Mental Health
Policy Initiative

Impact Assessment: Mental Health Policy Initiative (MHPI)

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Trigger Warning

MHPI would like to let readers know that the content of this report could be triggering. This report deals with sensitive and serious topics, such as mental illness and suicide.

If you are in crisis, please visit your local emergency department or call 911

If you are in distress the following are CAMH's 24 hour resources:

Toronto Distress Centres: 416 408-4357 or 408-HELP

Gerstein Centre: 416 929-5200

Spectra Helpline: 416 920-0497 or 905 459-7777 for Brampton and Mississauga residents
TTY: 905 278-4890; *Languages: English, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese*

Assaulted Women's Helpline: 416 863-0511; Toll-free: 1 866 863-0511

Kids Help Phone: 1 800 668-6868; Languages: English and French

Community Crisis Line Scarborough and Rouge Hospital: 416 495-2891 for 24/7 telephone crisis support.

Service borders: south to the lake, north to Steeles Avenue, east to Port Union Road, and west to Victoria Park

Durham Crisis and Mental Health Line: 905 666-0483

Distress Centre Halton: *For Residents of the Halton Region (Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton, and Oakville). Oakville: 905-849-4541; Burlington: 905-681-1488; Milton/Halton Hills: 905-877-1211*

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Introduction

The Mental Health Policy Initiative (MHPI) is a student-leadership initiative (SLI) that focuses on mental health policy, advocacy and research within the Munk School for Global Affairs and Public Policy graduate program. Throughout the first year of the initiative, MHPI has run a panel, hosted several mental health nights and conducted primary research and analysis for an Impact Assessment (IA).

What is an Impact Assessment?

An impact assessment is a document used to determine, evaluate and predict the outcomes of an ongoing project. MHPI has developed an Impact Assessment Team (IA Team) that has collected both qualitative and quantitative data on the mental health status of Munk students throughout the 2021-2022 school year. As this is MHPI's first year as an SLI within the Munk school, the IA Team set out to understand the general state of students' mental health. As such, the focus of the Impact Assessment was to gather baseline research and analysis for following years, rather than the traditional format of an impact assessment.

The IA team gathered background data on the baseline of mental health, relationships with professors and administration, and the comfort levels of students in discussing mental health struggles.

Data collection for the Impact Assessment was carried out by running focus groups, one-on-one conversations, surveys and polls. Specifically, MHPI leveraged digital platforms such as Zoom and both MPP and MGA Slack group chats.

Goals of the Impact Assesment

1. Reduce stigma through increased conversation

Starting and continuing the conversation surrounding mental health awareness and advocacy throughout Munk and within the public policy realm.

Giving students the opportunity to reflect on their mental health and initiate conversations on various mental health topics to strengthen mental health awareness.

2. Advocate for students' mental health needs

Allow students to have a safe platform to voice concerns

3. Influence mental health policies at the Munk School

Provide evidence-based research on common trends and mental health issues among Munk students for administration and faculty to reflect upon

Background

Beginning a degree at the University of Toronto can pose significant mental health challenges for graduate students. Between adjusting to a new environment, coping with a heavy workload and navigating the academic expectations of a prestigious institution, students may struggle with prioritizing their mental health. Andrea Levinson, psychiatrist-in-chief of Health & Wellness at the University of Toronto, states, "We are seeing on post-secondary campuses an increasing number of students seeking help and that's due to a lot of factors" (Levine, 2020).

Students enrolled at post-secondary institutions are vulnerable to mental health challenges. "Canadian youth between 15 and 24 are more likely to experience a mental health or substance abuse disorder than any other group," Levinson disclosed (Levine, 2020). The Center for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) reported that 70% of mental health issues begin during an individual's adolescence or childhood (Treleaven, 2020).

These statistics show that Canadian universities need comprehensive mental health strategies to respond to increasing numbers of mental illnesses, and specifically, suicide (Treleaven, 2020). Many students from different universities in Canada have similar experiences when seeking care, such as long wait times to see a counsellor in crisis situations, mandated leave policies forcing students to abandon their studies, mandatory sick notes for missed exams or assignments, and inaccessible and discriminatory campus support services (Treleaven, 2020).

Background

In response to the mental health crisis at the University of Toronto, The Presidential and Provost's Task Force on Student Mental Health was established in 2020. In its final report, the Task Force stated that a clear "road map" was needed to facilitate the navigation of mental health resources by students. However, improving on-campus mental health services is hindered by the "minimal access to provincial funding." Instead, on-campus counseling centers and other mental health services are funded by student fees, levies, and budgets (Levine, 2020).

The University-Mandated Leave of Absence Policy (UMLAP) was first drafted in 2015 and came into effect in 2018, after approval from the University of Toronto Governing Council. Under this policy, the University was given the power to mandate leaves if a student "poses a risk of harm to self or others" due to mental health concerns (Zhong, 2021). However, students quickly voiced concerns about this policy, due to a lack of meaningful student consultation, targeting of vulnerable student populations, the policy's vague scope, and the potential for further stigmatization of mental health (UTSU). Despite student protests, the University approved a revised version of the policy. In the wake of two student suicides, the University released a report that recommended the UMLAP be reviewed in 2019. As of 2021, the UMLAP policy is still in review.

MHPI was created in order to address the specific mental health needs of students at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. The 2021-2022 Impact Assessment report aims to both qualitatively and quantitatively measure the mental health of current Munk School students over the school year based on select indicators, and offer policy suggestions for future mental health initiatives.

Jurisdictional Scan

In Canada, post-secondary institutions struggle to address the ongoing mental health crisis among their students (Treleaven, 2020). However, certain post-secondary institutions have begun creating calls to action in order to increase awareness and mental health resources. For example, Queen's University has called for provincial-wide support in ensuring that students are not forced to select a post-secondary institution based on the availability of mental health resources (Treleaven, 2020). In comparison, the University of Toronto has stated that tackling mental health is not solely the responsibility of an institution but rather public health care systems as a whole (Treleaven, 2020).

