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Improvement on Healthy Views of Body Image at UD
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Abstract
The National Eating Disorders Collaboration describes body image as “the perception that a person has of his/her physical self.” Focusing on the pressures associated with social media and preparing for Dayton to Daytona, we analyzed publications distributed by the Health and Counseling Centers. After reviewing our findings, we developed a document that de-stigmatizes body images and raises awareness for available resources.

Problems
Body image can be a lifelong stress and one that is especially heightened in the college years and environment. Unhealthy misperceptions of body image can lead to many dangerous consequences such as eating disorders, depression, and anxiety.

Method
We conducted research online to understand issues surrounding body image, specifically in college students. To discover how UD handles body image, we visited campus locations to examine resources they provide to students, as well as searched UD’s website to find online resources. Then, we researched other universities’ resources and conducted interviews with UD students to analyze current campus perception of body image. Finally, we proposed suggestions for UD as well as constructed a fact sheet.

Results: University of Dayton
UD has several offices on campus that provide resources for students related to body image and eating disorders. The Health Center provides health magazines in the waiting room and pamphlets behind the front desk. The Counseling Center has a carousel of pamphlets, individual and group counseling. The Women’s Center offers programs including “Host a Program,” Post-it positivity, and Eating Disorder Awareness Week. The RecPlex offers group fitness classes and the Path to 30! Program.

Results: Other Universities
University of Michigan students can meet with a registered dietitian to aid in recovery from eating disorders to combat negative eating habits. They also have on-campus clubs solely dedicated to body positivity. Gonzaga University has resources on their health center website including free app suggestions that connect students with clinicians while providing positive feedback. Gonzaga also has a flyer with tips on talking to a friend about eating disorders and how to recognize if you or someone else is engaging in destructive eating or exercise habits.

Recommendations:
UD can take steps to improve the resources that are available to students who struggle with poor body images. These recommendations include the University taking steps to de-stigmatize the issue of body image, raising awareness of resources offered on campus, and updating existing pamphlets. A final recommendation would be to continue and extend the positive programs and helpful resources offered by UD.

References:
“Resources for Eating Disorders and Body Image Issues.” University Health Sources, uhs.umich.edu/edbiresources.