Assisting Students in Distress

See Something, Say Something, Do Something

Wellness, Health & Counseling Services
University of California - Irvine
What do you hope to get from this training?
Overview

• Overview of behavior that may be distressing, problematic or concerning

• Basic strategies for responding

• Where to refer & resources available
  • Counseling Center
  • AVC Social Work
  • Student Conduct
  • UCIPD
  • Consultation Team
COUNSELING CENTER

Frances S. Diaz, Psy.D.
Director, Counseling Center
949 824-6457
https://counseling.uci.edu/
## SEE SOMETHING

**Academic Indicators**
- Sudden decline in quality of work & grades
- Repeated absences
- Bizarre content in writings or presentations
- Multiple requests for extensions
- You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours
- Overly demanding of faculty/staff attention

**Physical Indicators**
- Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain
- Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance
- Disoriented or “out of it”
- Garbled, tangential, or slurred speech
- Intoxication, hang over, or smelling of alcohol

**Safety Risk Indicators**
- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others
- Communicating threats via email, correspondence, texting, or phone calls
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors – a “cry for help”
- Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers

**Psychological Indicators**
- Self-disclosure of personal distress – family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or unusual apathy
- Receiving/instigating verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
### SEE SOMETHING

#### Distressed or Disruptive – Not always an either/or

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distressed Student</th>
<th>Disruptive/Dangerous Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Emotionally reactive, impulsive</td>
<td>• Controlled, minimal arousal, “cold blooded”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Purpose: to reduce a perceived immediate threat</td>
<td>• Purpose: power, dominance, revenge, notoriety</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Goal: to survive</td>
<td>• Goal: to hunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Students sometimes become overwhelmed by the circumstance due to many factors including:</td>
<td>• Students sometimes become verbally aggressive when in frustrating situations which they see as being beyond their control.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Anger and frustration become displaced from those situations to you or could result in assaultive behavior towards other.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No intent to harm others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Violates boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Generally responsive when provided help or directed to calm down</td>
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</table>
SAY SOMETHING

From Step Up! Bystander Intervention Training

Use the 5 Point Formula

I Care: “As a student in my class, I care about how you are doing.”

I See: “I see a sad face and your papers are late.”

I Feel: “I’m worried that you may be struggling here at UCI.”

I Want: “I want you to get some help and find out about the many resources on campus.”

I Will: “I will help you bring your Humanities grade up in my class, but I am not a counselor so please go to the Counseling Center.”
SAY SOMETHING

From QPR – Suicide Prevention Training

HOW TO ASK

Asking the Question: Less Direct Approach
• “Have you been unhappy lately?”
• “Have you been so unhappy lately that you’ve been thinking about ending your life?”
• “Do you ever wish you could go to sleep and never wake up?”
• “Have you ever wished that somehow you could just disappear?”

Asking the Question: Direct Approach
• “You know, when people are as upset as you seem to be, they sometimes wish they were dead. I’m wondering if you’re feeling that way, too?”
• “You seem really down lately. I wonder if you’re thinking about suicide?”
• “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”

NOTE: If you cannot ask the question, find someone who can.
# De-escalation Techniques

## DO:
- Use low, deeper tones, and avoid raising your voice or talking too fast.
- Use gentle, soft voice, speaking slowly and confidently.
- Allow the person to tell you what is upsetting them.
- Acknowledge the person’s strengths.
- Stay calm & paraphrase your understanding of the person’s experience.
- Set aside your own thoughts & responses.
- Focus on what you are hearing.
- Validate the person’s possible emotions & what is upsetting them.
- Be specific and gentle, but firmly directive about the behavior that you will accept.
- Explain your intent before making any moves.
- Take deep breaths, slowing down your breathing so that you remain calm.
- Consider taking a quick break.
- Slow down & suspend judgement.
- Show empathy.
- Get them to say yes.

## Do NOT:
- Do not argue.
- Do not focus on the person and do not use adjectives or labels to describe the person. Instead, do focus on the specific behavior.
- Do not restrict the person’s movement. If he/she wants to stand, allow them. Do not corner them.
- Do not meet behind closed door if you foresee possible danger.
- Do not touch the person or make sudden moves.
- Do not threaten the person. Threatening could increase someone’s fear, which could prompt defense or aggression.
- Do not press for explanation about their behavior. Avoid “why” questions; these tend to increase a person’s defenses.
- Do not take the person’s behavior or remarks personally.
### How to Refer

#### Preparing to reach out to the student
- Consult with a Campus Consultation Team member
- Know resources
- Consult with colleagues
- Review your physical environment

#### Connecting with the student
- Listen supportively
- Do not challenge, shock, or become argumentative
- If possible, meet in private
- Clearly express your concerns in non-disparaging terms
- Ask if the student wants to hurt him/herself
- Respect confidentiality
- Explore student support system
- Emphasize importance of professional help
- Document

#### Managing a referral
- Recommend appropriate resources
- Normalize the use of campus resources
- Direct the student to the resource
- Be frank about your limits
- Make sure student understands actions necessary
- Encourage and assist in making an appointment
- Set a follow-up appointment with student
DO SOMETHING

Is the student a danger to him/herself or others or for any other reason does the student need immediate assistance?

