



Executive Summary

Mental health challenges among college students have been rising in recent years. Exacerbated by the global pandemic, students face increasing mental health issues leading to higher rates of anxiety, stress, depression, and suicide, which has magnified the need for colleges to adopt effective practices to address these concerns.

Concerned about the increase in mental health issues among college students, Alamance Community College (ACC) faculty, staff, and students have chosen mental health as the topic for ACC's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). **ACC aims to improve curriculum student success through enhanced and integrated mental health awareness, support, and services.** According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (2023), mental health is defined to “include our emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.”

Alamance Community College's QEP entitled *Get on the RAFT* will provide enhanced mental health support for students that helps them to *Rise and Flourish Together* through the following objectives and strategies.

Objective 1: Improve Mental Health Awareness

- 1.1 Provide Mental Health Awareness and “First Aid” Training for Faculty, Staff, and Students
- 1.2 Launch Mental Health Awareness Campaigns
- 1.3 Promote Mental Health Strategies through Student Programs and Activities

Objective 2: Enhance Mental Health Resources and Services

- 2.1 Increase Counseling Staff at ACC
- 2.2 Review College Policies and Procedures to Support Mental Health
- 2.2 Improve Telehealth Services for Students
- 2.3 Expand partnerships with Community Mental Health Providers
- 2.4 Support Faculty and Staff Mental Health

Objective 3: Foster a Supportive and Inclusive Campus Environment

- 3.1 Provide Faculty and Staff Training in Inclusive Practices
- 3.2 Foster a Sense of Community through Student Programs and Activities

This topic is congruent with ACC's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan Priority #4: Growth, which seeks to ensure that students, faculty, and staff have access to the resources they need to grow as healthy individuals, and Objective #2: Enhance mental health services and support for students.