

Counseling Services

Faculty and Staff Information Guide

Services Offered at Counseling Services

- [Individual Counseling](#)
- [Group Counseling](#)
- [Consultation Services](#)
- [Crisis Intervention](#)
- [Referral Resources](#)
- [Outreach Programming](#)
- [Training](#)

Counseling Services also has a reading and relaxation room containing books, videos, and CD's on a wide variety of psychological issues. This room also serves as a quiet place for relaxation and meditation and includes two reclining massage chairs.

Students in Emotional Distress

OWU Counseling Services has developed this information guide to help faculty and staff assist students experiencing emotional distress and to respond to disruptive behavior.

Who Seeks Services at OWU Counseling Services?

Here are just a few of the concerns that bring students to our office:

- *Depression, mood swings*
- *Anxiety, panic attacks, phobias*
- *Adjustment to college life*
- *Academic stress, procrastination, low motivation*
- *Sleep problems*
- *Low self-esteem*
- *Eating and body image concerns*
- *Sexual orientation issues, coming out*
- *Suicidal thoughts*
- *Self-injury*
- *Grief and loss*
- *Sexual assault, sexual harassment*
- *Relationship concerns*
- *Social anxiety*
- *Family issues*
- *Concentration and attention difficulties*
- *Concerns related to unexpected pregnancy*
- *Coping with medical illness*
- *Out of control thoughts/ behaviors*

When to Refer

The student remains distressed following repeated attempts by you and others to be helpful

Often when a student is upset, faculty and staff can provide adequate help. There are occasions, however, when students need professional help to overcome problems and to resume effective functioning. The following signs indicate a student may be in need of professional counseling:

- The student remains distressed following repeated attempts by you and others to be helpful.
- The student becomes increasingly isolated, unkempt, irritable, or disconnected.
- The student's academic or social performance deteriorates.
- The student's behavior reflects increased hopelessness or helplessness.
- The student makes references to suicide and/or self-harm.
- The student exhibits threatening, aggressive, and/or disruptive behavior.
- The student is unable to adequately care for self.
- The student is abusing alcohol or other substances.

How to Refer



- Encourage the student in a direct, concerned, and caring manner to call or to stop by the Counseling Services office to make an appointment.
- Because students may initially resist the idea of counseling, be caring but firm in your judgment that counseling would be helpful. Also, be clear about the reasons that you are concerned (“I am worried about you doing okay in school and I bring this up really because I care about how you are doing.”).
- Be knowledgeable in advance about the services and procedures of Counseling Services and other campus help-giving agencies. Communicating familiarity and trust with the Counseling Services office/staff can calm nerves and also help with follow through.
- Sometimes it is useful to more actively assist students in scheduling an initial counseling appointment. You can offer the use of your phone or call Counseling Services yourself while the student waits in your office. In some situations, it may be helpful to walk the student over to the Counseling office for additional support.
- If concerned the student is at immediate risk of harming self or others, you may request assistance from OWU Public Safety. Depending on the situation, the student may be escorted to the Counseling office, or to the Grady Hospital ER for further evaluation.



It is not unusual for students in significant emotional distress to be struggling with suicidal thoughts. The suicidal thoughts may be more passive (without plan or intent to harm self), or active (with plan or intent to harm self). Regardless of stated severity, any references to suicide should be considered serious. Judgments about the safety risk should not be made without consultation with a mental health professional.

Responding to Mental Health Emergencies

What Should You Do?

- If you have any indication that a student may be having thoughts of self-harm, ask them directly if they are having suicidal thoughts.
- If so, ask them if they have thought about how, if they intend to carry out that plan and how soon.
- Show your appreciation for their willingness to trust you enough to share this very sensitive and difficult information.
- Let them know that you are concerned about their safety and well being and that it is important for them to talk with a mental health professional as soon as possible.
- Ask them if they would be willing to walk over to Counseling Services with you to speak with a Counselor, or be willing to contact a counselor by phone with you present. If so, proceed.
- If it is outside of Counseling Services normal business hours, you may still call Counseling Services at 368-3145 and be directed to an emergency on call counselor. Alternatively, you may call Public Safety at 368-2222.
- If the student refuses to speak with a counselor, it is important to contact Counseling Services immediately for further consultation around how to proceed.
- If you believe a student is at immediate risk for self-harm and they are uncooperative with the above, call Public Safety. If they report to you that they have already taken steps to end their life, e.g., ingesting pills, call 911.



OWU Counseling Services

Hamilton Williams Campus Center 324 * 740-368-3145 * counseling.owu.edu
Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to Noon & 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Responding to Disruptive Students

What is disruptive behavior?

Any behavior that interferes with other students, faculty, or staff and their access to an appropriate educational or work environment.

What are some examples of disruptive behavior?

- Yelling or screaming
- Persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention
- Words or actions that have the effect of intimidating or harassing others
- Words or actions that cause others to fear for personal safety

How should I deal with a disruptive person?

Don't ignore the disruptive behavior. Attempt to remain calm and clearly and directly communicate to the person that such behavior is inappropriate. If the behavior persists, be clear with the individual about the consequences for failing to improve their behavior. Disruptive situations often involve some display of anger, so remember that the period of peak anger is usually quite brief. As a result, it is often best to "wait out" that brief period before attempting to progress. Here are some Do's and Don'ts:

Do:

- *Listen through the anger with active listening*
- *Acknowledge the feelings of the individual*
- *Allow the person to tell you what is upsetting them*
- *Set limits by explaining clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable*
- *Be firm, steady, consistent, and honest*
- *Focus on what can be done to help bring the situation to some resolution*
- *Make specific referrals, give the reasons for referral, and, if possible, notify the person to whom you referred in advance*
- *If warranted, report the behavior to Public Safety or the Dean of Students Office*
- *Call 911 if you feel threatened or endangered*

Don'ts:

- *Interrupt during the first 20-30 seconds of peak anger*
- *Minimize the situation*
- *Enter into argument or shouting match*
- *Blame, ridicule, or use sarcasm*
- *Touch the person*
- *Ignore warning signs if person is continuing to escalate and about to explode????????*
- *Ignore your limitations*

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