**YES**

- The student's conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening, including self-harm behavior

  - Call 911 or Campus Police 949.824.5223

  - After speaking with the police report the concern to: Campus Consultation Team by contacting the AVC 949.824.4642

**NOT SURE**

- The student shows signs of distress, but I am unsure how serious it is. My interaction left me feeling uneasy or really concerned about the student.

  - During business hours: Call the Counseling Center for consultation 949.824.6457

  - After hours & Holidays: Call the Counseling Center and select after hours service option to be connected to a live mental health specialist 949.824.6457

**NO**

- I am not concerned for the student’s immediate safety, but he/she is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.

  - Refer the student to an appropriate campus resource.
Dear Staff Member,

I really need to drop this class. I know that the deadline passed, but I really need your help. I haven’t been able to make it to class lately because my life is falling apart. If I can’t drop this class, I don’t know what I will do. I might as well just die. PLEASE help me and let me drop the class.
CAMPUS SOCIAL WORKER

Brenda Lapinid, LCSW
Director, Office of the Campus Social Worker
949 824-0101
https://whcs.uci.edu/campus-social-worker
CAMPUS SOCIAL WORKER SERVICES

• Short-term resource referral
• Long-term case management
• Students
• University affiliates
• Voluntary
• Supplemental
• Collaborative
AREAS OF FOCUS

- Generalists
- Basic needs
- Rapid rehousing
- Respondent services (work with faculty, staff, and students)
CLOSER LOOK AT CSW SERVICES

• On-Campus Referrals
  • Financial, mental health, disability, academic, housing, and food

• Case Management: Navigation of the University System
  • Example: Student recently discharged from a health facility is re-entering UCI and needs coordination of multiple services and resources

• Off-Campus Referrals
  • Does not qualify for on-campus services
  • Connection with community agencies and resources
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Consultation
- Start at least intrusive level
- Refer to the Campus Social Worker office or other appropriate campus department
- Ways to refer to a Campus Social Worker
  - Phone: (949) 824-0101
  - Email: campussocialworker@uci.edu
  - Online Referral Form: https://whcs.uci.edu/campus-social-worker/how-connect (under Referrals)
- Refer to Campus Assist List for resources
  - https://whcs.uci.edu/do-you-need-help/campus-assist-list
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & STUDENT CONDUCT (OAISC)

Kim Burdett, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct
949-824-1479
https://aisc.uci.edu/
The Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct is responsible for ensuring that students comply with and understand university policy related to academic integrity and student conduct by promoting student learning and development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficult Behavior</th>
<th>Policy Violation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rude email with cursing or inappropriate language</td>
<td>Veiled threats about safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outburst in class</td>
<td>Behavior that is severe or pervasive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slamming hands on a desk (or a wall)</td>
<td>Damage to things, destruction, physical violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People saying a student makes them feel “uncomfortable”</td>
<td>Following a person inappropriately, blocking an exit so professor/TA can’t leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment, sexual harassment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unusual behavior or disruption of class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Arguing with a professor in class</td>
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</table>
WHEN DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT STUDENT

Keep in Mind...

• Everyone has a right to be upset, angry, or mad.
• You are entitled to establish and enforce reasonable behavioral standards in your work environment (classroom/office space).
• “Suffering abuse is in no one’s job description.”
WHAT TO DO

• Call UCIPD if there is a concern for safety
• Help the student identify the problem
• Identify expected behavior
  • No yelling or cursing
  • Email student what was discussed
• Document incident
HOW DO I DOCUMENT THE INCIDENT?
CONDUCT@UCI.EDU

• When documenting behavior, include:
  • Facts
  • Specific behaviors
  • How the office attempted to assist student(s)

• What not to include:
  • Subjective text
    • ”he/she is paranoid;” “I think he’s psychotic;” “basically he/she is a nuisance to the department”
UCI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. Bob LeSage
Special Events & Active Shooter/Workplace Violence Trainer
UC Irvine Police Dept.
949-824-5223
https://police.uci.edu/
WHO WE ARE

We are the guardians who are focused on the ways we work, connect, inspire, educate, and protect our cherished UCI community. Our team continues to become more diverse, bringing different skills, perspectives, and insight.

