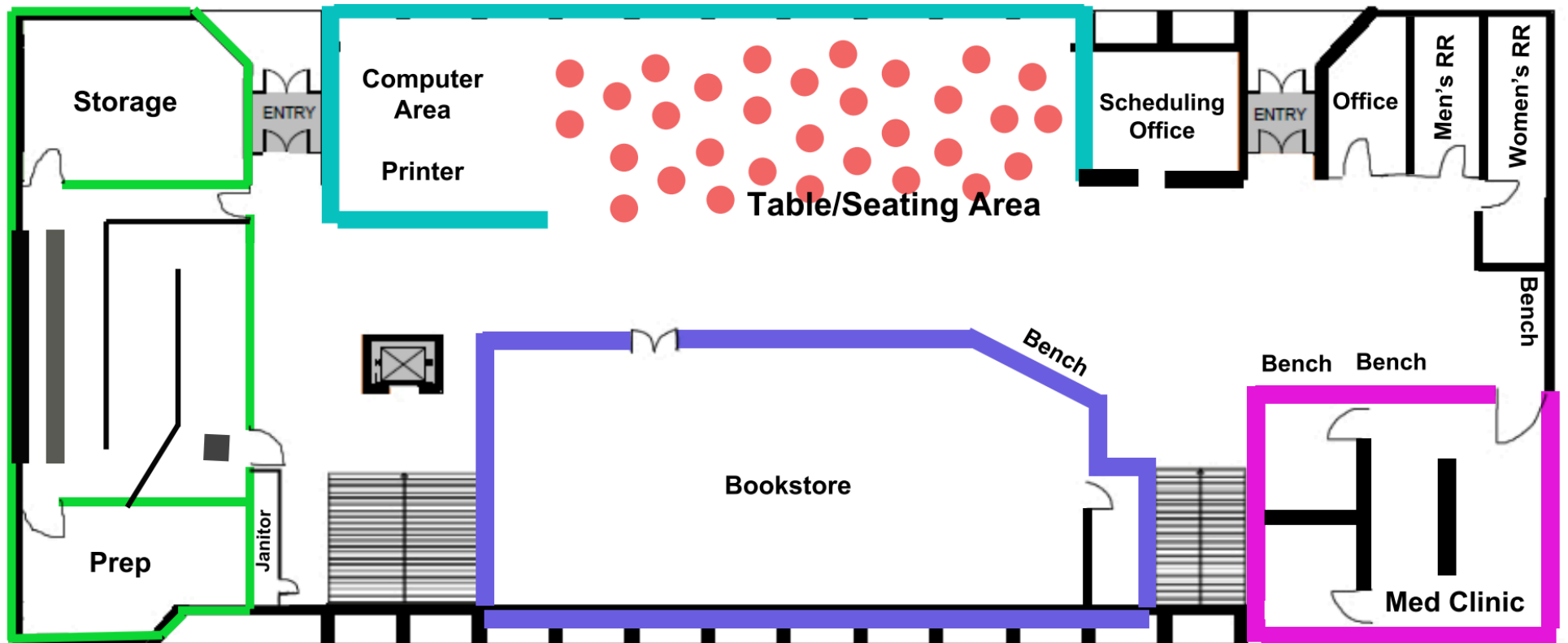


Health Clinic

Waiting around to get better: Augustana anticipates an on-campus clinic



Graphic courtesy of Krishna Marmé

A floor plan for the potential medical clinic proposed by a business class in 2018. The plan was then adopted by students in Dr. Lena Hann's PUBH-250 class and used in their presentation.

By *Thea Gonzales*
WatchTower Team

Your fever tells you that you're sick, but your schedule says that practice ends at 6 p.m., right when the medical car stops operating. It's your first few weeks at Augustana and you don't have access to a vehicle. Without a clinic on campus, your closest access to immediate medical care is 30 minutes away on foot.

During Dr. Hann's PUBH 350 class in the fall of 2017, Corey Lepoudre and Emma Larson ('18) were asked to design strategies to address a campus health issue. They chose the campus' lack of a health clinic.

Their proposal included a study of health services offered by schools comparable to Augustana. Lepoudre and Larson found that Augustana was lacking in every category of health services offered at other schools, which largely had staffed and regularly-open campus clinics.

It would take one business class and a second public health class to pitch two respective proposals (all based on the previous year's research) before administrative moves were made.

At the end of the last public health 350 class' stakeholder presentation during

winter of this academic year, President Bahls announced that the school was beginning to investigate the addition of a health clinic.

Sierra Rood, a senior and public health major behind the most recent proposal, found that every single school within Augustana's CCIW conference currently has a clinic, as well as most schools of comparable size.

The latest proposal for a clinic would include a regularly staffed nurse practitioner or physician who would provide services like flu shots, preventative health measures and possible STI testing.

According to Rood, the options students have of going off-campus for treatment aren't good enough.

"There are so many students that get sick – it's bound to happen. The clinic in Moline is a five-minute drive, but students don't have the accessibility to go there," Rood said.

