



# 2015-2016 Student Affairs Assessment Plan

Department: [Watkins Health Services]

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## **Animal Therapy & Stress Reduction**

### **Divisional Mission**

To engage the KU community in services and programs that complement academic goals and enhance quality of life.

### **Departmental Mission**

Watkins Health Services (WHS) supports the student's learning experience through the delivery of high quality affordable healthcare services and innovative programs that promote the health and wellness of the students, University, and community.

### **Departmental Student Learning Outcomes**

Students who utilize or interact with services and programs provided by Watkins Health Services will be able to...

1. Recognize the relationship between health and one's capacity to meet academic and personal goals.
2. Recognize prevention measures to avoid health issues/ injury in the future.
3. Acquire and use information that will enable them to manage their own personal health.

### **Description of Service/Program**

Watkins Health Services Animal Therapy for Stress Management events are targeting students to provide stress management education in the form of animal assisted therapy, along with tips and tools to for stress management. Though the goal of these programs is aimed at stress reduction, research shows animal therapy can also help with varies categories relating to mental health and wellness including: Depression, anxiety, trauma, etc.

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## Service/Program Student Learning Outcome(s)

Students participating in Animal Therapy for stress management programs will be able to...

- Recognize the connection between stress management and academics.
- Identify Stress management strategies to better manage personal health.
- Use stress information, services, and/or resources to better manage personal health

## Divisional Student Learning Outcomes: *Check all that apply*

- Knowledge Acquisition
- Cognitive Complexity
- Intrapersonal Development
- Interpersonal Competence
- Humanitarianism & Civic Engagement
- Practical Competence

## Project Specifics

**Project Title:** Animal Therapy & Stress Reduction

### **Purpose of the project:**

With stress being the number one academic impediment for KU students; this project will help WHS better understand if animal therapy, and stress management tips and tools are being used to contribute to academic success. It will also help us identify gaps in information and tool that students aren't receiving/using.

### **Assessment method(s):**

At each animal therapy for stress management event students will swipe their KU ID card, so we can capture contact and demographic information. Upon swiping cards students will be handed an information piece on stress management strategies. Stress kits containing tips and tool will also be available for students if desired, but not every

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student will receive one. An electronic copy of the survey will then be distributed via email to all students who attended the event two weeks after the original event date.

**Staff contact(s):**

Kelsey Fortin, [Kelseyf123@ku.edu](mailto:Kelseyf123@ku.edu), 785-864-9573

**Timeline/frequency:**

These events are biweekly throughout the semester, and during the week of final exams each fall and spring semester. Survey would will be distributed two weeks following the original event participants attended.

**Population/Sample:**

Undergraduate and graduate level KU students that attend animal therapy events

**Special challenges to this assessment:**

Specific challenges for this program include ensuring that there is a significant number of students participating in the event to complete the survey. An influx of campus wide surveys throughout the year may result in lower response rates. Continued funding and policy changes could delay events. The consistency in volunteers from Loving Paws Therapy organization could fluctuate. Being sure all students in attendance get an education piece on stress management.

**Use to inform current practice:**

Results from animal therapy stress management programing could provide WHS with helpful information on whether or not students are gaining stress management knowledge and skills. With stress being the number one academic impediment for students, WHS works to provide Stress management programs and resources that contribute to student success. The goal of these programs is to not only to help students in the short term through the animal interaction, but to help them in the long term by providing stress management education. With survey feedback we can see if students are leaning maintenance habits, and practicing them. This will help us identify what areas are lacking in education, and what management strategies are being most



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practiced, to influence future programming. Further, information provided can be used to potentially expand the animal therapy stress management services across campus.

**Plans for reporting results:**

Plans for reporting results include annual reports to Student Affairs; grant writing and additional funding opportunities to expand programming on campus, and further promotion of events on campus

**CampusLabs Used:**  Yes  No