In 2019, University of Alberta students organized a rally after the university evicted a student that had attempted suicide on campus (Treleaven, 2020). Similarly, University of Ottawa students held a protest demanding better mental health resources after multiple students died by suicide on campus (Treleaven, 2020). Dalhousie University organized a forum, titled "Speak Truth to Power: Racism, Mental Health & Healing," which brought together students and faculty to discuss the intersection of racism and mental health (Treleaven, 2020). Brock University has adopted various measures to address mental health, including workshops to discuss and mitigate anxiety, which garnered the participation of over 1400 students (Treleaven, 2020). Additionally, the university has partnered with local agencies, like the Community Addictions Services of Niagara, with the goal of implementing more mental health services on and off-campus (Treleaven, 2020).

Along these universities, the University of Ottawa has made significant strides to address mental health. Most notably, the university created a student-led initiative called the uOttawa Collective 4 Mental Health, to demand action after a student committed suicide (Treleaven, 2020). The uOttawa Collective launched a petition that called for a roundtable with stakeholders, implemented training on mental health for faculty and staff, hired more frontline mental health specialists, and minimized out-of-pocket costs for pharmacare and private counseling (Treleaven, 2020). As a result, the uOttawa Collective and University of Toronto's Mental Health Policy Council hosted a summit to discuss how to best create systemic change across Ontario's universities (Treleaven, 2020).

Jurisdictional Scan

In addition, there exist more targeted interventions. For example, Memorial University created Stepped Care 2.0 service which provided students with recovery treatment through online counseling (Treleaven, 2020). McMaster University established an online portal which offers students the ability to extend a deadline or reschedule an exam by 48 hours, once in a term, without requiring documentation (Treleaven, 2020).

Based on the Mental Health Commission of Canada's national standards on mental health, which remain voluntary, universities are beginning to foster environments and resources centered on mental health (Simpson, 2021). For instance, the University of Calgary and the Université de Montreal have established online mental health services to reduce wait times and increase accessibility of services (Simpson, 2021).

These approaches allow students to share decision-making power with administration and work to collectively improve mental health resources at universities. According to Joanna Henderson, a psychologist from CAMH specializing in child and youth mental health, "young people must be given the same decision-making power at the table as other people...We're seeing that their lived expertise is as valuable as the technical expertise of the clinician or evaluator" (Treleaven, 2020). It is necessary and valuable for students to engage in creating new models of care, such as determining which programs or services are crucial to care and developing best practices for service-delivery based on students' needs (Treleaven, 2020).

Methodology

To begin, the IA team developed a mixed methods approach by conducting informal polls through Slack channels to determine the baseline wellbeing of students. These polls provided options for students to express their emotional state through emojis. To build upon the subjective reporting of the informal polls, and to gain more quantifiable insight, the IA Team shifted to data collection using numeric scales. Analysts sent out polls, through Slack, asking students to rate their mental health on a scale from 1 to 5, where 5 indicated the highest positive emotional state. For the third stage of data collection, the IA team leveraged the use of Google forms to collect more in-depth quantitative and qualitative responses from Munk students.

To the right is one of the first initial polls to give a visual representation. Reference Appendix 6 for further examples.
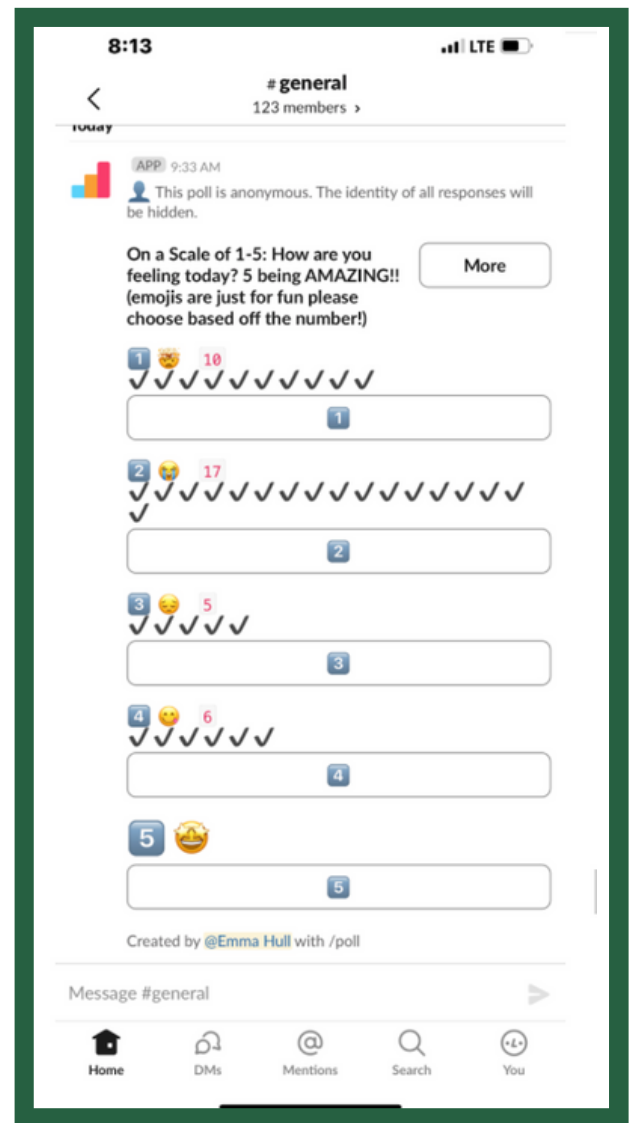
The Google forms surveys were administered through Slack and Facebook. The first survey was posted three times across January and February. This survey garnered 33 responses. The second survey was posted twice in February and received 15 responses. The third survey was conducted in March, posted twice through Slack.

In contrast to the first two surveys, this survey focused on mental health services offered by Munk. This survey was prepared in collaboration with Chad Jankowski, who is a Mental Health Programs Officer for the Faculty of Arts and Science at the University of Toronto. After meeting with Jankowski on two separate occasions, his feedback was incorporated into the survey, which was then sent out to Munk students. This final survey garnered 42 responses.

Methodology

The fourth stage of data collection included focus groups that took place from March 7-18th. To participate, students had to fill out a google form expressing their interest. These forms were distributed on Slack, Facebook, Zoom and the MPPSA newsletter. These efforts led to the participation of 10 students, which included nine MPP1 students and one MPP2 student.

