

University of New Mexico

## UNM Digital Repository

---

Posters and Presentations

Research and Scholarship

---

11-2-2022

### **Autonomous Space: Incorporating Concepts of Questioning into a Wellness Room**

Varina A. Kosovich

Kelleen Maluski

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/hslic-posters-presentations>

---

The background features a light teal color with a grid of small teal dots in the upper center. Teal leaf illustrations with black outlines are scattered around the edges. A large, light teal circular shape is behind the text.

# **Autonomous Space: Incorporating Concepts of Questioning into a Wellness Room**

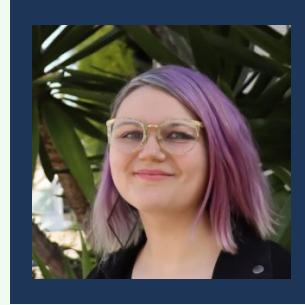
Varina Kosovich &  
Kelleen Maluski

Teal leaf illustrations and circular patterns with vertical lines are located at the bottom of the page.

# Who We Are



**Varina (she/her)**



**Kelleen (she/her)**



# We are on the land of the Pueblo, Navajo/Diné, and Apache Peoples

- There are 19 Pueblos of New Mexico and several Apache Nations.
- Each Pueblo and Tribal Nation have their own unique cultures.

## Resources:

- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center  
<https://indianpueblo.org/>
- A Guide to Land Acknowledgement  
<https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>
- LandGrabU <https://www.landgrabu.org/>
- Honor Native Land Tax  
<https://www.honornativelandtax.org/>

# Labor Acknowledgement

We must acknowledge that much of what we know of this country today, including its culture, economic growth, and development throughout history and across time, has been made possible by the labor of enslaved Africans and their ascendants and descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. We must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today and we as white women must also accept our culpability in perpetuating these cycles of oppression and harm.

## Resources:

- BLM: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
- The Bail Project: <https://bailproject.org/>
- We Here Patreon: <https://www.wehere.space/support-us>

Adapted from Terah 'TJ' Stewart's labor acknowledgement:  
<https://www.diverseeducation.com/demographics/african-american/article/15108677/on-labor-acknowledgements-and-honoring-the-sacrifice-of-black-americans>

# Topics

**01**

**Funding/Budget**

**02**

**Autonomous  
Space/Theory**

**03**

**Theory to  
Practice**

**04**

**Feedback**

# Seed Funding Grant

The UNM Health Sciences Library established an internal grant opportunity for all staff

The Wellness Room:

- Started as a conversation in the library's Justice, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Was awarded one of the 2022 grants

We then moved forward with planning and implementation!



# Project Budget

## \$2270



Initial request in grant

**\$1210**



Funds remaining

**\$300**



Additional funding

**\$1060**



# Wellness Concerns at our Institution



## Co-opting the term self-care

Placing wellness on the individual so that the institution doesn't have to be accountable.



## The cost of Wellness

We serve a population that is socio-economically diverse. We shouldn't expect students to front the bill for wellness.



**“As university and college students all over the nation commit to being tens of thousands of dollars in debt, it becomes a social justice issue that not only do they finish, but that they receive the best education possible.”**

Bruce (2020)



# “Feminist pedagogy insists on seeing and honoring the full humanity of learners”

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Fluidity
- Need for care
- Equity
- Justice

Accardi (2017)

Howard (2017)



[University of Nevada, Las Vegas,  
Student Wellness Center](#)

Utilize concepts that emphasize **options & autonomy** to give all our students space to accommodate their needs

- Accessibility through Universal Design
- Trauma-informed care
- Autonomous space

