

SAY SOMETHING!



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL TEXAS

This guide can be used as a resource for faculty and staff to identify, help, and refer students who may be experiencing distress. The Division of Student Affairs is available for consultation if assistance is needed. For concerning behavior of faculty or staff, contact the Office of the Provost or Employee Services respectively.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

RECOGNIZE CONCERNS

- Out of the normal behavior
- Threatening behavior
- Tardiness or excessive absences
- Repetitive excuses
- Classroom disruption
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Talk of suicide or suicidal thoughts (directly or indirectly)
- Disclosure of sexual assault/harrassment/relationship violence
- Depressed, stressed appearance
- Dramatic change in academic work
- Noticeable change in personal hygiene

WHAT TO DO

- Talk to the student in private and allow plenty of time for a real conversation. Don't just "check in"
- Express your concern for the student's well-being in non-judgmental terms
- Focus on listening and not fixing
- Determine what resources might best assist the student (student affairs, counseling, academic support)
- Refer the student to appropriate resources

CRISIS SITUATIONS

If a student exhibits behaviors that you feel indicate IMMEDIATE DANGER TO SELF OR SOMEONE ELSE:

- Call TAMUCTPD at 501-5800 from your cell phone or off campus or 5800 from a campus phone
- Or call 911

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Emergency (TAMUCT Police Dept.)
Counseling Center
Behavioral Intervention Team
Academic Integrity

254-501-5800
254-519-5403
254-501-5909
254-501-5909

Disability Support and Access
Absences from Class
Employee Services
Student Conduct

254-501-5836
254-501-5909
254-519-8016
254-501-5909

WHY SAY SOMETHING?

Students touch all parts of our institution. It is possible that students may be demonstrating similar behavior elsewhere in the institution.

Knowing the extent of the disruptive behavior can be helpful in determining the level of intervention the student may need.

REFERRALS

For general questions or consultation please call the Division of Student Affairs at (254)501-5909

THREATENING BEHAVIOR

If you see or are dealing with threatening behavior or other unusual situations in which a student appears extremely aggressive:

UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT
Emergency: 9-911 (on campus)
Non-emergency: 254-501-5800
www.tamuct.edu/security

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION TEAM
(for non-emergency)
Phone: 254-501-5909
<http://www.tamuct.edu/BAT>

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
(for non-emergency)
Phone: 254-501-5909
www.tamuct.edu/studentaffairs

DISABILITY

If you are working with a student with a disability who needs assistance, contact:

DISABILITY SUPPORT AND ACCESS
Phone: 254-501-5836
www.tamuct.edu/disabilitysupport/faculty-disability

CLASS ABSENCES

We encourage faculty members to refer students early when exhibiting difficulties. Referrals should be made to Student Affairs. Reasons for referral may include: •Excessive absences during the first couple of weeks •Not attending class •Failing (or missing) an exam •Failing to turn in assignments •No response to professor's expressed concerns

STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

If you believe that a student may be experiencing a psychological or emotional crisis, or needs to speak with someone, contact:

COUNSELING CENTER
Phone: 254-519-5403
www.tamuct.edu/counseling

ALCOHOL DRUGS

If you have reason to believe that a student may have abuse or dependence issues related to alcohol or other drugs, the Counseling Center may be able to assist.

COUNSELING CENTER
Phone: 254-519-5403
www.tamuct.edu/counseling

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT

If you believe that a student has been the victim of sexual harassment or assault or the student discloses having been sexually harassed or assaulted, contact:

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
(for non-emergency)
Phone: 254-501-5909
www.tamuct.edu/studentaffairs

UNIVERSITY TITLE IX COORDINATOR
(for non-emergency)
Phone: 254-519-5722
www.tamuct.edu/compliance/titleix

The University may be required to take action under Title IX of the Education Amendments to take certain action. Additional information about sexual and/or gender-based harassment or assault and what victims should do is included on the Office of Student Conduct website.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How should I respond when classroom disruption occurs?

Responding to disruptive behavior depends on a number of factors. The instructor responsible for the class or activity should inform the student that the behavior is inappropriate. The instructor should describe specifically what needs to change. The student should then be given an opportunity to modify the behavior. The instructor should follow up with a written summary of the needed change(s). Involve others as appropriate. Even when there is no threat of harm it may be helpful to report this behavior to your department chair or supervisor. The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs is also available for consultation.