Focus groups were conducted remotely via Zoom. Prior to the focus groups, participants were required to submit consent forms (reference appendix 26). Participants received a detailed explanation about the nature and aims of the research and were invited to ask questions before the focus group began.

Focus groups lasted 30 to 40 minutes. At least two Impact Assessment members attended each focus group. For continuity, the same IA member ran each focus group. Recordings from focus groups were transcribed verbatim and analyzed for common themes.
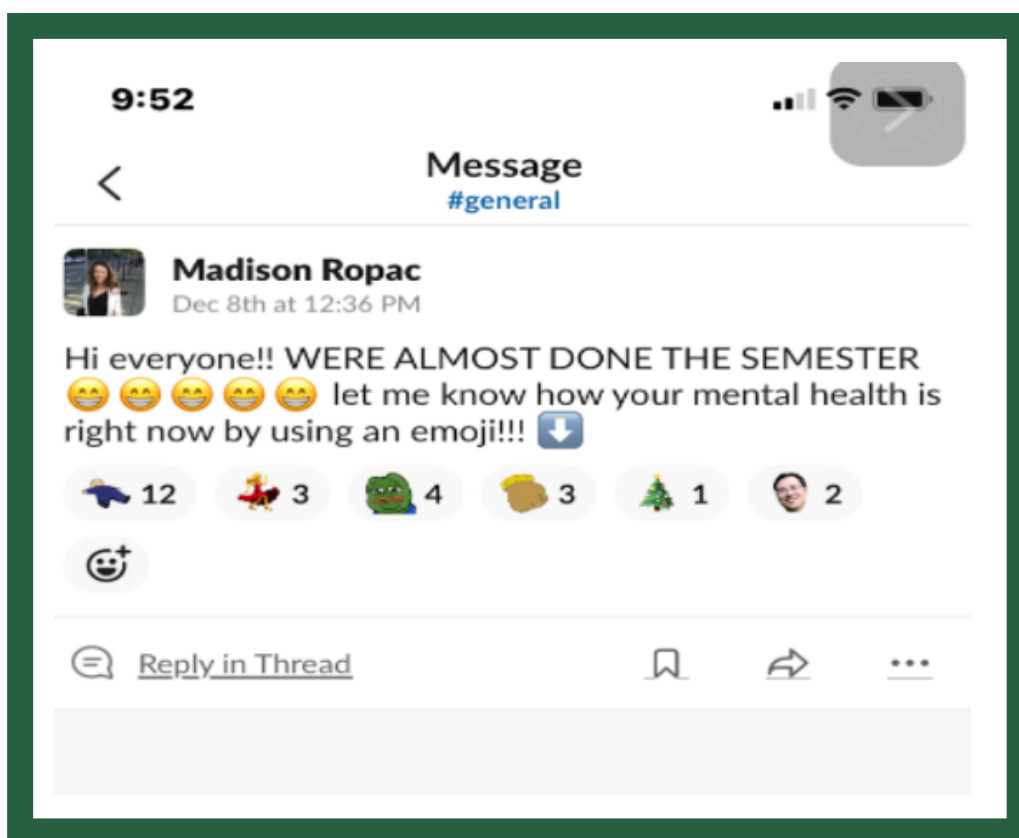
Survey 1
Key Findings

Of the respondents, 24/33 reported having the opportunity to speak to someone outside of Munk about their mental health. When asked about if they felt supported by administration in terms of mental health 14/33 of respondents answered 'yes but not alot.' Concern about mental health with hybrid learning was expressed by 26/33 of respondents.

To give a sense of a baseline mental health state, respondents were asked how their mental health was faring that day on a scale of 1 to 5, in which 5 represented the best mental health. Of the respondents, 18/33 reported a rating of 3/5, a middleground. This was followed by 11/33 of respondents reporting a rating of 4, 3/33 reported 2 and 1/33 reported 1.

Survey 2
Key Findings

Respondents were not comfortable discussing their mental health with professors, administrators or TAs. When asked if respondents had ever reached out to a professor to discuss their mental health 14/15 students responded 'no.' Similarly, when asked if they had ever reached out to an administrator about their mental health 14/15 responded 'no.' When asked if they would feel comfortable reaching out to a professor or TA 11/15 of the respondents responded 'no.'

With a range of 1 to 8 hours, 5/15 of respondents reported that they spend 5 hours a day on homework. When asked if respondents knew where to access mental health resources on campus 10/15 responded 'yes'.

To give a sense of a baseline mental health state, respondents were asked how their mental health was faring that day on a scale of 1 to 5, in which 5 represented the best mental health. Of the respondents, 6/15 reported a rating of 3/5, a middleground. However, 6/15 also reported a rating of 2, a further 2/15 reported a rating of 2 and 2/15 reported a rating of 4.

(Reference appendices 3-14 for all graphs and data collection.)
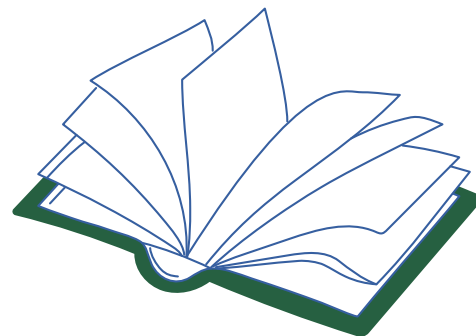
Survey 3
Key Findings

Of the respondents, 28/42 reported that they felt a sense of belonging at Munk. However, 18/42 respondents reported that Munk does not do an adequate job of communicating mental health resources to the student body.

Notably, 23/36 respondents reported that non-academic support, such as career or administrative services, were helpful in providing mental health support. Despite this, 19/42 respondents reported that they felt that their mental health had suffered during the academic year. Subsequently, 18/42 respondents believed that mental health resources were not easily accessible through the university.

(Reference appendices 12-21 for all graph and data collection.)

Analysis of Quantitative Data

These surveys provide a glimpse into the mental health of students in competitive graduate programs, such as those offered at Munk. These results, based on raw data, demonstrate that students feel uneasy about approaching faculty and administration with their mental health concerns, despite feeling a sense of belonging at Munk. Additionally, respondents only felt marginally supported by administration and expressed concerns about hybrid learning. These results are not sufficient to form any conclusions, however, they provide an interesting insight into student perceptions about mental health and stigma on campus.

