

HOW CAN I TELL IF A STUDENT MAY BE TROUBLED?

At times students simply inform you that they are in need of counseling or other assistance. In these instances, provide students with information about campus resources that are provided in this guide. At other times, students who are troubled will not directly inform you of their difficulties, but they will exhibit behaviors that indicate a problem. Knowledge of and sensitivity to some of the indicators of possible problems helps in determining whether to refer the student for assistance. Some behaviors that indicate a need for referral are:

UNUSUAL OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

- Withdrawal from usual social interactions, seclusion or unwillingness to communicate
- Statements related to death or dying or feelings of hopelessness
- Persistent lying, stealing, or antisocial acts
- Lack of social skills or extreme shyness
- Persistent sadness or unexplained crying
- Extreme appetite or weight change (increase or decrease) in a relatively short period of time
- Inability to sleep or excessive sleep
- High levels of irritability or inappropriate excitement
- Outbursts of anger
- Acute change in activity level, (i.e., restlessness or noticeably decreased activity)
- Irrational conversation or speech that seems disconnected
- Suspiciousness, irrational feelings of persecution
- Frequent or excessive worry, anxiety, agitation, or expression of fear
- Problems concentrating, remembering things or making decisions
- Excessive dependency or “clinginess”
- Infrequent class attendance

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN RELATIONSHIPS

- Severe illness or death of a family member or someone close to the student
- Separation, divorce, or threat of separation or divorce
- Difficulties in family relationships
- Dating or courtship difficulties

ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUG ABUSE

- Indications of excessive drinking or other drug abuse or drug dependence of any kind. Contact the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention and Education located in the Health Center (817-272-2771)
- NOTE: In the event of overdose, call 817-272-3003 (if calling from an on-campus telephone) or 911 (from other telephones).

REFERENCES TO SUICIDE

- When a student makes any reference to suicide, threat of suicide, or attempt at suicide, a judgment should be made by a professional about the seriousness of a possible suicidal thought or behavior.
- Suicide attempts are first and foremost a medical emergency. The person who has attempted suicide should obtain immediate medical attention. After the person is medically stable, other interventions can be performed.
- NOTE: If danger of suicidal behavior appears imminent, call 817-272-3003 (if calling from an on-campus telephone), 911 (from other telephones) or take the person to an emergency room.

LEARNING PROBLEMS

- Marked change(s) in academic performance in the classroom
- Significant drop in examination scores
- Test anxiety that significantly interferes with performance
- A marked deficit in memory or concentration
- A lack of confidence in a student’s ability to understand or learn
- Learning problems that involve deficient reading or comprehension, mathematics deficiency, poor writing skills, or poor study habits
- NOTE: The verification of documentation regarding learning disabilities is handled by the Office for Students with Disabilities (817-272-3364).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Assistance for students with disabilities is available through the Office for Students with Disabilities (817-272-3364 or TTY 817-272-1524).

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AT HEALTH SERVICES

- Evaluation of psychological functioning
- Provision of appropriate treatment (Individual, Couples, or Group Therapy)
- Referrals to health agencies or other professionals when appropriate
- Consultation with faculty/staff regarding their concerns about students
- Presentations on mental health topics

Contact:

Marie Bannister, Ph.D.
Health Services
605 S. West Street
817-272-2771

OFFICE OF COUNSELING SERVICES

- Academic, career, and personal counseling
- Academic, career, and personal growth seminars
- Academic and career assessment services
- Consultation to faculty and staff regarding student concerns
- Agency, community and on-campus referrals

Contact:

Cynthia I. Bing, MA, LPC, NCC
Counseling Services
701 S. Nedderman Drive
Suite 216, Davis Hall
817-272-3671

OFFICE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Verification of disability for students with a documented physical or mental disability
- Faculty liaison for accommodations for students with a documented physical or mental disability
- Advocacy and counseling for disability related issues
- Implementation of adaptive technology for students with disabilities

Contact:

Dianne Hengst, Psy. D.
Office for Students with Disabilities
102 University Hall
817-272-3364 or TTY 817-272-1524



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

FACULTY AND STAFF GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO TROUBLED STUDENTS



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AT
UTA HEALTH SERVICES

COUNSELING SERVICES



OFFICE FOR STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) is committed to both the educational and personal welfare of its students. In that regard, UTA takes a proactive approach toward maintaining programs and services that encourage the development of well-rounded students. Because students may experience difficulties in their academic or personal lives, UTA is prepared to assist students in dealing with their problems. Since faculty and staff members are sometimes the first to recognize that a student is experiencing difficulties, this guide is being disseminated to offer suggestions in responding to troubled students.

The Offices of Mental Health Services (MHS) at Health Services, Counseling, Advising, Assessment, and Career Services (CAACS) and The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) have professional staff available to assist troubled students. MHS, located in the Health Center, provides students with psychological evaluations, counseling and referrals, as well as consultation to faculty and staff regarding concerns about students. Counseling Services, located in Davis Hall, provides academic and career counseling, personal counseling, and a number of assessments and seminars to assist students in their academic, personal, and career pursuits. OSD, located at 102 University Hall, verifies all physical, emotional, Attention-Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Learning Disabilities documentation in order to specify the appropriate disability-specific accommodations and/or adaptations that will assist each student in successfully completing his/her academic objectives.

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL

The nature of a student's difficulties determines the appropriate campus referral source. In general, most students who are troubled by difficulties of a psychological or emotional nature can be referred to MHS. Those students who are troubled by difficulties of an academic or vocational nature can be referred to Counseling Services. The following suggestions may be helpful when making a referral to either office.

- Be specific and straightforward with the student about the behaviors that are the basis for your referral.
- Be sensitive as you express your concerns about the student's behavior. Making generalizations or negative attributions about the person's character or personality is counterproductive.
- Except in emergencies, allow the student the freedom to accept or decline the referral. If the student is reluctant to seek counseling, express your acceptance of the student's feelings.
- Go slowly unless it is an emergency or a matter of urgency.
- If the student agrees to a referral, provide the appropriate telephone number and, if desired, allow the student to use your phone to set up an appointment.
- A student may prefer to go to the office or call at another time to schedule an appointment.
- Offer to provide information about the nature of the problem to the appropriate referral source and ask for the student's permission to do so.
- If possible, follow up with the student at a later date whether the student accepts the referral.
- In the event that the situation is urgent, accompany the student to MHS in the Health Center or call the Campus Police at 817-272-3003.
- If at any time you want consultation about the behavior of a student, please call MHS (817-272-2771).

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH AN UPSET STUDENT

- Remain calm and speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Let the student know you are interested in helping him or her.
- Listen to what the student has to say.
- Try to engage the student in considering options to deal with the upsetting situation.
- Suggest options the student may not have considered.
- Be forthright about whether you can be of assistance to the student.
- Suggest a counseling referral.
- If needed, contact the Campus Police (817-272-3003) or MHS (817-272-2771).
- NOTE: If there appears to be a threat of immediate danger to the student or others, call the Campus Police emergency line (817-272-3003).