Northern Illinois University
Assisting Students with Emotional and/or Behavioral Concerns
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Counseling & Consultation Services (CCS)
Division of Student Affairs

Counseling & Consultation Services (CCS)
Campus Life Building 200
815-753-1206
www.niu.edu/counseling

CCS Services
• Initial Consultation Appointments
  • Monday- Friday, 11:00 - 3:30
• Individual & Group Counseling
• Crisis Response & Support
• Substance UseEducation Program & Eating Concerns/Body Image Assessment
• Consultation
  • With faculty, staff & TAs/GAs
  • With students, friends, parents, & family members
  • With other mental health and health professionals
• Outreach presentations & programs
• Services are NO COST (mostly) to students

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 potentially disrupt the learning environment & make it more challenging for you to manage the 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 student’s wellbeing & personal safety
• Can lead to challenges to maintain professional and/or personal boundaries
  • You might feel pulled to exceed your areas of expertise and the responsibilities of your role

Tips for Interacting with Students of Concern
• Ask to speak privately whenever possible
• Stay calm & keep your emotions in check
• Clear verbal & nonverbal communication
  • Non-threatening, relaxed body language
  • Express your specific concerns & observations
  • Maintain eye contact & listen
  • Ask direct questions if necessary, including any concerns you might have about suicidal thoughts
  • Establish limits/expectations if necessary and specify what needs to happen next
• 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 life
- 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 (FERPA vs. confidentiality)

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 support for mental health emergencies available 24 hours
  - During the day, call CCS at 815-753-1206
  - After office hours or over weekends, also call 815-753-1206 and you will be directly connected to the CCS on-call service
  - In emergency situations, always call 911 first!
- CONSULT, CONSULT, CONSULT

Helpful Information is a Click Away (or you can use the phone too)

- When you are concerned about a student and feel they might benefit from or need counseling support, click the “Seeking Help for Others” link on the CCS website: [www.niu.edu/counseling/help-for-others/staff-faculty/index.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/counseling/help-for-others/staff-faculty/index.shtml)
- If you feel others outside of CCS need to be aware of a student’s non-emergency behavior, contact Student Conduct
- You can also complete a Student of Concern Report on the Student Conduct website (for non-emergency or non-urgent behavioral concerns): [www.niu.edu/conduct/incident-reporting/student-of-concern.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/conduct/incident-reporting/student-of-concern.shtml)

The End

Thank You!
Questions, Thoughts, Comments?