Limitations

Limitations to this study include a low participation rate. With only 15, 33, and 42 respondents within each survey, with possible overlap between surveys, our findings remain constrained. In addition, there was significantly low engagement from MGA students. Our findings therefore cannot be generalizable to Munk as a whole. We were unable to account for selection bias, which decreases the external validity of these surveys. It is possible that students who struggle more with mental health were more likely to answer the surveys. Furthermore, these surveys are self-reported studies which could increase the bias associated with the current results. As noted previously, our survey findings did not undergo statistical analysis.

Analysis of Qualitative Data: Key Themes

Academic Impact

Munk offers an academically rigorous course load which can pose a risk to the mental health of students. Half of the participants asserted that Munk had negatively contributed to their mental health. Common discussions that arose were around feelings of imposter syndrome, a fear of being unproductive and a sense of competition. Mental health fluctuated depending on course load and was heavily affected by the internship search.

"I would say that it has fluctuated but there's also a consistent level of stress there that could be detrimental."

"I think the lowest it's been is when we were looking for internships, I think it's the nature of competition. As much as we like each other there's still that level of competition and comparing ourselves to others. It's a hard time for a lot of people."

High levels of anxiety and stress persisted into breaks for several participants. These participants specifically cited a difficulty detaching from the culture of competition and productivity associated with Munk.

"During breaks, I feel unproductive... If I'm not doing something, when I have nothing, I feel like kind of low, like I'm not doing enough."

"I .. feel compelled to do something over the break. Over December break I spent the whole time researching internships and writing cover letters."

However, the other half of students felt their mental health remained unchanged following their admittance into Munk.

"I haven't found that Munk has added to my stress, or been a detriment to my mental health."

"I wouldn't say that Munk has negatively contributed to my stress."

Academic Impact

Participants recognized the importance of engaging in self-care. However, aside from one participant, all other participants spoke about how self-care was no longer a priority when faced with academic pressures and external responsibilities.

"I've actively tried to work on, trying to practice self-care daily, going for a walk, going to the gym, listening to music, phoning a friend, all things I try to incorporate into my day."

"Munk is very demanding and when you have other stuff on top of that, it can be very overwhelming."

External Factors

A number of participants (4/10) expressed their frustration that Munk did not appear cognizant that students had external responsibilities. Aside from the demands of the program, students reported having to balance familial obligations and part-time employment.

"The assumption that you live, sleep and breathe the program is not totally accurate."

Additionally, certain participants did not feel that the administration was understanding of the complicated circumstances faced by students following COVID-19.

"This is an extraordinary time in our lives, it's too much and I think at the end of the day we're people and mental health is a priority now and to default to an old way of doing things is not the answer. Accounting for COVID-19 and the Ukraine and the Middle East, a lot of things that go on in our everyday lives go beyond academics and that needs to be accounted for."

One participant expressed their desire for an avenue to discuss subjects discussed in class, which are often heavy and may leave a lasting impact on students' mental health.

"Every time I show up to class we're discussing some kind of crisis, like climate, or inflation or whatever. I wish there was a space to talk openly and earnestly about everything that's going on."

Safe Communication

The majority of participants (8/10) were reluctant and uneasy about approaching professors with mental health concerns. Students expressed their worry that doing so would be deemed unprofessional or would reveal them as being unable to succeed in the program.

"Munk is more supportive than my undergrad ever was. Although, asking for an extension feels unprofessional or unacademic."

Participants also reported that the administration did not express sufficient understanding or empathy. One participant explained that while they would be comfortable discussing their mental health with a professor, they would never reach out to administration for fear of the University Mandated Leave of Absence Policy (UMLAP).

"I don't find that admin has been empathetic at all to the stressors we face."

"I don't really feel supported by the administration."

In contrast, two students reported a positive relationship with faculty and administration. Both indicated that they would feel comfortable reaching out to faculty or administration in the case of a mental health struggle, although neither of these participants had ever done so.

"I had something happen with my family before school started, and I reached out to the administration who I felt very comfortable talking with and how this impacted my start with Munk."

"I felt supported by my classmates and my faculty, I'm extremely fortunate for that."

Camaraderie

Interestingly, several (4/10) participants cited feeling a sense of camaraderie within their cohort. This ability to form attachments to peers contributed to alleviating mental health stressors. Munk was capable of fostering positive connections between students. This was only facilitated when students attended class in person.

"The thing that's really interesting about the MPP program is the camaraderie that I wasn't expecting."

Several participants (3/10) explained that being able to share their academic struggle with peers helped them gain perspective and assuage their fears.

"It's interesting talking to them, they're not in the program, they don't fully understand the stress. It's more helpful to talk to people in the program."

"When we're in person, things are lighter. For example, I would go into class and then someone would make a joke about how that last midterm was so hard. That creates a sense of community and it's very silly."

MHPI's Role

Participants provided positive feedback about MHPI's attempts to discuss and advocate for mental health at Munk. Surveys and focus groups were well received.

"This kind of format is very special because it gives the administration a first hand approach about what students are feeling. These little panels bring the truth to the administration."

"Polls on slack are very helpful, maybe send it back to admin or even professors."

"I really enjoyed [slack polls]. U of T is a very isolating place, especially when we are online. Is everyone getting this? Am I slow? Am I being left alone? It was really nice to know that people are on your side."

"Great session. Would definitely partake in a similar session next year."

"Lowering barriers and making people more comfortable talking about their mental health normalizes a lot of topics that can be super isolating and I love this idea."
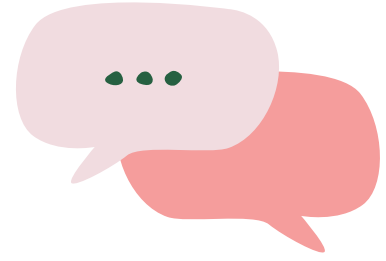
Limitations

This data is subject to selection bias and a low participation rate. The sample was limited to 10 participants and it is important to note that no MGA students participated. In addition, since only one MPP2 student participated, findings related to camaraderie being facilitated only by in person learning are not generalizable to all students. As with the surveys, these findings are not generalizable to the entirety of the Munk program. Certain focus group questions were formatted in a way that lacked clarity, prompting questions from participants and potentially clouding their ability to answer accurately.

