestimated.

"Some don't really understand the impacts that anxiety and depression can have on one's entire ability to go about their day or function in everyday life," Himelein said. "They aren't thinking as well, they aren't retaining information well, everything is slower and takes more time. Those are all qualities that are not helpful when it comes to schoolwork."

Gabriella Livanos, a senior philosophy and psychology student, said she tries to address student mental health issues through her internship with Peers Educating Peers and Advancing Health, a peer mentoring program created by UNC Asheville's Health and Counseling Center. PEPAH attempts to reach students through their peers.

"We're all students on this college campus," Livanos said. "PEPAH really wants to give students the

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Melissa Himelein speaks about anxiety and depression in college students and how it can affect school work.

PHOTO BY BRYCE ALBERGHINI

UNCA students struggle with time management and procrastination

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Time management is a struggle for many college students, including those at UNC Asheville. Visiting professor of sociology, Susan Ortiz said this could be a result of students adjusting to college.

Ortiz said the drastic shift of going to college can cause students to struggle. In high school, students have a set schedule in which they arrive at a certain time and stay until a certain time. In college, Ortiz said, it is different.

"Suddenly, you might have two classes on Tuesday-Thursday and one class on Monday-Wednesday-Friday, which means, if you have one class, then the rest of the day you have to manage your time," Ortiz said. "I think that's a shock to a lot of people."

Many students think they have all the time in the world to get their work done, Ortiz said. But later on, they realize they did not allot the time needed for an assignment or to study for an exam.

Two-year veteran of working in the University Writing Center, Marquana Burgess, a 20-year-old studio art student, has first hand experience with the procrastination habits of UNCA students.

"We all need to stop procrastinating as much as we are," Burgess said.

The University Writing Center, one of the academic support systems available on campus for students, seems to get many students looking for help on assignments after managing their time poorly and procrastinating, Burgess said.

"Maybe, like, 75 percent of the students I see come in last minute," Burgess said.

Most of the time, Burgess said she is able to help them. Often, students want someone to proofread their papers and check their grammar.

Burgess said sometimes clients

come in who need more than a grammar check. Sometimes they need to completely rewrite their papers or need to do more research, but often do not have the time. Recently, Burgess said she had a client come in with a paper three hours overdue, who had trouble meeting their paper requirements and did not know what to do.

"Coming in an hour before it's due isn't really going to help much unless you're positive that your paper is good," Burgess said.

Burgess said she procrastinates plenty too. She advises students to schedule appointments at the Writing Center several days before the assignment's due date to allow time for time to make revisions. The Writing Center can also help students even if they have not started writing their paper yet, Burgess said they can also help students start their papers.

Similar to Burgess, Ortiz said she sees her fair share of procrastination on college campuses.

"Every semester, I will have at least one or two students who struggle with it," Ortiz said.

Her teaching career began as an elementary school teacher, but she later began teaching college classes. She said she spent two years teaching at Warren Wilson College before starting at UNCA three years ago.

Ortiz said the time management skills of college students vary, depending on culture and values.

"I'm a sociologist, so I think about things like culture and our social groups and organizations," Ortiz said.

She said each can all play a role in a person's time management, as can the attitude of the university or how a student's friends view time management.

"Are peers laid back about friends being late? How does that influence

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