Counseling Services

College students may encounter a great deal of stress during their academic experience. Although many students cope successfully with the demands of college life, for some the pressures can become overwhelming and unmanageable. Students may experience stressors as they attempt to perform well academically, begin their career path, navigate interpersonal relationships, and as they balance academic, work, and family obligations.

As a faculty member interacting daily with students, you are in an excellent position to recognize potential problems. You are likely to be the first person a student reaches out to for help. Your ability to recognize the signs of emotional distress and to make an initial intervention can have a significant impact on a student's future well being.

Common Causes of Emotional Distress

- Relationship Breakup
- Family Conflict
- Loss of a Loved One
- Divorce of Parents
- Feeling Lonely
- Academic Pressure or Failure
- Serious Illness or Injury
- Difficulty Adjusting to University
- Not fitting in with Peers
- Unplanned Pregnancy
- Religious Conflicts
- Sexual or Physical Abuse of Assault
- Identity Confusion
- Depression
- Drug/Alcohol Abuse
- Career Indecision
- Loss of Goal or Dream
- Occupational Setback

Common Warning Signs of Student Distress

Academic Problems

- Career and Course Indecision
- Excessive Procrastination
- Uncharacteristically Poor Preparation or Performance
- Repeated Requests for Extensions or Special Considerations
- Disruptive Classroom Behavior
- Excessive Absence/Tardiness
- Avoiding or Dominating Discussions
- References to Suicide or Homicide in Verbal Statements or Writing
Interpersonal Problems

- Asking Instructor for Help with Personal Problems
- Dependency on Advisor
- Hanging Around Office
- Disruptive Behavior
- Inability to Get Along with Others
- Compliments from Other Students

Behavior Problems

- Change in Personal Hygiene
- Dramatic Weight Gain or Loss
- Frequently Falling Asleep in Class
- Irritability
- Unruly Behavior
- Impaired Speech
- Disjointed Thoughts
- Tearfulness
- Intense Emotion
- Inappropriate Responses
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Physically Harming Self

What Faculty Can Do

If you have noticed any of these warning signs, you are faced with the decision of whether or not to intervene. Although your faculty appointment is demanding, your interest in your student's well-being can make an important difference to a person in distress.

If you decide to intervene, here are some suggestions:

- Talk to the student privately to help minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Listen carefully to the student, and respond to both the content and the emotions of the situation.
- Discuss your observations and perceptions of the situation directly and honestly with the student.
- Express your concern in a non-judgmental way. Respect the student's value system, even if you do not agree with it.
- Help the student identify options for action and explore the possible consequences.
- Be frank with the student about the limits on your ability to help him or her.
- If the student appears to be in imminent danger of hurting self or others, consult the University Counseling Services or the police immediately. Do not promise to keep threats to self or others secret.

How to Make a Counseling Center Referral

Presenting yourself as knowledgeable about campus services can ease a student's discomfort about seeking help. Here are some suggestions for emergency and non-emergency situations.
Emergency Referrals

During Business Hours:

If the emergency occurs during regular NMT business hours (Mon-Fri 8:00am-5:00pm), call Counseling Services at 835-6619. State that you need crisis support and ask to speak to the director immediately. If you believe that the student or another person is in imminent danger or out of control, call Campus Police at 835-5434, or dial 911 on a campus phone. Provide a description of the situation that has lead to your concern. Counseling Services will advise you of the appropriate actions to take to most effectively help the student.

Outside of Regular Business Hours:

If the emergency occurs outside of Counseling Services business hours, call Campus Police at 835-5434, or dial 911 on a campus phone, and inform them of the situation. They will contact Counseling Services and/or Socorro Mental Health at 835-2444 as needed.

Non-Emergency Referrals

Encourage the student to contact Counseling Services directly to schedule an initial intake interview, by calling 835-6619.

Offer to let the student call from your office if you believe that they need extra support and encouragement.

It might be helpful to share with the student that Counseling Services is staffed by licensed mental health professionals.
COMMON ACCOMMODATIONS
FOR
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWD)

This list is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather it serves to give some examples of common accommodations for students in a classroom environment. This type of accommodations will be communicated to professors/academic advisors through accommodation letters.

1. Extended time on quizzes and exams.
2. Separate proctoring of exams.
3. Ability to get up and take breaks during class sessions.
4. Permission to record lectures during class.
5. Peer note taker.
6. Use of SMART classroom recordings.
7. Spelling and grammar leniency.
8. Copy of Instructional materials.
10. Use of laptop/tablet for routine note taking.
11. Use of calculator for routine calculations.
12. Preferential seating.
13. Note cards or other prompting materials.
15. Attendance leniency.

The OCDS process for accommodation letters is for the SWD to request the letters at the beginning of each semester. Once the SWD collects the accommodation letters from OCDS, s/he is responsible for delivering the letters to each of their professors and to their advisor. A professor is not held legally responsible for providing approved accommodations until the SWD provides them with accommodation letter.

