

Blue Folder

Faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate care and compassion for students in distress. The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize potential symptoms of distress and identify appropriate campus resources to refer students to.



Message to Faculty and Staff

When faced with the various challenges of college life, students may feel stressed, alone, and even hopeless at times. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences. As a result of your frequent and continued contact, you may be the first person to notice a student in distress.

As fellow members of the UNF community, it is important that we act with compassion. Keep in mind that students exhibiting concerning behaviors may be having difficulties in other areas of their lives. Students sometimes feel that they can't share their struggles with family and friends but may be comfortable doing so with faculty or staff. By expressing concern, you may help save a student's academic career or even more importantly, their life. If a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened, please consult with someone.

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Indicators of Distress

Use the following chart to help you identify a student in distress. Look for groupings, frequency, duration, and severity.

Academic

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disorganized performance
- Multiple requests for extensions
- Overly demanding of faculty or staff's time and attention
- Bizarre content in writings or presentations
- You find yourself providing more personal than academic support

Physical

- Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g., grooming or hygiene deterioration, weight loss/gain)
- Excessive fatigue or sleep disturbance
- Intoxication, hangovers, or smelling of alcohol
- Disoriented or "out of it"
- Garbled, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech
- Behavior is out of context or bizarre
- Delusions and paranoia

Psychological

- Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g., family problems, grief, suicidal thoughts)
- Unusual/disproportionate emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness or panic reactions
- Irritability or unusual apathy
- Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Concern from peers

Safety Risk

- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Physical violence (e.g., shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapons)
- Implying or making direct threat to harm self or others
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors
- Stalking or harassing behavior

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Dean of Students Office/Care Services

The Dean of Students office provides various forms of support to assist students with academic concerns, administrative processes, as well as their physical and personal well-being. Care Services is integral part of this effort and includes the following programs and services:

- Supporting Our Students program
- Nesting Place program
- medical withdrawals
- Medical Amnesty program

What About FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other student privacy regulations generally allow university faculty and staff to share observations about the behavior of students, statements made by students, and concerns about students with UNF personnel, parents, law enforcement, and anyone else whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

Appropriate consideration for student privacy should be given before information is shared with people other than those suggested in this document, and questions about when such disclosure is appropriate can be answered by the UNF Office of the General Counsel.

Supporting Our Students

Students may be referred to SOS, a service provided by the Dean of Students office, when they exhibit or share concerns related to their personal, physical, and emotional well-being. An SOS referral form can be filled out online by the student who needs assistance or someone else.

The DOS team help students with various issues, including behavioral health concerns, housing and food insecurities, connecting to campus resources, communication skills, conflict resolution, student conduct and medial withdrawals.

For more information visit here:

<https://www.unf.edu/deanofstudents/care-services/sos-home.html>



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Tips

Safety First:

The welfare of the campus community is our top priority. When a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior, do not hesitate to call for help.

Listen Sensitively & Carefully:

Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice. Avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.

Be Proactive:

Engage students early on, setting expectations for appropriate behavior.

Be Direct:

Ask students directly if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feeling confused, or having thoughts of harming themselves or others.

Follow Through:

Ensure that the student gets connected to support and follow up to express ongoing care.

Consultation & Documentation:

Always document your interactions with students experiencing distress and consult with your department chair or supervisor after any incident.

Campus Resources

UNF Counseling Center*

(904) 620-2600

UNF Counseling Center supports the emotional, psychological, educational, social, and cultural development of all UNF students through a wide range of multiculturally based counseling, psychiatric, consultation, training, and educational services.

24-Hour Help Line*

(904) 620-2602

A consultation and crisis resource service for students 24 hours a day, provided by licensed mental health provider. Press option 2 after calling the number.

Emergency

Dial 911

Call when concerned about students who may pose an immediate danger to self or others.

UNF Police Department (non-emergency)

(904) 620-2800

Dean of Students/Office of the Student Ombuds*

(904) 620-1491

A safe and confidential environment for students to bring questions and/or concerns about university rules, policies, and procedures.

Office for Equal Opportunity and Inclusion

(904) 620-2507

Any member of the university community may contact the OEI for guidance or to file a complaint alleging violation of its non-discrimination, equal opportunity, inclusion, sexual misconduct, or sexual harassment policies and regulations.

UNF Employee Assistance Program*

<https://www.unf.edu/hr/benefits/health-advocate.html>

UNF Police Department (confidential tip report)

<https://www.unf.edu/upd/silent-witness.html>

* Resources marked with an asterisk are confidential resources

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Responding to Disclosure of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment

Provide Care and Support

- Appreciate student for seeking support
- If responsible employee, explain confidentiality limitations
- Offer resources and connection to an Advocate
- Allow student to make their own choices

Connect to an Advocate

- Offer a warm referral by calling together
- Call the **24-Hour Crisis Line** with the student at **(904) 620-1010**
- Introduce student to the on-call Advocate
- Step out to provide privacy

Next Steps

- If responsible employee, notify UPD at (904) 620-2800 or EOI office at (904) 620-2507 of disclosure
- Practice self care

Community Resources

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (Non-Emergency)

(904) 630-0500

Call for off-campus concerns about safety and well-being

United Way of Northeast Florida

Dial 211

Call to get connected to essential health, human and social services at no cost

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

(800) 273-TALK

Call for immediate, confidential crisis support and intervention.

HCA Florida Memorial Hospital

(904) 702-6111

The closest hospital/ER to campus, located at the intersection of Beach Blvd and University Blvd, at 3625 University Blvd.

Victim's Advocacy Program

The Victim Advocacy Program provides aid to victims and survivors of the University of North Florida community. No matter when the event occurred, advocates are available to support you. Advocates are available 24 hours a day to assist community members who need support after a crime or victimization. Office Hours are Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m. Walk-in appointments are available by visiting the Dean of Students Office located in Bldg 57, Room 2707.

24-Hour Crisis Helpline

If a crime has impacted someone you know, we can help. Call (904) 620 –1010 to speak with an Advocate. The Crisis Helpline is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

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Does the Student Need Immediate Assistance?

YES

The student's conduct is clearly reckless, disorderly, and/or threatening and suggestive of immediate harm to self or others in the community.

Call 911 for immediate response

Report the concern to UPD at (904) 620-2800 and the UNF Counseling Center at (904) 620-2602.

NOT SURE

Indicators of distress are observed but severity is unclear. The interaction has left you feeling uneasy or concerned about the student.

To speak with someone for consultation, call the UNF Counseling Center at (904)620-2602 during business hours, and/or the 24-Help Line at (904) 620-2602, select option 2.

For coordinated campus response, please submit a SOS referral using the link below

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofNorthFlorida&layout_id=15

NO

There is no concern for the student's immediate safety, but they are having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.

Refer to appropriate campus resource using the detailed list above.