However, this data is strengthened by a high level of emic reporting. This was made possible through the inclusion of peers as focus group leads and the fact that MHPI is a peer run organization. This allowed for an increase in trust and openness during focus group chats due to the conversations being in the same language.

Despite concerns about external validity, these findings act as an informative starting point for pertinent mental health recommendations.

Summary of Findings

This paper alone does not reveal the mental health status of all Munk students. However, key trends and themes remain relevant. Our findings reveal that Master's of Public Policy students, particularly those in their first year, suffer from high levels of stress. In addition, students reported being plagued by feelings of imposter syndrome and difficulty balancing school work with external responsibilities.

Despite the fact that students feel a sense of community at Munk, students simultaneously reported feeling disconnected from the administration and faculty. The majority of students (8/10) reported unease at the idea of reaching out to faculty or administration about their mental health. Our focus groups revealed that students feared retribution, a lack of understanding, or fear of appearing unprofessional. In addition, across surveys and focus groups students on average did not access mental health services.

Recommendations

1. Increase the amount administration and professors discuss mental health, offer resources, follow-up with students and publicly promote mental health support opportunities.

Faculty and administration may wish to encourage discussion with students surrounding mental health, to reduce stigma on campus. This could be accomplished by more frequently outlining available accommodations and acknowledging the role of mental health in academics either verbally or through email. The IA Team recommends that professors and administration communicate more openly and more often on the subject of mental health with students. By not addressing the interplay of academia and mental health, faculty and administration may miss the opportunity to open up the conversation to vulnerable students who may be struggling alone.

Additionally, the IA Team recommends that MHPI and Health & Wellness collaborate to create resources to be distributed to Munk students.

Recommendations

2. Allow an MHPI Director to speak at Orientation with Chad Jankowski.

MHPI is not only a student leadership initiative dedicated to advancing policy research, MHPI is also committed to supporting the mental health needs of students and is uniquely situated to do so.

The IA team recommends that an MHPI Director collaborates with the Orientation mental health speaker Chad Jankowski to facilitate an honest peer-to-peer discussion about mental health at Munk. We believe that there is value in hearing from a student regarding how mental health can be affected by specific patterns in the program, such as coursework or internship searches. This would allow students to be better prepared for the demands of the program before the start of the term. In this, Munk and MHPI would present a united front for incoming students. This partnership would demonstrate an understanding of mental health needs from administration and faculty, as well as from a students' point of view.

Impact Assesment Team

In 2022-2023, the IA Team will collect data on the impact of MHPI on students in both the MGA and MPP programs across both years. More specifically, the IA team will gather data on the success of mental health events and panels held by MHPI. The IA team will endeavor to obtain feedback and evaluate the impact of MHPI initiatives. In addition, the IA Team will conduct continued surveys and focus groups to evaluate the mental health of students as well as their level of comfort with faculty and administration. In doing so, the IA Team will compare next year's findings against the current findings to identify areas of improvement or stagnation, specifically looking toward the proposed recommendations.

To create a more comprehensive outlook of mental health within Munk, the IA Team will conduct interviews with professors and pursue conversations with the Munk Community Mental Health Conversation Committee. In addition, the IA Team will continue to promote engagement with students, particularly MGA students who were absent from this data collection. The IA will look towards investigating the impact the UMLAP has on Munk students. Specifically, the IA Team will conduct UX interviews to determine how accessible online mental health resources are to students.

Mental Health Policy Initiative

Next year, MHPI is committed to creating more opportunities to reduce stress for students, through mental health chat nights, frequent outings and creative events. These initiatives will encourage further discussion about mental health between students.

In addition, the IA Team has identified a lack of intersectionality in mental health discussions at Munk. Therefore, the IA Team recommends collaborating with the Munk School Black Student Association (MSBSA), Equity, Diversity and Public Policy Initiative (EDPP), Indigenous Policy Initiative (IPI) Spectrum and Master of Public Policy Student Association (MPPSA). MHPI would evaluate current mental health offerings for students and support existing initiatives or collaborate to create new ones. Finally, MHPI should create an online hub for mental health resources at Munk, compiling both on and off-campus resources.

Conclusion

MHPI's Impact Assessment provides insight into the mental health of students at the Munk School. Despite the IA's limitations, noted previously, this report still provides important findings for MHPI and relevant stakeholders at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and at the University of Toronto. Mental health concerns that arose across surveys and focus groups may be revealing of broader trends. This report is a preliminary step in MHPI's goal to reduce stigma by increasing conversations, advocate for students and influence Munk's mental health policies. More research is necessary but these findings remain relevant.

On behalf of all of MHPI and the IA team, thank you to all participants for their open and honest discussions. For all individuals within the Munk community MHPI's doors are always open.

Appendix

Mental Health
Policy Initiative

Appendix 1: Survey 1

Have you had an opportunity to speak about your mental health with people outside Munk?
33 responses

- Yes
- No
- I would rather not share

24.2%
72.7%
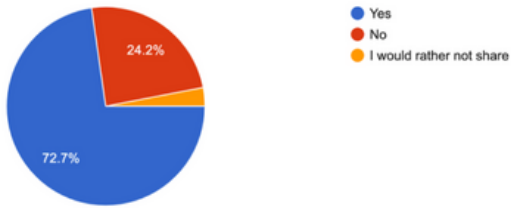
Would you be interested in being part of a focus group that would discuss things such as work life balance, and or comfort levels talking about mental health with professors, TAs, peers etc.
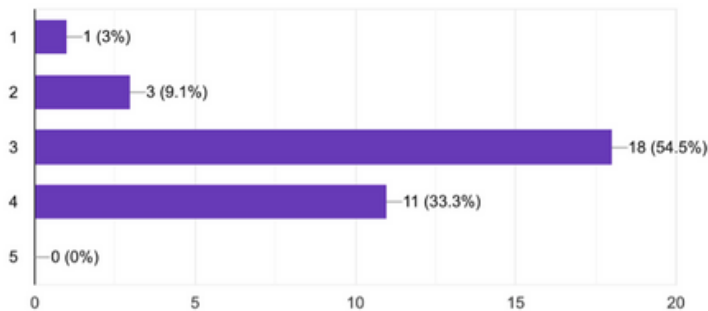33 responses

