

Assisting Students in Distress

Recognize . Respond . Refer



EMMANUEL
COLLEGE

Counseling Center

The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize symptoms of a student in distress and identify appropriate referrals to campus and community resources.

Recognize

Emmanuel faculty and staff are in a unique position to notice and respond with compassion to EC students who may be in distress. Students may feel alone, isolated and even hopeless when faced with academic and life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences. You may be the first person to notice the student in distress since you have frequent contact and may initially see the effects of distress on their performance.

Respond with Compassion

The Counseling Center and the College ask that you act with compassion when interacting with such students. Communicate Verbally and Non-verbally. Make eye contact, keep your body turned toward the person speaking and listen quietly. You might also practice active listening, which involves paraphrasing what you've just heard, and ask open-ended questions to send the message that you're ready to hear more.

Students exhibiting concerning behaviors are likely having difficulties in other areas; however, you may be the first person to notice and thus become an important resource for students.

Refer and Consult

Sometimes students cannot or will not turn to family or friends. Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in saving a student's academic career or even their life. In this folder are on-campus resources to help students and to support you in reaching out to them.

Trust your instincts and consult with someone if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed or threatened!

What About Privacy?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows EC faculty and staff to share observations and concerns about students' behavior, statements and/or general wellbeing with the EC personnel responsible for the welfare of students and with law enforcement, as suggested in this document.

FERPA and other student privacy regulations generally allow EC to release such information to parents, police or others 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 disclosures are appropriate can be answered by the CARE team or Counseling Center.

Early Warning Indicators of Distress – What to Look For



Academic Indicators	Physical Indicators	Psychological Indicators	Safety Risk Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sudden decline in quality of work and grades ✓ Repeated absences ✓ Verbal aggressiveness in class meetings ✓ Disorganized or erratic performance ✓ Continual seeking of special accommodations such as extensions ✓ Writing or presentations that indicate extremes of hopelessness, social isolation, rage, despair or bizarre content ✓ Overly demanding of faculty and staff attention ✓ More personal rather than academic counseling during office hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deterioration in physical appearance including grooming, hygiene or weight loss/gain ✓ Changes in typical clothing (baggy clothing; long sleeves) ✓ Excessive fatigue or sleep disturbance ✓ Coming to class bleary-eyed, hung over, or smelling of alcohol ✓ Disorientated or “out of it” ✓ Garbled, tangential, disconnected or slurred speech ✓ Behavior is out of context or bizarre ✓ Delusions or paranoia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-disclosure of personal distress such as family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief ✓ Unusual or disproportionate responses to events ✓ Excessive tearfulness or panic reactions ✓ Irritability or unusual apathy ✓ Verbal abuse (taunting, badgering, intimidation) ✓ Expressions of concern about the student by their peers ✓ Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unprovoked anger or hostility ✓ Physical violence (shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon) ✓ Implying or making threats to harm self or others ✓ Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideation or violent behaviors ✓ Any written note or verbal statement that has a “sense of finality” or “going away for a long time” (suicidality) ✓ Stalking or harassing ✓ Self-injurious or self-destructive behaviors

Please Note:

- Look for groupings, frequency, duration and severity – not just isolated symptoms.
- None of these warning indicators alone is sufficient for predicting mental health problems, aggression, and/or violence to self or others. When presented in combination, they indicate the need for consultation with your supervisor and possibly with Counseling staff or CARE team to further analyze and determine an appropriate intervention.
- Know your limits. Stay within the boundaries of your professional role.
- It is better to act sooner rather than later.