Another common accommodation for SWDs is a reduced course load. OCDS can currently waive a student down to as low as 6 credits per semester for purposes of the Lottery Scholarship (and other types of financial aid) and for housing purposes. With the changes in the Lottery Scholarship requirements, students are now required to carry 15 credits. At this time they can continue to be reduced down to 14-6 credits by OCDS. In order for a student to be qualified for a reduced course load, s/he will need to be registered with OCDS.

5/19/14
Counseling Services

New Mexico Tech provides emergency and/or short term counseling services for students. The counseling services can take the form of individual, couple or group treatment. Counseling is provided by licensed mental health providers. Currently, Janet Ward, LCSW (licensed clinical social worker), Kathryn Fleming, LMSW (Licensed masters social worker) and Rande Brown, LADAC (licensed alcohol and drug abuse counselor) are the treatment providers. OCDS staff are available for consults if faculty have questions of a general nature or regarding a specific student.

OCDS Contact Information

OCDS shares the lobby with the Student Health Center. We have an outside entrance in the northwest corner of Fidel Center. Telephone x 6619 (main), x 5543 (Janet), x5780 (Kathryn) and x 5093 (Rande). Email: Andrea Jojola (administrative assistant) ajojola@admin.mnt.edu, Janet Ward jward@admin.mnt.edu, Kathryn Fleming kfleming@admin.mnt.edu, Rande Brown rbrown@admin.mnt.edu.

Suggested Syllabus Statement Regarding Counseling Services

Counseling Services

New Mexico Tech offers mental health and substance abuse counseling through the Office of Counseling and Disability Services. The confidential services are provided free of charge by licensed professionals. To schedule an appointment, please call 835-6619.

Suggested Syllabus Statement Regarding Disabled Students

Reasonable Accommodations

New Mexico Tech is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. Qualified individuals who require reasonable accommodations are invited to make their needs known to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (OCDS) as soon as possible.
Disability Services

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology provides accessible programs, services, and reasonable accommodations for any student with a documented, qualifying disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In order to be considered, a disability must substantially limit a major life activity (i.e. reading, walking, hearing, learning).

If a student with a disability (SWD) wants to receive accommodations for their disability, s/he must meet with OCDS staff for an intake appointment. During the appointment the SWD and OCDS staff engage in an interactive process with the goal of determining what accommodations are appropriate in a college environment. Students are asked to provide OCDS documentation of their disability as a part of this process.

At the beginning of each semester, the SWD submits a request for accommodation letters with their updated class information. OCDS provides the student with accommodation letters for each of their professors and for their academic advisor. It is the SWD’s responsibility to deliver the accommodation letters to their professors. A professor is not legally responsible for providing accommodations until s/he receives the accommodation letter from the SWD. However, once a professor is made aware of the need for academic accommodations, they are required by law to provide them as documented in the accommodation letter. There can be discretion in how the professor provides the accommodation. For example, a SWD has been given extended time on an exam. The professor can decided the location of the testing, in the department or at the OCDS office. If the professor believes that an accommodation “fundamentally alters the essential requirements of the course”, s/he should contact OCDS for further assessment.

Assistance Animals

1) Service animals can either be dogs or miniature horses.
2) Service animals must be allowed any place the student/visitor is allowed to go.
   Exceptions include:
   a) The dog is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to bring it under control.
   b) The dog is not house broken.
3) Questions faculty can ask a student/visitor about their service animal.
   a) Is the dog a service animal required because of a disability?
   b) What task or work is the animal been trained to perform?
June 17, 2016

Dear Professor:

Student has provided documentation to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (OCDS) for academic accommodations. Student’s disability meets criteria for reasonable academic accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The following information is being provided to you and may not be released without student’s consent. S/he has the right to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of his/her situation in the classroom and amongst his/her peers. Student has been encouraged to speak with you directly about his/her disability as needed. S/he has read this letter and agreed to disclosure of this information.

The following are academic accommodations requested by Disability Services on behalf of student:

1. **Extended time on quizzes and exams.** Please allow student time and a half to take quizzes and exams. If you need these exams to be proctored by OCDS because of the extra time allowed, please contact our office 24hrs prior to the exam date to ensure we have room for the student. As always, students can be proctored in your department.
2. **Permission to record lectures during class.** Due to student’s disability, he/she should be allowed to record lectures routinely using devices such as voice recorder, smart pen, etc.
3. **Separate proctoring of exams.** Please allow student to take his/her exams in a separate quiet room. If you need OCDS to proctor the exams, we can provide this service if given 24hrs notice prior to the exam date to ensure we have room for the student.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. Please feel free to contact OCDS at 835-6619 if you have any questions about providing accommodations.

Sincerely,

Janet J. Ward, LCSW
Director of Counseling and Disability Services