Our commitment to diversity is woven into our every day fabric of who we are. We will always work towards equity, diversity, inclusion and compassion in serving the UCI community.

25% ARE UCI GRADUATES

6.4% Black/African American (3)

4.3% Filipino (2)

2% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (1)

21.3% Asian (10)

27.7% Hispanic/Latino (13)

38.3% White (18)

8% Masters (4)

15% Other (7)

77% Bachelors (36)

38% ARE UC ALUMNI

19% Female (9)

81% Male (38)

GENDER

81% Male (38)

21 - 30 28%

31 - 40 28%

41 - 50 21%

51 - 60 23%

OFFICERS BY AGE RANGE

AVERAGE AGE OF OFFICER 40 YEARS
WARNING SIGNS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- History of violence
- Threats of physical harm
- Intimidation of others
- Possession or display of weapons
- Hypersensitivity or extreme suspiciousness
- Unable to take criticism of job performance
- Fascination with incidents of workplace violence
ACTIVE SHOOTER
an individual actively engaging in the killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area

—Department of Homeland Security
RUN

CAN YOU SAFELY ESCAPE?
Encourage others to leave with you, but don’t let them get in your way.

Remember your stuff is not important.

Leave your belongings behind.

Your survival may depend on whether or not you have a plan.
IS THERE A GOOD PLACE TO HIDE?
Find a place to hide (storage closet, behind a desk, copier, etc.)

Close blinds, block windows

Lock or barricade doors (be creative – use belts, straps, ties to secure)

Turn OFF electronics, silence phones
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r2tIEUBRHw

WILL YOU TAKE OUT THE SHOOTER?
Only as a LAST RESORT

Use your discretion about when to engage a shooter for survival

Make a plan as to how you will survive the situation

Work as a team

Improvise weapons (books, phones, chairs)

Yell

Once committed, go for it! Commit to your actions
Calling 911

- Cell phones on campus connect to UCIPD dispatch
- Provide clear, accurate information quickly
- Do not hang up on dispatcher
- Be patient - dispatchers will be inundated with calls
- Identify: yourself
  your LOCATION
  suspect information
  suspect location
  suspect weapon information
  personal or group medical needs
  call back number
WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVE

- Fast response may be extremely violent
- Pass over injured
- Secure area, conduct search
- Criminal investigation
UCIPD

- 41 Sworn Officers
- Active Shooter Trained
- 911 Dispatch Center
- 24/7 Patrol
- County-wide support from local agencies

Equipment:
- Rifles
- Ballistic helmets and shields
- Less lethal options
- 40 mm launcher
- Pepperball gun
- Taser
Emergency Notifications

- zotALERT text message
- ZotMail email message
- Desktop notification
- Classroom Beacons = NEW
- UCI Emergency Hotline: 866-IRV-NEWS
- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Nixle)
CAMPUS CONSULTATION TEAM

Marcelle Hayashida, Ph.D.
AVC, Wellness, Health & Counseling Services
https://whcs.uci.edu/
CAMPUS CONSULTATION TEAM

- **Purpose**
  - Established in the early 1990s by Dr. Thomas Parham
  - Addresses crises that demand a sense of urgency & require the involvement of various department heads both during & after these emergent situations concerning students & university personnel

- **Structure**
  - **Core Group**
    - Counseling Center
    - AVC WH&CS
    - UCI Police
    - Campus Social Work
    - Legal Counsel
    - Student Life & Leadership
  - **Activated Members**
To Activate the Consultation Team:

- A faculty or staff member – Point of Contact – believes that a critical incident or circumstance has reached a high level of concern.
- Point of Contact consults a member of the UCI Consultation Team Core Group.
- The Core Group may activate some (or all) members of the UCI Consultation Team, including those areas determined to have a need to know and/or are relevant for the planning of interventions.
- Point of Contact personnel receive coordinated plans of action for various critical scenarios, with duties and responsibilities assigned to the appropriate unit.
Student with a history of depression posted something on Facebook suggesting preparation to end their own life. The classmate feels burdened and sends you a screenshot. What do you do?
LET’S THINK ABOUT IT

1. Shouldn’t carry the burden of the classmate
2. Call the police
3. Refer the student to the Counseling Center
4. Student may be hospitalized
5. Student could come back (virtually or physically)
• QPR
• StepUp! Bystander Training
• UCIPD Safety Training
• ComPsych
• Case Management Team for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Misconduct
• CARE
• UCI Student Health Center
• Disability Services Center
• Faculty/Staff Support Services
• Graduate Counselor Resources at Grad Division
• https://whcs.uci.edu/