Faculty and Staff Guide

Responding & Referring Student Behavior Issues

Campus Security	Counseling Center	Dean of Students & CARE TEAM/ Student Affairs	Advising & ARC/Disability Services	Human Resources Title 9 Coordinators Bias Response Team
617-735-9888	617-735-9920	Dean of Students: 617-735-9917 CARE Team: 617-735-9917	Advising: 617-735-9872 ARC/Disability Services: 617-735-9755	617-735-9991
<p>Threat of imminent harm</p> <p>Threats: in person or via phone, email and/or social media</p> <p>Aggressive behavior towards faculty and/or students</p> <p>Student agitated w/ weapon</p> <p>Student not complying with directive to leave classroom/lab/studio</p> <p>Student actively consuming alcohol and/or drugs</p>	<p>Concern for student's mental health such as depression/anxiety</p> <p>Concerns about potential self-harm</p> <p>Concerning behavior assumed related to mental health</p> <p>Student requesting additional emotional support</p> <p>www.emmanuel.edu/counseling</p>	<p>Unusual or lengthy Absenteeism Jury duty</p> <p>Significant behavior changes</p> <p>Attending class under the influence of alcohol/ or drugs</p> <p>Death of family member (Also helpful to inform Campus Ministry at 617-735-9703)</p> <p>Concerning behavior such as sleeping in class, confronting others, being aggressive without threat</p> <p>Disruptive or inappropriate use of technology (i.e. pornography; harassment)</p> <p>Conversations around family issues, financial issues, roommate concern</p>	<p>Absenteeism</p> <p>Inappropriate in-class behavior such as phone use, talking</p> <p>Poor academic performance</p> <p>Request for academic accommodations</p> <p>Stress related to academics</p> <p>Uncertainty about major</p> <p>Disrespectful emails</p>	<p>Reports of sexual assault, harassment or gender discrimination</p> <p>Other forms of discrimination, bias or harassment including racial, sexual orientation, nationality, religion or disabilities.</p>

Response Tips

Use the tips to help you refer the student to one of the resources listed.

- **Safety First:** The welfare of the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call for help.
- **Listen Sensitively and Carefully:**
 - Speak with the student in private.
 - Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice.
 - Express concern. Be as specific as possible in stating your observations and reasons for concern.
 - Listen carefully to everything the student says.
 - Repeat the essence of what the student has told you so your attempts to understand are communicated.
 - Avoid criticizing, judgmental, threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.
 - Assess the situation and determine if the student may benefit from meeting with a Counselor. If so, refer the student to Counseling Services. The Counseling Center has emergency walk in hours from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday if the situation cannot wait for a regular appointment.
- **Be Proactive:** Engage students early on, setting limits on disruptive behavior.
- **Be Direct:** Don't be afraid to 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:** Direct the student to the physical location of the identified resource.
- **Consultation & Documentation:** Always document your interactions with distressed students and consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incident.

Campus Resources for Students

EC Campus Security ADM 139 <i>For concerns about students that pose an immediate danger to hurt self or others</i>	617-735-9888
EC Counseling Center ADM 151 <i>For consultation about students of concern and helping connect students to counseling services</i>	617-735-9920
After Hours Assistance Campus Security <i>For crisis resource for students after business hours</i>	617-735.9888

Campus Resources for Faculty/Staff

All One Health - Employee Assistance <i>For concerns about a colleague and referrals to counseling</i>	877-720-7770
Human Resources EC Campus Security <i>For concerning faculty/staff behavior</i>	617-735-9991 617-735-9888

Community Resources for Students, Faculty and Staff

Boston Police <i>For off-campus concerns about safety and wellbeing</i>	617-343-4500
Samaritans (call or text) <i>For immediate confidential crisis support</i>	877-870-4673
Crisis Text Line <i>For immediate confidential crisis support</i>	text "start" to 741-741
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline <i>For immediate confidential crisis support</i>	800-273-8255
GLBT Youth Hotline <i>For immediate confidential crisis support</i>	866-488-7386
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center <i>For free and confidential counseling, legal advocacy, medical accompaniment</i>	617-492-RAPE
Beth Israel Deaconess Emergency Room <i>Hospital close to campus for medical and mental health evaluations</i>	617-754-2450 190 Pilgrim Road, Boston, MA