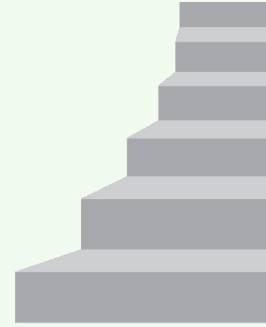


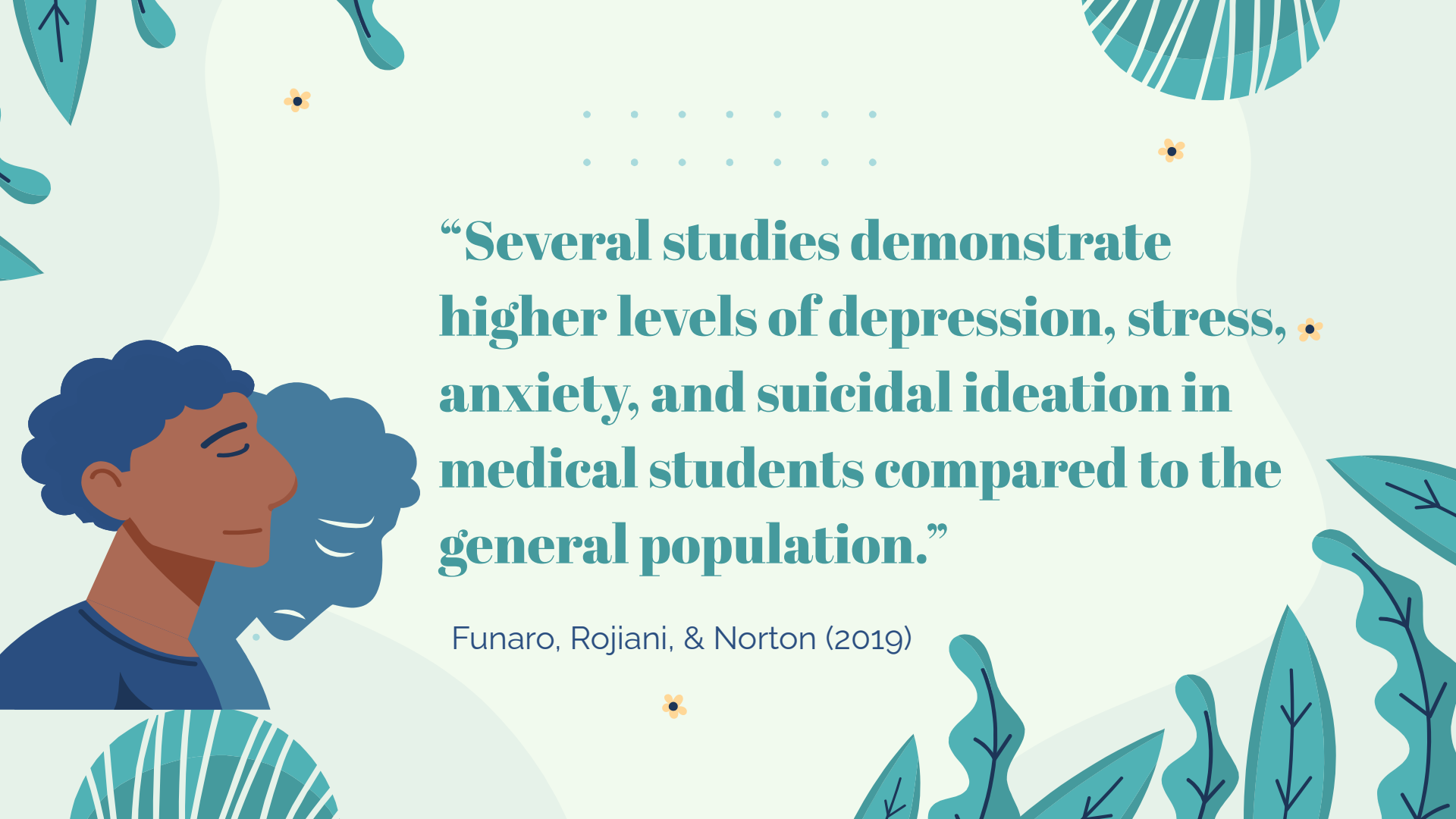
“Autonomies are not institutions  
but forms of relation.

We need autonomy precisely  
because we are different.”

—Escobar (2018), relating takeaways from  
the second *Tramas y mingas para el Buen  
Vivir*

# Universal Design








• • • • •  
• • • • •

**“Several studies demonstrate higher levels of depression, stress, anxiety, and suicidal ideation in medical students compared to the general population.”**

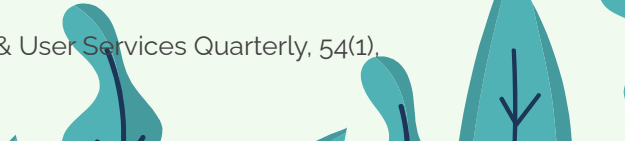

Funaro, Rojani, & Norton (2019)



“Sensory overload can occur quite frequently for people with ASDs. Contemporary library environments can bombard us with constant stimuli, such as flickering lights, background noise, and countless other sensory distractions. Most people have filtering capabilities and may not be sensitive to external stimuli; however, many with ASDs cannot ‘turn these off,’ preventing them from concentrating on tasks and resulting in anxiety and exhaustion.”



Polacek, K. M., Remy, C., & Seaman, P. (2014). Evolving from Disability to Diversity. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 54(1), 24–28. <https://doi.org/10.5860/rusq.54n1.24>





# Putting Theory to Work



Considering these factors in our student population:

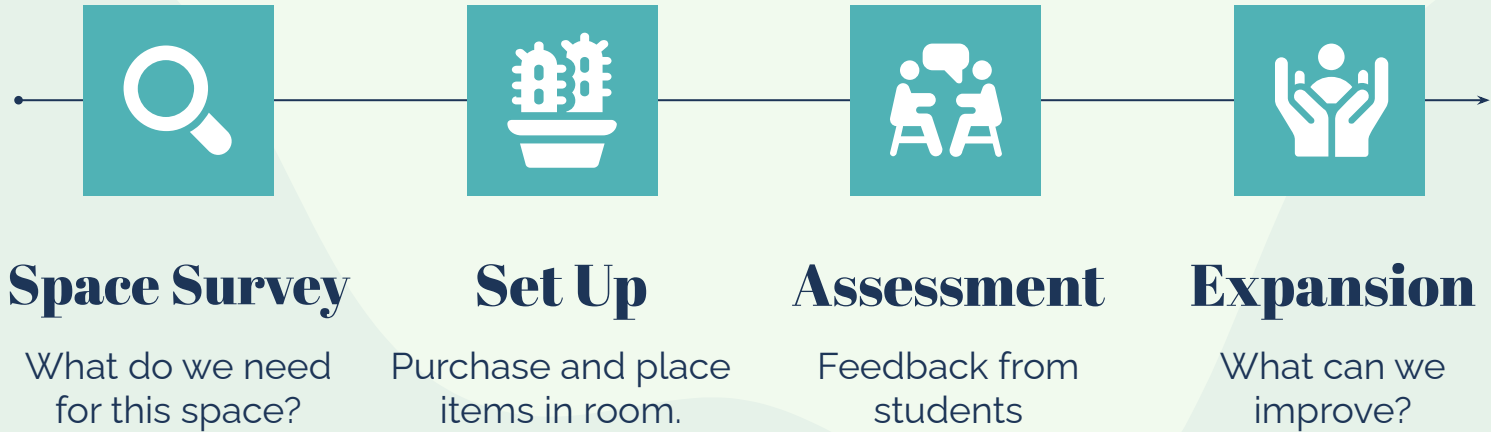
- High levels of stress
- Trauma in marginalized/underserved groups
- Sensory overload

What practical steps can we take?

- Adaptable/accessible to accommodate various needs
- Student led and student-centric
- Private and comfortable
- Community resources
- Tools for care

Bremer, P. (2019). Reflecting on student mental health: Creating a meditation room in a small college library. *College & Research Libraries News*, 80(6), 339. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.80.6.339>

# Pilot to Expansion



# Supplies and Furniture

- Adaptable seating
- Fidget tools
- Art supplies
- Meditation cushion
- Tools for stretching
- Prayer rug
- Lighting and sound options
- Art and fake plants
- Blankets and pillows
- Privacy considerations
- Acoustic panels
- Community journal



# Pilot

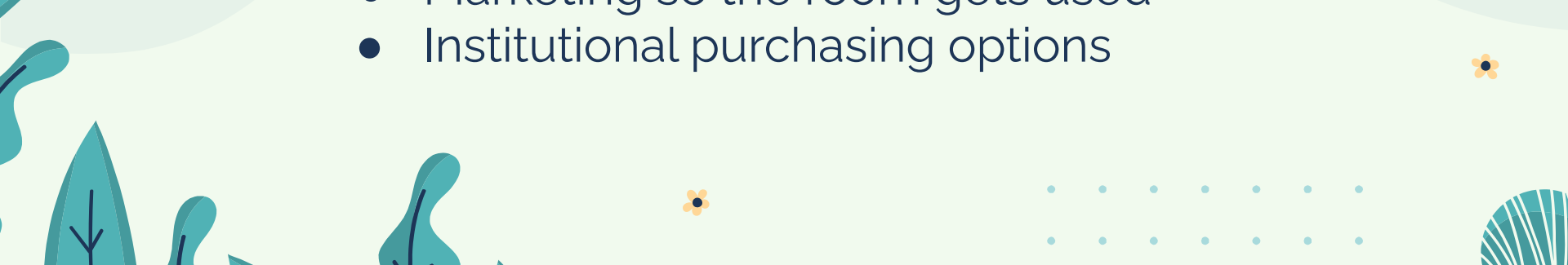


# Expanded Wellness Room





# Challenges

- Making sure the room is accessible
  - Managing different needs
  - The room is not a study area
  - Management of the space  
post-project timeline
  - Marketing so the room gets used
  - Institutional purchasing options
- 

Just wanted to reach out about this room- I've already seen multiple people posting on Snapchat etc about how grateful they are to have a space to pray in and to unwind. This was such a great idea, and I wanted to just let you know how grateful all of us are for the library staff and everything you guys do 😊

I had too much stress today. Laying down for 20 min. Helped me calm down and now heading to my exam! Thank you.

Thank you. I found out my grandfather is dying today and I was able to know this room was here for me to come and have some quiet alone time and meditate/pray/cry. Thank you.

# Focus Groups Have Confirmed Need



Being inside and online all of the time leads to fatigue, so need resources to unplug



Having options for movement indoors is necessary to full wellness of students



A need for quiet space to unwind was mentioned many times





[bit.ly/claps22bib](https://bit.ly/claps22bib)

# Bibliography

Everything we used for this session, not just quoted, is located in this bibliography

# Thanks!

Questions?

Varina:

[vkosovich@salud.unm.edu](mailto:vkosovich@salud.unm.edu)

Kelleen:

[camaluski@salud.unm.edu](mailto:camaluski@salud.unm.edu)

CREDITS: This presentation template was created by **Slidesgo**, including icons by **Flaticon**, and infographics & images by **Freepik**