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

18.2%
30.3%
51.5%
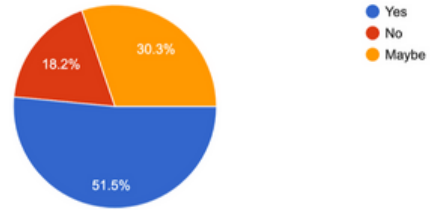
Do you feel supported by administration regarding your mental health?
33 responses

- Yes
- Yes but not a lot
- No
- No not really

33.3%
21.2%
42.4%
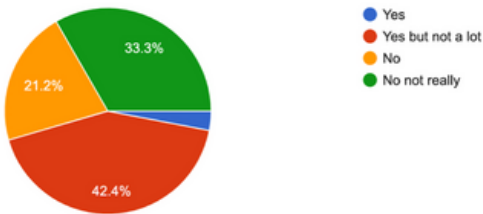
Are you worried about your mental health with the mixture of online and in-person school?
33 responses

- Yes
- No
- I'd rather not say

21.2%
78.8%
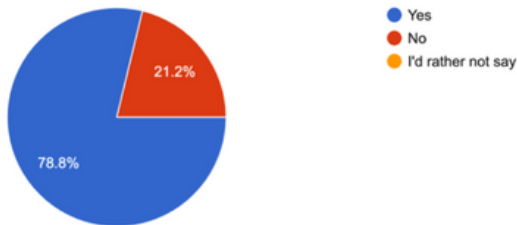
How is your mental health today 1-5 (1 being horrible 5 being incredible)
33 responses

Rating	Count
1	1 (3%)
2	3 (9.1%)
3	18 (54.5%)
4	11 (33.3%)
5	0 (0%)

Appendix 2: Survey 2

If you are struggling with your mental health would you feel comfortable reaching out to a Professor or TA?
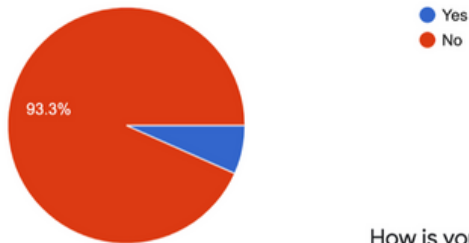15 responses

- Yes
- No

73.3%
26.7%
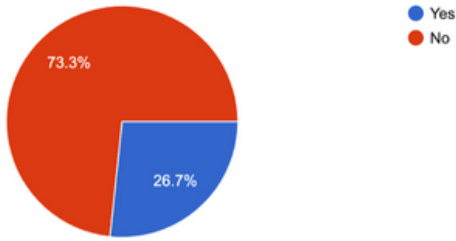
Have you spoken to a professor at the Munk school about your mental health?
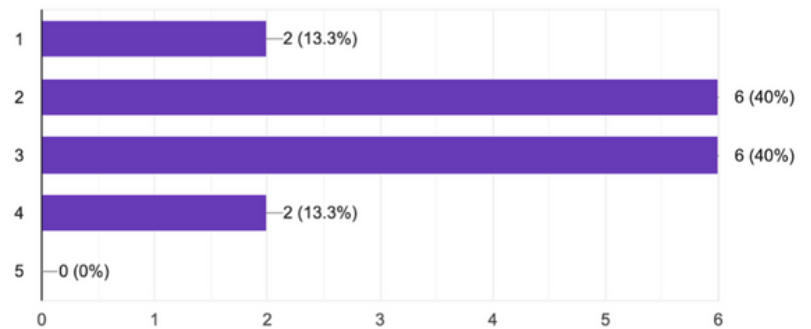15 responses

- Yes
- No

93.3%
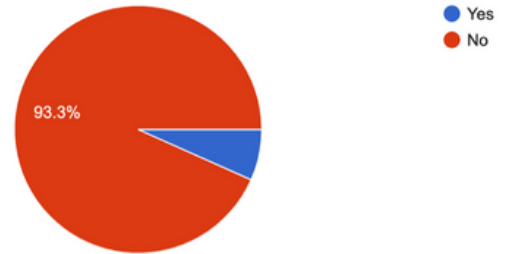
Have you spoken to an administrator at the Munk school about your mental
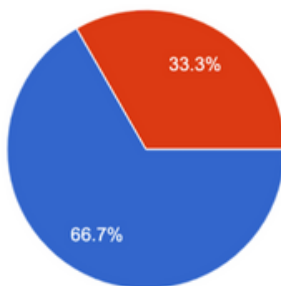15 responses

- Yes
- No

93.3%

How is your mental health today 1-5 (1 being horrible 5 being incredible)
15 responses

1 — 2 (13.3%)
2 — 6 (40%)
3 — 6 (40%)
4 — 2 (13.3%)
5 — 0 (0%)

Do you know where to find Mental Health resou
15 responses

33.3%
66.7%

On Average how much time do you spend on homework a day? (hours)
15 responses

- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

20%
20%
26.7%
20%

1/2

32
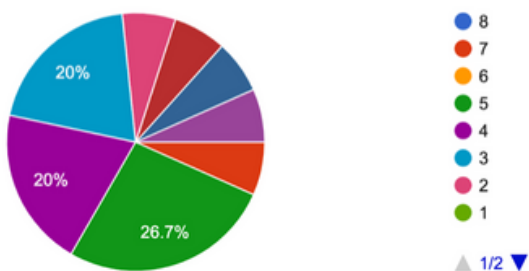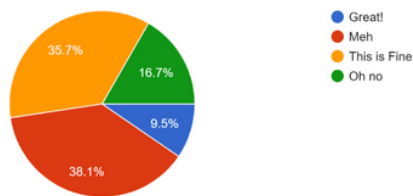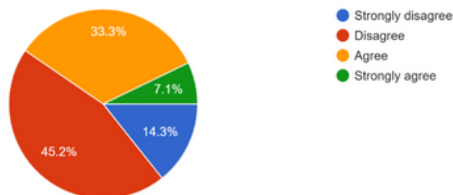
Appendix 3: Survey 3

