

Recovery on Campus (ROC!) Status Report January 8, 2020



Per the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statue 3.197, the cost to prepare this report was \$240.

Overview Residential collegiate recovery programs offer an intensive and transformative opportunity for students in recovery not only to participate in college but excel in their academics and recovery process. A residential collegiate recovery program is a supportive environment within the campus culture that reinforces the decision to disengage from addictive behavior. Such a community is designed to provide an educational opportunity alongside recovery support to ensure that students do not have to sacrifice one for the other. ROC! (Recovery On Campus) was established to create such a community at the University of Minnesota Rochester, with the first cohort starting in 2016-2017.

Goals Our foremost goal in creating ROC! was to establish a nationally-recognized, best practice program for students in recovery seeking a degree in the health sciences. Defined goals included:

- Design, launch and evolve ROC! Living Learning Community (LLC) over the course of three years.
- Collaborate with other LLC's within UMR to cultivate a shared sense of connection and belonging and offer layered levels of support.
- Establish a Bridge Program as a way for students to gather as LLC's members, connect with peers, faculty and staff and begin acclimating to campus prior to the start of the academic semester.
- Create a comprehensive programmatic calendar of events, meetings, workshops, activities and leadership opportunities for ROC! Students.
- Develop a ROC! Advisory Board and mentorship opportunities for ROC! students.
- Evaluate ROC! and make changes accordingly

Milestones

- Shaping of strategic plan for ROC! initiative with experienced consultants
- Development of Advisory Board of community members with relevant professional expertise in 2016 (continues)
- Development and launch of ROC! with two students in 2016-2017
- Selection and training of a student leader as "Community Advisor" (2017 and continuing)

- Creation and implementation of a Bridge program focused on student development and academics in math and writing with a central wellbeing theme in 2017, continuing in fall 18, 19 and beyond
- Enhanced recruitment through collaboration with admissions department
- Creation and implementation of comprehensive programmatic calendar of events, meetings, workshops, activities and leadership opportunities, with student leaders assisting staff
- Development of Healthy Living Learning Community (HLLC) to encompass ROC! in 2018- 2019
- Combining ROC! and HLLC to reach more students with the central tenet that recovery is healthy living 2018-2019
- Currently embedded in campus functioning and budget, given start-up funding provided by the legislature.

Brief History Approval for ROC! was granted in 2016 with a three year plan for the development, launch, maintenance and evolution of ROC! The design and implementation phase focused on formal consulting with an established college student recovery program, to establish appropriate and compliant processes; recruiting and selecting students; assembling an Advisory Board; and creating a well -designed, intentional and innovative community concept, complete with comprehensive services and programs to fully support ROC! students on multiple levels.

The maintenance and evolution phase focused on retaining members, developing programs, evaluation, the development of Healthy Living Learning Community (HLCC) (that eventually merged with ROC!), and enhancing services and opportunities.

Of significance was the development of HLLC. HLLC was established to encompass and support ROC! when it became evident that identifying as being in recovery was creating a barrier for students. HLLC was first created as an alternative for those students seeking to maintain a healthy lifestyle who did not meet the criteria for ROC! yet had experienced negative impacts from drug and alcohol use.. Ultimately, the tenet that recovery is healthy living resonated strongly and positively with students and combining ROC! and HLLC allowed for much greater participation.

Merging ROC! and HLLC provided an opportunity for a breadth of students to maintain a healthy lifestyle in an environment that best supported well-being, academic success, personal development and a sense of community. In ROC!/HLLC students cultivated meaningful connections while developing self-awareness, literacy and skills in areas of health, wellness, mindfulness, resilience and nutrition.

Key Points for Merging ROC! and HLLC

Embedding ROC! within HLLC proved to be vital for the continuation of ROC!.

Embedding and broadening the definitions of recovery and addiction significantly allowed for greater student participation. In so doing, ROC! expanded to encompass any student who had experienced a negative impact due to drugs or alcohol. There are currently 12 students in ROC!/HLLC that identify as having been negatively impacted by drugs and alcohol or in recovery. Students that identify as in recovery receive extra support and resources at UMR and in the community including counseling services, support groups in the community, connection to recovery mentors and access to organizations such as Recovery is Happening.

Stigma impacts students’ choices.

Initially, before we embedded ROC! within HLCC, four students in recovery described their hesitancy to join ROC!, stating they felt the label of “recovery” was stigmatizing and might negatively impact their opportunities in healthcare. Those students did subsequently join the reframed HLCC and have been successful in continuing their college education. Other students who had been negatively affected by their alcohol and drug use stated that they did not necessarily define themselves as “in recovery” and therefore did not consider ROC! as a relevant living learning choice, instead resonating moreso with the tenets of HLLC. Ultimately, the behavioral expectations and commitment for the LLC are consistent with an “recovery” program, but the framing is “healthy” living.

Current Status Report

- Currently 24 students are in ROC!/HLLC: 15 first year students and 9 returning returning students
- In total, 10 students have identified as having experienced negative impacts from drug or alcohol use, while two students identify as being “in recovery” based on the original criteria.
- 100% LLC continuation: All students that have remained at UMR have stayed in ROC!/HLLC

Note: no graduation data are available yet as we began the program with first year students. We anticipate graduation rates above the campus average for non-HLCC and statistically significantly above the generally low college attainment rate for students in recovery.

Year	Total # of students in LLC	# of New Incoming Students	#Returning Students	Reason for not returning	Identifies as “in Recovery”	Identifies as having previously experienced negative impacts due to drug and/or alcohol use
16-17	2	2	N/A	N/A	2	2
17-18	4	4	0	Two students transferred	0	4
18-19	12	10	2	Two students transferred	2	5
19-20	24	15	9	Three students transferred	2	10

Summation

In summary, the development, execution and evolution of ROC!/HLLC has been an intricate and inspiring journey into better understanding how to best reach and support both students in recovery (as per the original criteria) and those who have experienced negative impacts from alcohol and drugs and wish to cultivate a healthy lifestyle. The emphasis on recovery as healthy living has helped students shift to a positive and productive mindset and reduced stigma for these students who are pursuing health careers. Our original goal was to create a community that supports students in recovery by addressing barriers, providing support and fostering a healthy community free of substances and committed to cultivating health and well being. We have been successful in doing so and have evolved ROC! to reaching more students than originally envisioned. We expect the program to continue to flourish, given the initial state financing that allowed us to establish and launch.