



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who participate in the medical leave process/experience will [or will be able to] . . .

1. Reflect on what led to their request for a medical leave and explain how they will manage a similar set of circumstances differently should they arise again after they return
2. Describe a recent situation when he/she used help-seeking and positive coping skills learned during the voluntary medical leave to manage a stressful situation
3. Describe what they learned about themselves and others during the medical leave
4. Present a plan with specific behavioral and treatment goals designed to create positive change
5. Identify at least one resource on- or off-campus that they can access when they need assistance/support

Related Division learning domains: Personal Development, Cognitive and Practical Skills

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

- **Interviews** with students at the time of reinstatement, focusing on ability to function and learning with **rubric**
- Student self-reported gains on **“quasi” pre/posttest survey** sent at end of academic year to those who had been reinstated
- **Focus groups/individual interviews** with students reinstated

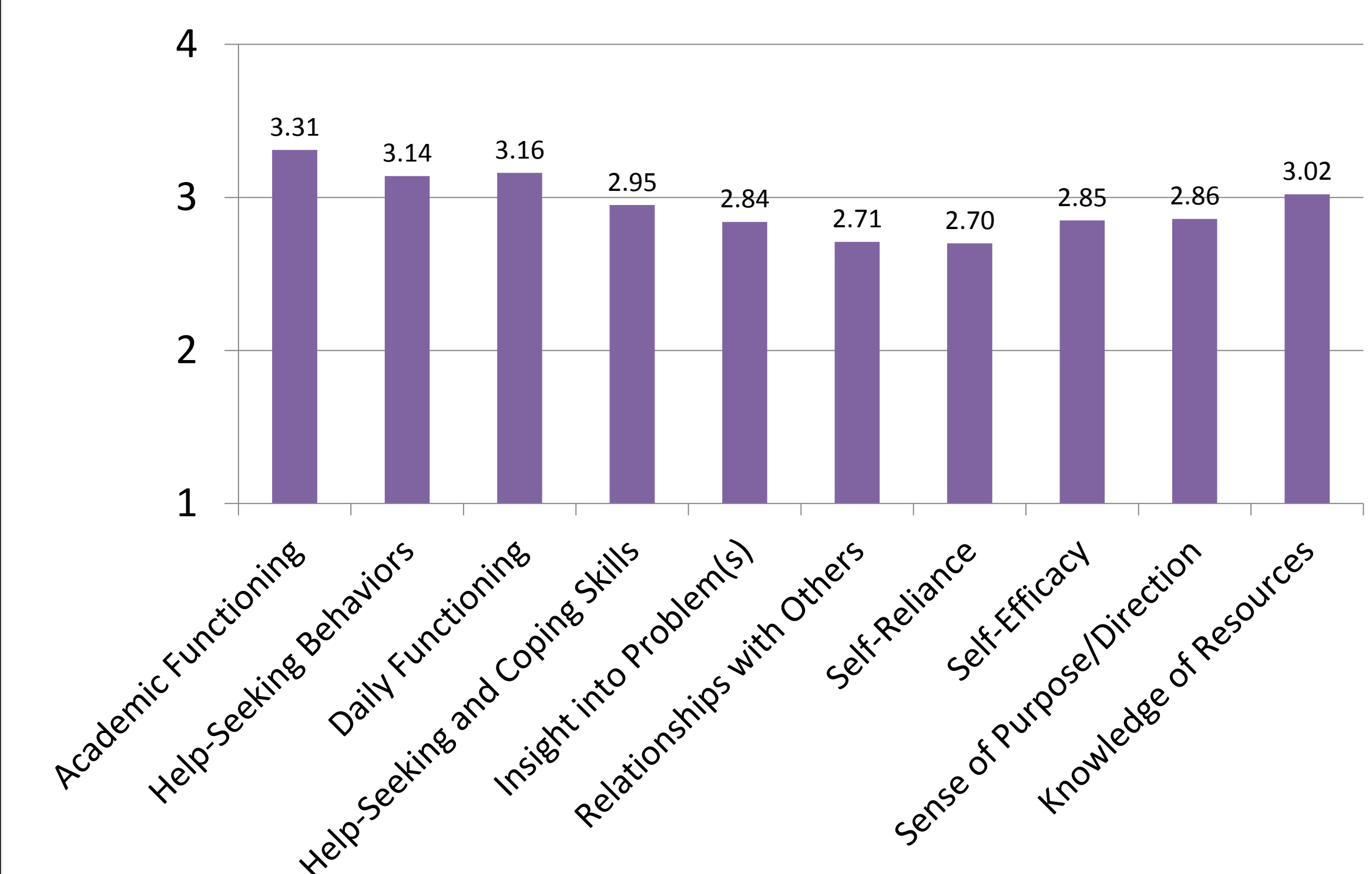
A Medical Leave of Absence: What Do Students Learn?

Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS)

EXAMPLE OF RUBRIC

	1 – Not Developed	2 - Developing	3 - Developed	4 – Fully Developed
Insight Into Problem(s)	Demonstrates little self-awareness; unable to articulate what it means to be physically and psychologically well; unable to describe how personal behavior is affecting him/herself or others; unable to describe the connection between well-being, health and academic success; voices an unwilling—even resistance—to seeking help; may even display behavior that is out of touch with reality	Demonstrates some self-awareness and introspection; can describe how various aspects of behavior are affecting him/herself and, perhaps, others, but reluctant to take responsibility for changing that behavior; may minimize issues; may blame others for situation; seems somewhat open to getting help	Demonstrates much self-awareness and introspection; can describe unhealthy patterns of behavior in which he/she may have engaged, but may be unable to describe a plan for how to break these patterns; willing to seek help	Able to describe what he/she learned about self and others while in therapy; can describe how well-being and health are central to their success (academic, co-curricular, social) at NU; clearly articulates how past behaviors were unhelpful; has a plan for breaking unhealthy patterns of behavior and/or balancing health and studies; able and willing to self-advocate and take control of his/her life

SASS Staff Evaluation of Functioning and Learning Upon Reinstatement Using Rubric



Focus Groups

What did you learn about yourself and others during your medical leave?

“Things suck. Everything is not going to be perfect, but you can figure out some things to make it work for you.”

“I learned through the medical leave process to not wait to take care of myself. . . . To take care of myself in small bits. I meditate before I go to bed and I sleep 8 hours a night. I make sure I take care of myself. I know the steps to take care of me.”

“I learned I’ve been ‘stuffing’ a lot of emotions—things about myself—down for a long time. I told everyone I was having the perfect college experience—making it look like that—but I felt depressed and isolated inside. I learned that a lot of people are in the same boat.”

“I’ve changed my thought process. What I’m doing here now is trying my best. I stopped comparing myself to my peers or my friends.”

“I learned about my disease [depression].”

“Communication was the biggest thing I took away from the leave of absence. I’ve learned that people can be really understanding. If you express your needs in the right way, they are more than willing to help.”

“I am better at making decisions for myself and knowing when a decision someone else suggests is terrible for me and recognizing that.”

“QUASI” PRE/POSTTEST SURVEY – SELF-REPORTED LEARNING (0 = not at all like me, to 4 = extremely like me)

		Before Medical Leave	After Medical Leave	
Functioning	Academic			
		It’s hard to stay motivated for my classes	3.03	1.04***
		I regularly attend my classes	1.73	3.23***
		I am unable to keep up with my school work	2.69	1.00***
		I complete most class assignments on time	1.92	3.35***
Daily Functioning		I am in good academic standing	2.38	3.31**
		I am able to care for myself, including my personal hygiene	2.08	3.36***
		Most nights I sleep seven to nine hours	1.28	2.84***
		I take the medications prescribed for me	2.08	3.04*
		I avoid unhealthy substances/activities	1.76	2.96**
		I seek out professional help when my symptoms become overwhelming	1.92	3.32***
Learning	Help-Seeking and Coping Skills			
		I am able to successfully cope with the stresses of college life	1.04	3.00***
		I’m flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances	1.56	3.20***
	Insight into problems			
		I can articulate what it means to be physically and psychologically healthy	1.36	3.40***
	Relationships with others			
		I have at least one close, trusting relationship with another person at Northwestern	2.56	3.04*
	I am open to feedback from others	2.52	3.20**	
Self-reliance				
	I am confident in my ability to function independently without constant reassurance from others	1.80	3.12***	
Sense of purpose/direction				
	I have a sense of direction in my life	1.32	2.92***	
	I am able to set realistic goals for myself	1.40	3.20***	
Knowledge of resources				
	I know the resources at Northwestern that I can access when I need assistance	1.80	3.12***	