"Student are at risk for not taking the time to get attention for their health needs. You can't miss class unless you have a doctor's note. How are they supposed to receive that doctor's note? Do I go to class sick or miss class and let my grade be affected?"

While the clinic is in its early stages

of planning, President Bahls confirmed that Vice President Kirk Anderson will be developing a proposal and cost-benefit analysis for a campus clinic.

According to Bahls, he anticipates discussing the pros and cons of a tuition increase to fund the high cost of the clinic.

“ We just really wanted to combat that because it's such a bad culture to have on campus of waiting around until you get better ”

- Willow Kornoski

There are currently no plans to include a health clinic in the upcoming Knowlton Center for Innovation in Health, Wellness and Human Performance.

"The discussion and early planning

around a health clinic was started by members of the student body. The college's leadership team is committed to listening to the ideas and concerns of students," Bahls said in an email.

"As healthcare changes and our needs around wellness change, this seems like an opportunity for reflection about an on-campus health clinic. We want to ensure we're serving students in the best ways we can."

For Willow Kornoski, a junior involved in the last health clinic proposal, health and wellness have everything to do with the college's mission.

"It's honestly kind of concerning that we don't have one because we're billing ourselves as a holistic campus. One of the five faith commitments is that we're trying to focus on students' spiritual and physical health. We're not offering convenient access to physical health at all," Kornoski said.

With the factors of time, transportation and cost to consider when looking for treatment, many students choose to go without.

Dr. Hann, assistant professor of public health, sees illness regularly when

The only CCIW school without a health clinic: Augustana College

	Augustana College	Carroll College	Elmhurst College	North Central	Wheaton College	Illinois Wesleyan	Carthage College	Millikin College	North Park University
On-Campus Health Clinic	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Open Mon-Fri	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
On staff Nurse Practitioner	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+
Referrals to Off Campus Healthcare	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Prescription Medications	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+

Graphic courtesy of Krishna Marmé

A representation of CCIW schools in our athletic conference and the health services they offer. According to the research done by Dr. Lena Hann's winter term 2018-2019 PUBH 350 students, Augustana is the only college in the CCIW without a clinic.

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students don't feel like they can afford the time to go off-campus for help.

"Resting means not going to class. I've noticed that students will either come to class sick and then put everyone at risk of getting each other sick or they just keep pushing themselves as hard as they can until they absolutely crash and have to stay home," Hann said. "Then their recovery takes a lot longer than if they had immediate access to a nurse practitioner or physician's assistant."

For international students, the challenge to proper healthcare is even more daunting.

Yemu Mapurisa, a senior and international student from Zimbabwe, knows the difficulties of global health communication after four years.

"We're not really prepared when we come here. Nobody really explains how the health system works.

Sometimes, people just don't understand some of the costs that are mailed to them. We're not really educated on clinics in the area; there's very little communication on that if you're an international student," Mapurisa said.

When she arrived in the United States, she didn't know what pink eye or mono

was. Both ailments pop up frequently during "The Augie Plague" or times each term (typically weeks four and eight) when mass illnesses or infections are spread.

“ We’re not really educated on clinics in the area; there’s very little communication on that if you’re an international student.

- Yemu Mapurisa

"The whole reason there's something called 'The Augie Plague' is because there are students who would rather choose to wait it out and be sick in their rooms than actually go and get a doctor's note. College

students are busy," Rood said.

Though all students are required by the school to purchase health insurance, the costs add up for international students.

One of Mapurisa's friends took an Uber to meet with a med school intern in Iowa City because "it was too expensive here."

It was around \$100 to and from Iowa City, but treatment there was still cheaper than what his insurance covered in the Quad Cities.

According to Mapurisa, "If we had a nurse, they could be our preliminary. If someone else was there to tell him, 'I don't think this is serious enough,' that would give him assurance. That's why we need a nurse."

Large limitations stand in the way of an easily-built campus clinic. With staffing, funding and finding location on their minds, there is a lot to consider before the proposal becomes a blueprint.

For Kornoski, however, the fight for public health on campus is on-going and any choice that doesn't educate students about their health is a choice that is letting them down.

"We just really wanted to combat that because it's such a bad culture to have on campus of waiting around until you get better.

Inevitably, you're getting other people sick, especially in the dorms," Kornoski

said. "They don't know how to get to the doctor. Freshmen are just getting to know the campus; they don't know the area. This is something we're not educating about enough."

Mary Maraist, a senior and admissions worker, frequently gets questions from parents about Augustana's health services when giving tours.

According to her, parents ask three to four times a month about a campus clinic. She provides an answer the best she can.

"In terms of telling future students if it's something that gets brought up, it doesn't feel good to say, 'This is something we don't have.'

You can especially tell with parents that there's a little bit of disappointment and disdain there because this is supposedly a very good school," Maraist said. "So why don't they have something as simple as a nurse's office?"

For Maraist, although the school's partnership with community health centers has been helpful, there's no substitute for the immediate access to healthcare students would get through a campus clinic.

"It seems like this is something that should have existed a long time ago," Maraist said. "It doesn't feel good to tell my ambassadors either that this is going to have to be good enough. This is as good as we can get right now."