Please select the gif that best represents your current state of mental health:
42 responses

- Great! — 9.5%
- Meh — 38.1%
- This is Fine — 35.7%
- Oh no — 16.7%

Agree or Disagree: Throughout this academic year, my mental health has been in a good place
42 responses

- Strongly disagree — 14.3%
- Disagree — 45.2%
- Agree — 33.3%
- Strongly agree — 7.1%

Agree or Disagree: I feel as though mental health services are easily accessible through the University
42 responses

- Strongly disagree — 21.4%
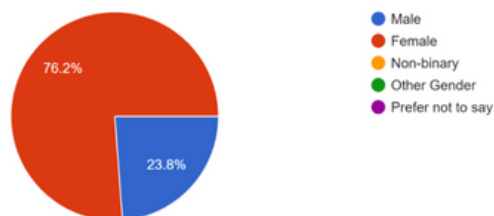- Disagree — 42.9%
- Agree — 31%
- Strongly agree
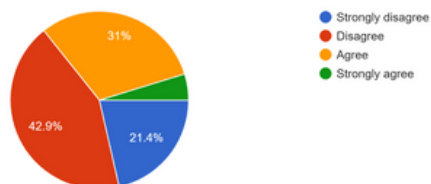
I have attended at least one MHPI community building event this academic year (2021-2022).
42 responses

- Yes — 35.7%
- No — 64.3%
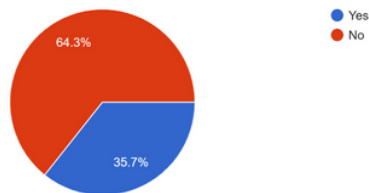
Do you identify as a racialized person?
42 responses

- Yes — 45.2%
- No — 52.4%
- Prefer not to say
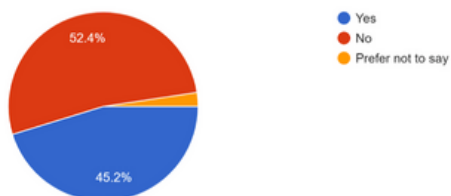
Which gender do you most identify with?
42 responses

- Male — 23.8%
- Female — 76.2%
- Non-binary
- Other Gender
- Prefer not to say

Agree or Disagree: I feel a sense of belonging at Munk
42 responses

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree — 21.4%
- Agree — 66.7%
- Strongly Agree — 9.5%
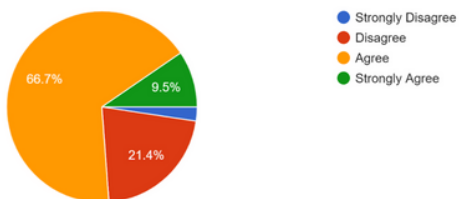
Agree or Disagree: Munk effectively communicates the available mental health services offered by the University
42 responses

- Strongly disagree — 26.2%
- Disagree — 42.9%
- Agree — 26.2%
- Strongly agree
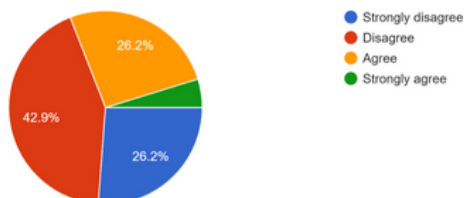
In which areas do you feel as though Munk effectively supports your mental health:
36 responses

- Social Events — 13 (36.1%)
- Academic Flexibility — 8 (22.2%)
- Academic Support — 9 (25%)
- Financial Support — 4 (11.1%)
- Access to Formal Mental Health Services — 6 (16.7%)
- Non-Academic Support (Career/Administrative) — 23 (63.9%)
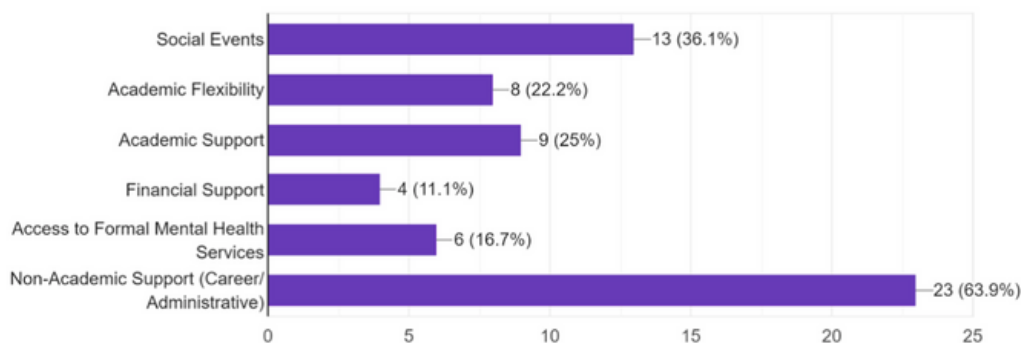
Appendix 4:
Focus Group Questions

1. How much time a week on AVERAGE do you spend on self-care (going on a walk, talking to a friend on the phone, watching a movie, anything that makes you feel good?)
2. How has the Munk contributed to your mental health positively or negatively and How have you managed the stress of the program? (Classes, culture, SLIs)
3. Have you had an opportunity to speak about your mental health with people outside Munk? Do you feel supported by the administration regarding your mental health? If yes can you elaborate? If not, what could they do better to support you? Have you spoken to a professor at the Munk school about your mental health? If yes can you elaborate? If not, why not (would you feel comfortable)?
4. Over the semester has your mental health fluctuated? If so, do you feel supported during the times when you're struggling with your mental health? Do you feel like you struggle more with your mental health during the school year or during breaks?
5. What is something MHPI could do to support you this term?

Appendix 5: MHPI Consent Form 2022 Focus Groups

Mental Health Policy Initiative MHPI 2022 Focus Group Chat

What is the reason for this focus group chat?

This focus group is running to gather in-depth information about Mental Health resources, culture and communication within the Munk School for Global Affairs and Public Policy. The responses will be used to support the Impact Assessment report and presentation for students and faculty.

What will happen to any of the information I share?

All conversations will be kept completely confidential. The Impact Assessment team will be deleting all recordings of after the completion of the final report and presentation. Only the MHPI Impact Assessment analysts will have access to this information. You will be kept completely anonymous within the report and presentation.

