



## Helping Students with Mental Health Problems

Mental health problems take different forms and vary greatly in severity. Students experience the same types of issues as the general population. Research suggests college students are more prone to anxiety and depression than similar age groups in the general population.

### What are the warning signs?

- A **sudden deterioration** in academic performance or motivation, including persistent absences.
- Complete or sudden **withdrawal** from activities once considered important.
- An **obsessive** attitude towards work or an **unrealistic preoccupation** with failure.
- **Mood swings**, irritability, **uncontrollable crying**.
- Signs of **extreme anxiety, agitation** or **panic**.
- Misuse of **alcohol** or **drugs**.
- **Mental confusion/disorientation** or paranoia.
- Expressions of **hopelessness**, despair, apathy.
- Verbal and/or written **statements of suicide**.
- **Changes in appearance**: unkempt, weight change, decline in personal hygiene.

### What to do if it is a CRISIS

If a student threatens to harm themselves or others and their behavior suggests they will act on the threat:

- **Contact Campus Public Safety at 738-4199** in order to initiate the appropriate crisis response.
- Tell the student what you are doing: “I am worried about you so I’m calling someone that can help keep you safe.”

### What to do if you are worried about a student

- **Think carefully** beforehand about what you can or cannot do.
- Consider whether there **might be a conflict** of interest with any of your other responsibilities.
- Be prepared to **limit your involvement** e.g.. “I can help you with the academic side but you need to seek expert advice from your doctor...”
- **Refer** them to Psychological Services. Students can access up to 5 free personal counseling sessions and obtain community referrals.

### What if they refuse help?

- **Reassure** students that disclosures to a doctor, therapist or religious leader can remain confidential.
- **Point out the consequences of not seeking help**; that the problem will not go away by itself and that academic performance could decline.
- **Consult** with your colleagues, Dean or Psychological Services at 738-4459 or 738-4351.

### Other Resources

**Suicide Prevention Lifeline** (24/7 Hotline)

**800-273-8255**

**SM County Psychiatric ER Services** (Available 24 hrs)

**650-573-2662**

**Crisis Line** (24/7 Hotline)

**650-579-0350**

**SF County Psychiatric ER Services** (Available 24 hrs)

**415-206-8125**

**Crisis Center** (24/7 Hotline)

**415-781-0500**

**Skyline College Psychological Services**

**Room 2221**

**Beverly Muse, MFT 738-4459**

**Liz Llamas, MFT 738-4351**