Assisting Students with Emotional and/or Behavioral Concerns

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Counseling & Consultation Services (CCS)
Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
CCS Services

- Walk-In Appointments
  - Monday - Friday, 11:00 - 3:30
- Individual & Group Counseling
- Substance Use & Eating Concern Assessments
- Crisis Intervention
- Consultation
  - Faculty, Staff, & Teaching Assistants
  - Students, friends, parents, & family members
  - Other mental health and health professionals
- Outreach presentations & programs
- Services are mostly no cost to students with a few exceptions
Behavioral Concerns

- Student behavior, especially sudden/significant changes, can be indicative of personal, emotional, & psychological problems
  - Often the “first sign” of concern that something is happening
  - May be more observable at first compared to underlying emotional concerns
  - Can disrupt the learning environment & make it more challenging for you to be effective in your classroom
  - May cause you to feel concerned about your safety or the safety of others
Emotional Concerns

• Can also disrupt your classroom
  • Sometimes in more subtle ways (sometimes not)

• May cause you to feel concerned about a students well-being & personal safety

• Can lead to challenges to maintain professional and personal boundaries, areas of expertise
Tips for Interacting with Students of Concern

• Clear verbal & nonverbal communication
  • Maintain eye contact & listen
  • Non-threatening body language
  • Establish limits when necessary and specify what needs to happen next

• Stay calm & keep your emotions in check

• Ask how you can help/provide assistance
Barriers to Seeking Consultation

- I “should” be able to handle the situation & control my classroom
- I don’t want to escalate the situation &/or I don’t want to interfere with a student’s personal affairs
- Academic freedom; wanting to encourage open discussions, dialogue, and debate in class
- Misunderstanding of FERPA and what information can be communicated to other parties on campus
Consult Early!

• Consultation always available
  • We can help you assess the situation & review next steps
  • We can make recommendations & offer our expertise about how we (or others) can help

• Crisis intervention available 24 hours
  • During the day, call CCS at 753-1206
  • After office hours or over weekends, call University Police at 753-1212 and ask to speak with the CCS on-call counselor
  • In emergency situations, always call 911 first!
Counseling & Consultation Services
Campus Life Building 200

815-753-1206
www.niu.edu/counseling