We will ask you and others in the chat to avoid sharing the questions or information individuals within your group have shared to ensure a safe space for all focus groups.

What will happen to the findings of these chats?

The findings of this conversations will be used in producing the Impact Assessment report and presentation for the Munk School directors and board members. The final report will be published and accessible for all students and faculty.

Are there any risks?

There are no known risks associated with participation in this focus group interview. If a question, or the discussion, makes you uncomfortable, you can choose not to answer.

Contact details

If you have any questions regarding this chat or would like additional information please contact the Impact Assessment team by email, any of the team members below, or respective MHPI directors.

Impact Assessment Team and MHPI Directors:

Emma Hull
emma.hull@mail.utoronto.ca

Eliana Sinicropi
eliana.sinicropi@utoronto.ca

Appendix 5:
MHPI Consent Form 2022 Focus Groups

Mary Mikhail
m.mikhail@mail.utoronto.ca

Directors: Madison Ropac and Carrington Buchcan
madison.ropac@mail.utoronto.ca
carrington.buchan@mail.utoronto.ca

Thank you for taking the time to read and review this document. Please complete the consent form on the next page and email to emma.hull@mail.utoronto.ca before the focus group chat starts.

Consent Form

Title of the study: MHPI 2022 Focus Group Chat

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the focus group chat conducted by the Mental Health Policy Initiative (MHPI) Impact Assessment Team, under the supervision of **Madison Ropac and Carrington Buchan**. I have had the opportunity to ask questions related to the conservations and have received complete answers to my questions and any additional details.

☐ I am aware the focus group will be audio recorded to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

☐ I give permission for the use of anonymous quotations in any presentation that comes from this research.

☐ I agree to participate in the focus group.

☐ I agree to supporting the efforts of the Impact Assessment team in making my chat a safe space.

Participant's name: _____

Participant's signature: _____ Date:_____

Appendix 6: Slack Polls
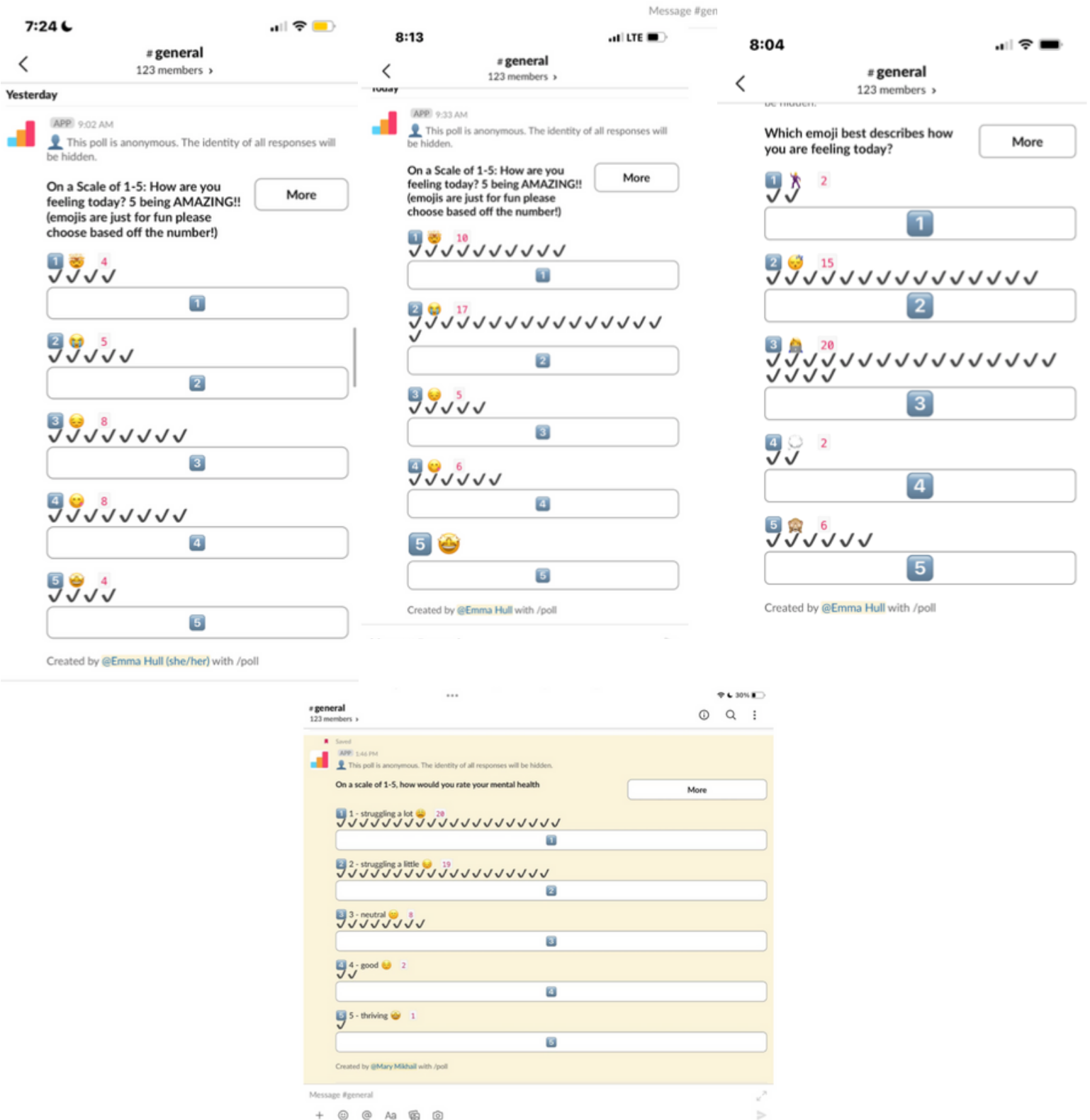
This poll was conducted when we did not know how to quantify these results but it was also conducted on November 27th, 2021 which was right before exam period in a particular school heavy week. This is therefore quite biased, that is why it is not spoken about in the overall paper but paints an important picture of the mental health implications of student stress at the Munk School.

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Thank you for Reading!

Mental Health
Policy Initiative