

Mental health and the Ph.D student

Presentation at OsloMet, 23.09.2019

Who are we?

“Someone to talk to” – that is the topic I have been asked to say something about this evening.

First: Who are we – the “someone” – that you can talk too?

Second: Who are the students that comes to the chaplain and what can you talk about?

Third: What else does the student chaplaincy do?

Who are we – the “someone” – that you can talk too?

The university chaplain is a merge of our services at OsloMetropolitan University, BI Norwegian Business School, and the University of Oslo. The Church of Norway provides four pastors for the chaplaincy – one each at Oslo Met and the BI Business School and two pastors at the University of Oslo. We work together and provide things together, e.g. grief support groups. All higher educational institutions in Norway have a University Chaplain service.

Who are the students that comes to the chaplain and what can you talk about?

The Chaplain is a resource for all students. You are welcome regardless of background, gender, sexual orientation, or religious conviction. We have professional confidentiality and we have time. The service is free.

We meet all different kinds of students with all different kinds of problems. It could be about love and worries about breaking up. It could be about grief and the loss of a loves one. Sometimes we meet people from other religions that have heard that they can come us and speak openly about life. We meet students that are about to come out as homosexuals or bi-sexual, transsexual or queer. We meet those with a deep Christian faith or seekers that would like to talk about life and faith. We also meet those who struggle with problematic peers

and professors. And, of course, questions about studies, the pressure, the deadlines, are we good enough etc.

What else do a chaplaincy do?

The students represent great diversity, also when it comes to beliefs and philosophy of life. We believe this is an asset! In order to accommodate this diversity, you will find a chapel, Fredrikke Chapel, and a mosalla at Blindern that is open 24/7. At OsloMet and Bi you will also find Quiet Rooms for silence and prayer on campus. At Fredrikke Chapel we have a lunch mass Tuesdays at 12.15, every last Tuesdays in the month the lunch mass will be in English.

We also have grief support groups, one at OlsoMet and one at University of Oslo. In these groups you may share experiences related to loss, memories, thoughts and emotions. Grief is not an illness, but a natural and healthy reaction in a person who has lost someone close. As a student it might be difficult to find fellow students to share the grief with, and that is the reason for us having these groups.

Students, like others, may be struck by illness, accidents or death.

The University chaplain is part of the preparedness group called “when a student die”. When a student die, different needs will occur among those who were close to the student. Parents might want to visit the university and perhaps also meet someone who knew their lost one. Fellow students and friends might want to gather to share memories and loss.

Every Sunday at 8pm at Jakobskirken Down Town the student chaplaincy is involved in a mass called Jakobmessen. During that mass you will experience contemporary music, lights, readings and songs reflecting lived life in modern era.

Welcome to the Student Chaplaincy!