Goal of the Panel:
To provide attendees with a high-level perspective of the mental health services / initiatives underway at Rhode Island’s higher education institutions. Two institutional presidents, one from a private institution and one from a public institution, will discuss their respective campus services, strategies that have improved their services, ideas for further refinement / expansion, as well as potential resource sharing opportunities.

Moderator:

Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH
Dr. Nicole Alexander-Scott has been the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health since 2015. In her time as Director of Health, Dr. Alexander-Scott has made it the Department’s principal focus to give every person and every community in Rhode Island an equal opportunity to be as healthy as possible. She brings tremendous experience to this position from her work as a specialist in infectious diseases for children and adults, and from her time in academia as an associate professor of pediatrics, medicine, and public health (with a focus on health services, policy, and practice). Dr. Alexander-Scott is board certified in Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Pediatric Infectious Diseases, and Adult Infectious Diseases. In 2018, Dr. Alexander-Scott was elected President of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, the national organization for state health directors. She earned her undergraduate degree at Cornell University. She graduated from SUNY Upstate Medical University at Syracuse. After completing a combined internal medicine-pediatrics residency at SUNY Stony Brook University Hospital, Dr. Alexander-Scott did a combined fellowship in adult and pediatric infectious diseases at Brown University. She also holds a Master’s Degree in Public Health from Brown University.
Panel Participants:

Frank D. Sanchez, PhD
Dr. Frank D. Sánchez took office as the 10th President of Rhode Island College on July 1, 2016. Previously, he served as Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the City University of New York (CUNY), now the largest urban public university in America serving over 500,000 students. In this role, he was responsible for providing system-wide leadership in the coordination, delivery and evaluation of a student-centered university culture.

Sánchez is a fierce advocate for students and maintains a reverence for higher education and its potential to transform individuals, families and communities. His more than 25 years in higher education also include executive leadership positions at Adams State College in Colorado and the University of Colorado-Denver/Anschutz Medical Center.
Panel Participants (continued):

Christina H. Paxson, PhD

Christina Paxson is the 19th president of Brown University and Professor of Economics and Public Policy. Since assuming the presidency in July 2012, Paxson’s key priorities have included building distinction in strategic areas of Brown’s rich research environment, such as brain science, data science, the digital humanities and engineering; expanding financial aid through initiatives like the Brown Promise, which eliminates University-packaged loans from all undergraduate financial aid packages; and cultivating entrepreneurship among teacher-scholars and students. Under Paxson’s leadership, Brown gained national attention for an ambitious plan to advance academic excellence by shaping a fully diverse and inclusive campus. Brown released “Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion: An Action Plan for Brown University” in February 2016.

Prior to her appointment at Brown, Paxson was dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of International and Public Affairs and the Hughes Rogers Professor of Economics and Public Affairs at Princeton University. A nationally recognized higher education leader, respected economist and public health expert, Paxson is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, a board member of the Association of American Universities, and serves on the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Board of Directors. She is 1982 honors graduate of Swarthmore College and earned her graduate degrees in economics at Columbia University (M.A., 1985; Ph.D., 1987).