As at other North American institutions, UBC students often feel so stressed and overwhelmed that their academic success is at risk (NCHA, 2009, 2013; NSSE, 2014). UBC, along with many higher education institutions, recognizes they have a role to play in supporting students’ health and wellbeing not only to enhance academic performance but also support their livelihood off-campus as active and capable citizens. Health and wellbeing encompasses, among other things, social connection, a sense of belonging, physical health, stress and anxiety, and nutrition. The Peer Wellness Coaching pilot was developed to fill a gap in current student support programming, offering students with individualized, non-clinical peer support to improve their self-management skills.

**Pilot Program Objectives**
- Fill gaps in current resources by providing individualized assistance for students needing assistance developing self-management capacities to enhance their ability to cope effectively with demands and prevent negative impact on learning and wellbeing.
- Strengthen resources available for students in need of skill development but who do not require professional mental health services. These services can then be more effectively leveraged to support students in need of mental health intervention.
- Facilitate connection to campus resources through peer wellness coaching for students who may need professional care but who may be initially reluctant to seek counselling services.
- Provide enriched training and peer coaching opportunities for senior undergraduate and graduate students.

Enhance the peer coaching programs at UBC through the ongoing development of a coaching community of practice for professional staff coordinators of peer wellness, career and academic coaching programs.

**Wellness Coaches**
- UBC Peer Programs coaching programs (wellness, career and academic success)
- UBC Peer Programs coordinators of peer wellness, career and academic coaching programs.

**Students Receiving Coaching**
- Year of study: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year students.
- disciplines: Faculty of Arts, Science, Applied Science, Engineering, Sauder, and LFS.
- Peer Wellness Coaches Focus Group: 3rd year students.

**Coaching Activity**
- Top topics discussed in coaching:
  - Time management
  - Stress management
  - Making/mentoring relationships
  - Transition to university
  - Academic Performance

**Coaching Activity**
- Top campus resource/services discussed in coaching:
  - Counselling Services
  - UBC Recreation
  - Academic Support Services

**Programs and outcomes with wellness goals**
- A student to enhance their ability to cope effectively with demands and prevent negative impact on learning and wellbeing.

**UBC PEER PROGRAMS COACH APPROACH**
- Before/Exploration
- Goal Setting
- Follow-Up

**KEY LEARNING & NEXT STEPS**

**Key Learning**
- Online Services: Online services can be the first point of contact for students who don’t feel comfortable with or are able to request professional counselling during business hours. The online environment allows for greater accessibility and consistency in coaching. The asynchronous nature allows for customized email responses to students so that the quality and consistency of service delivery is insured.
- Teachable Skills: Coaches or other student leaders can learn effective self-management skills and share those skills with other students, thereby increasing their own ability and that of the students they coach, to manage their learning and to balance the demands of their academic and personal lives.
- Peer to Peer Service Delivery: Students respond well to peer to peer service because as fellow students, peers share similar experiences and are thus perceived to be more relatable. A peer-to-peer model of service delivery reduces the power difference a student may experience with a professional staff, allowing for a more comfortable and safe dynamic. By connecting with a peer, connection is fostered between the student and broader UBC community, improving student’s general university experience and strengthening ties to on-campus resources.

Coaching Process: The UBC Coach Approach provides students with an opportunity to share their story, feel heard, and take an active role in their own learning. Having a peer coach follow up with them over a short period of time can be helpful in staying on track, readjusting goals to account for new possibilities, and changing circumstances is a critical component of a growth mindset approach to personal learning.

**Next Steps**
- Based on the success of the pilot program, two recommendations are being put forward to maintain the sustainability of wellness coaching moving forward:
  1. Wellness coaching can be integrated into the service delivery model of health and wellness services as an integral part of a stepped care model of mental health services.
  2. Skill development and knowledge of wellness topics can be incorporated into student leader training to build capacity of student leaders across the University and to enhance existing peer support programs.