

Proposed Mental Health Bill of Rights
For Graduate Students of Vanderbilt University

1. Vanderbilt University sees the mental health of its students as a priority and guarantees student access to quality, affordable, professional, and comprehensive mental health care.
2. Vanderbilt University is committed to combating stigma surrounding mental health, to providing an environment of mental health care that is inviting and inclusive for all students, and to proactively encouraging and guiding students to be good stewards of their mental health.
3. In caring for the mental health of its students, Vanderbilt University commits to consider and accommodate the unique needs of its students, including but not limited to: students of color, international students, LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, military veterans, and students who are first-generation college students.
4. Vanderbilt University commits to protecting the privacy of its graduate students with regards to their mental health care and to providing maximum information and transparency for students regarding their medical privacy rights.
5. Vanderbilt University shall provide mental health services in accordance with the following guidelines:
 - a. Every graduate student at Vanderbilt shall be guaranteed individual therapy with a Vanderbilt counseling center provider at no more than nominal cost until a mental health clinical review panel determines that a standard of care is reached, or that such standard of care would be better facilitated by a community provider. The University shall not terminate services without first providing due notice and facilitating necessary additional treatment by a community provider in accordance with 5(c).
 - b. For non-urgent mental health concerns, students shall have a right to in-person assessment by a qualified mental health provider within a reasonable time after contacting the Vanderbilt counseling center. For urgent concerns during normal operating hours and during nights and weekends, students shall have access to an on-call provider for telephonic assessment; the on-call provider may refer the student to emergency services if the student's condition necessitates immediate attention, or may initiate scheduling of an in-person assessment within a reasonable time. A "reasonable time" shall be determined on an individual basis by qualified Vanderbilt counseling center staff.
 - c. Students shall have the right to commence and continue care with a Vanderbilt University provider until care has been transferred to a community provider. For referrals to outside providers, the Vanderbilt University counseling center shall maintain ready access to a list of community providers who accept the graduate student insurance option and shall engage in a collaborative referral process with the student to secure appropriate services in the community.
 - d. Students shall have the right to appeal discontinuation of mental health services by a Vanderbilt University provider for anonymous review by the Committee

outlined in 8. Student inability to pay out-of-pocket expenses associated with referral to a community provider shall be among the committee's considerations.

6. Vanderbilt University shall guarantee a graduate student health insurance option that provides comprehensive coverage for mental health care, including, but not limited to, therapy, medication, emergency services, surgery, in-patient mental health treatment, and substance abuse treatment. Vanderbilt University shall consider the fiscal limitations of its graduate students in selecting student insurance options.
7. Each graduate student at Vanderbilt University shall be entitled to:
 - a. Remain apprised of the structure, policies, and practices of mental health care services for graduate students by Vanderbilt University, through elected representatives in the Graduate Student Council;
 - b. Provide input to Vanderbilt University regarding the structure, policies, and practices of mental health services for graduate students, through elected representatives in the Graduate Student Council;
 - c. Consider and comment on any proposed changes to the structure, policies, and practices of mental health services for graduate students, through a mechanism determined by the Graduate Student Council, for a period of at least thirty (30) days, at which time such comments shall be entered into the record and duly considered before proposed changes may be adopted;
 - d. Receive detailed, transparent notice of changes following their adoption and prior to their implementation; and
 - e. Access metrics and data regarding mental health care provided by Vanderbilt to its students, or underlying all decisions to alter, discontinue, or add mental health services.
8. Vanderbilt University shall appoint a standing committee, which shall hear all student grievances and appeals arising pursuant to this Bill of Rights, and which shall:
 - a. Seat, as no fewer than two-fifths of its members, representatives of the student body, who shall be elected annually, or as vacancies arise;
 - b. Meet a number of times annually to hear cases, and to advise the administration regarding matters of policy and practice surrounding mental health at Vanderbilt University; and
 - c. Be authorized to arbitrate student petitions and appeals regarding the rights outlined herein, particularly for discontinuation of services provided by Vanderbilt University, and to dictate specific actions for the relief of the student.