Behavior of concern may also be reported at: www.tamuct.edu/BAT.

2. What is the follow-up procedure with faculty when students are referred to a specific department?

Depending on the department where the student was referred, someone may or may not follow up with the reporting faculty members. Records of students who are referred to counseling or medical help are not released unless written permission is given by the student. For assistance in following up about a student, contact the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs.

3. What confidentiality standards should I follow?

The Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) allows school officials to share personally identifiable information from student education records (like grades or conduct) with other school officials who have a legitimate educational interest. In an emergency, FERPA permits school officials to disclose without a student's consent to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. At such times, records and information may be released to appropriate parties such as law enforcement, public health officials, and medical personnel.

4. How should I report a concern that came from a private conversation with a student?

Even when there is no threat of harm, it is suggested that you involve others when a conversation or interaction with a student causes concern. You may find it helpful to discuss this with your department head or supervisor. The Counseling Center and the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs are also available for consultation.

5. If I submit a report about concerning behavior, will I remain anonymous?

It is possible to remain anonymous when reporting concerning behaviors or other incidents; however, this type of reporting may limit or prolong the process of finding a solution or helping the individual.

6. I believe the student's behavior might be a violation of our Code of Student Conduct. What can I do?

Submit a community incident report through the Office of Student Conduct. The form is an opportunity for any individual in the TAMUCT community to provide information concerning an alleged TAMUCT rule violation. More information may be obtained at www.tamuct.edu/studentconduct.

7. Will I be liable for defamation if I call the police or refer a student for disciplinary action and it is later determined I made an honest mistake?

"The risk of liability for making such a report is virtually nil. There are strong public reasons to support and protect individuals who make good faith reports of wrongdoing to appropriate officials, even if those reports later prove to be mistaken. Common law (or statutes in some states) give people who report misconduct to proper authorities a 'qualified privilege.' That means they cannot be held liable for defamation unless their report was made in bad faith, with knowledge the information they provided was false, or in reckless disregard of its truth or falsity." (Pavela, G. (2001). Questions and answers on classroom disruption: A guide for professors and instructors on how to handle disruptive students. *Association for Student Judicial Affairs (ASJA) Law and Policy Article, No. 26*)

WHY SAY SOMETHING?

Students may demonstrate similar behavior in other parts of TAMUCT.

Sharing what you know can help us determine the best intervention and support for each student's needs.

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION TEAM (BIT)

After tragic events at Virginia Tech and other universities involving campus violence, institutions of higher education began looking more closely at how to monitor, assess, and intervene (when necessary), to promote a healthy and safe campus for students, faculty, staff, and community members.

The Behavioral Intervention Team meets regularly to assess, intervene, and/or provide timely resources and support for students displaying concerning behavior or experiencing problems that might lead to disruptive or dangerous behaviors. The BIT doesn't profile and its goal is to prevent the worst case scenario.

Team Members:

Dean of Student Affairs
Associate Director of Student Conduct
Coordinator for Disability Support & Access
Institutional Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator
Director of Counseling Services
Director of Public Safety
Director of Employee Services
Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Undergraduate Studies

At one time or another everyone feels upset or distressed. We encourage the TAMUCT community to report any concern they have about a student. Possible concerns range from financial aid concerns, absences, death in the family, and more.

What to report:

- Facts (Keep opinions out of your report)
- Provide what you see, not speculation
- Use descriptive language. Do not use diagnostic terms
- Be as specific as possible about dates and places.

Here are some things to be on the lookout for:

- Changes in academic performance in the classroom
- Change in pattern of interaction
- Changes in physical appearance
- Problems concentrating & remembering things or making decisions
- Repeated requests for special consideration
- New or regularly occurring behavior which pushes the limits and may interfere with class
- Manipulating or being disruptive to other students, faculty, or staff
- Persistent sadness or unexplained crying
- High levels of irritability or inappropriate excitement
- Outbursts of anger
- Irrational conversation or speech that seems disconnected
- Statements related to death or hopelessness
- Threats of harming self or harming others

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