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My simple initiative (with a hat tip to Connecticut Law) is to conduct electronic outreach to every entering student with the goal of having an initial meeting with a duration of 15 minutes to whatever it takes. The goal of our meetings has been to explain the availability of mental health resources. Scripted we would ask them how they felt about being compelled to have a meeting; describe the resources available to them; ask if they had any questions; circle back around and ask how they then felt about the “compulsory” meeting.

In actuality the conversations went in all sorts of directions. We were actually delayed in this initiative this past year; we had hoped to start and complete in the Fall but finished mid-spring for reasons not germane here. The silver lining was that we had knowledge of Fall grades and could point to academic resources where applicable; also, we were able to point some in the direction of summer externships, networking and the like. We are actually debating the start date next year as a result; we still want them aware of MH services but may go with the staggered approach.