

### CONSULTATION

When in doubt about a situation, please fee free to call us (336.758.5273). A brief conversation with a clinician may assist you in clarifying the need to intervene, determining the appropriate means of intervention, or providing other referral options. Throughout the year we are open 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. If your call is urgent, please indicate that clearly when you call.

Non-crisis assistance during business hours can also be obtained by contacting the WFU CARE Team ([careteam.wfu.edu](mailto:careteam.wfu.edu)).

If you are concerned that a possible disability may be interfering with a student's work, please call The Learning Assistance Center (336.758.5929).

### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCIES OR CRISES

An emergency is a situation which is life-threatening or involves imminent danger or other extreme circumstances. In these situation, call 911 immediately to access emergency services. For urgent mental health concerns, crisis support is also available by calling us (336.758.5273).

### CONFIDENTIALITY

The UCC operates under ethical and legal confidentiality obligations that restrict any transmission of information (including attendance or lack thereof) without a signed release by the client. Exceptions to confidentiality include imminent risk to an identified individual, abuse of a vulnerable person, and court subpoena.

Occasionally, students wish for us to have a more in-depth consultations with faculty. This is done rarely, and again, only with the student's written permission.

### UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER STAFF

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### Find us:

- Facebook
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336.758.5273  
[counselingcenter.wfu.edu](http://counselingcenter.wfu.edu)



## WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY **COUNSELING CENTER**

### Referral Guide for Faculty 2017-2018

117 Reynolda Hall  
336.758.5273  
[counselingcenter.wfu.edu](http://counselingcenter.wfu.edu)

## INTRODUCTION

As a faculty member, you may be the first person students turn to when they need help. Some students will come directly to you because they see you as someone they trust, someone who cares about their wellbeing, and with whom they feel safe. You are therefore in an excellent position to recognize certain distress signals indicating the possible presence of some emotional trouble or pending crisis. Your role in expressing concern and assisting a student in getting help can be quite significant to the student.

The University Counseling Center is available to help you with students in distress by consulting with you about the best course of action and by working directly with the student once a referral has been made.

Sometimes, students may demonstrate unusual, disturbing, or markedly changed behavior in or out of your classroom that causes you to feel concerned about them. In these situations, knowing what to look for and how to address it with the student can be important. The following information addresses both of these concerns.

## IDENTIFYING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Changes in behavior and demeanor may be quick and dramatic or they may involve slow but steady deterioration over time. Such changes may include:

- Excessive absences from class
- Multiple requests for special consideration in the absence of supporting data (e.g., learning or other disability)
- Failure to turn in assignments or take tests
- Changes in class participation
- Decline in academic performance
- Failure to keep scheduled appointments with you
- Dramatic changes in weight or physical appearance (including personal hygiene)

Unusual Behaviors may include:

- Outburst or other disruptive behaviors
- Intoxication
- Excessively rapid speech or increased activity level
- Tangential or irrelevant speech/writing
- Social or interpersonal withdrawal
- Depressed or anxious mood
- Crying
- Frequent requests or demands for your time
- Poor academic performance
- Complaints of inability to concentrate
- Multiple physical complaints
- Sleeping in class

Risk & Safety Concerns may include:

- References to suicide, including plan
- Preoccupation with death themes
- Reference to/preoccupation with violence
- Homicidal or other threatening statements, whether verbal or written
- Severe isolation from family or friends
- Perception of having no support network
- Feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, despair
- Indication of drug or excessive alcohol use.

## INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL

If you notice these or other alarming behaviors, you may wish to approach the student about whom you are concerned. Invite the student to have a conversation at a time convenient to both of you. Try to select a place where there will be some privacy (but not too much isolation) for a private discussion: "I have noticed that you have seemed really withdrawn in class lately and I'm concerned about you."

If the student chooses to respond and tells you how he or she is doing, listen carefully, giving the student your full attention. You can communicate your listening by either paraphrasing what the student has said or reflecting the feelings you are hearing: "Sounds like you are really feeling overwhelmed." Offer respect, hope and support to the student and help him or her realize that there are resources available. In making a referral you might point out that seeking help demonstrates strength, not weakness.

In referring to the Counseling Center, you might suggest that he or she call for an appointment from your office. Remind the student that our services are free, confidential, and that crisis support is available 24/7 from anywhere. Tell the student what you know about the Center and that even if he or she doesn't wish to receive help from us, we are in a good position to make referrals to other resources on and off campus.