

ASSISTING STUDENTS



SEE SOMETHING? SAY SOMETHING. DO SOMETHING!



TELEPHONE NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

(from a campus phone, dial the last four digits)

EMERGENCY: For life threatening situations, please call the *Office of Public Safety* at 812/492-7777.

Primary Emergency Contacts:

Office of Public Safety (non-emergency)	812/464-1845
Dean of Students Office	812/464-1862
Counseling Center	812/464-1867
Housing and Residence Life	812/468-2000
University Health Center	812/465-1250

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Multicultural Center	812/465-7188
Office of Disability Resources	812/464-1961
Religious Life	812/464-1871
Wellness and Community Outreach Services	812/461-5268
Veteran Student Support Services	812/464-1857

In serious situations, **DO NOT** e-mail! Get a USI C.A.R.E. Team Member on the phone. If in doubt, call the *Office of Public Safety* or the *Dean of Students Office*.

If a student is causing a disruption, but does NOT pose a threat:

- Refer to the *Counseling Center* flow chart.
- Ensure your safety in the environment.
- Use a calm, non-confrontational approach to defuse/de-escalate the situation.
- Set limits by explaining how the behavior is inappropriate.
- If behavior continues, ask the student to stop and warn him/her that official action will be taken—you've already given a warning.
- If you believe there is a safety risk, contact the *Office of Public Safety* or the *Dean of Students Office* immediately. **DO NOT** e-mail or leave a voicemail message—get someone on the phone.

DISRUPTIVE STUDENT

A student whose conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening (includes self-harming behaviors).

SAFETY CONCERNS

If you are concerned for your safety or the safety of others due to a student's disruptive and/or threatening behavior, or to report an injury, call the

Office of Public Safety
-OR-
Dean of Students Office

DISTRESSED STUDENT

A student with a cluster of persistent behaviors who seems unduly anxious, sad, irritable, withdrawn, or confused; lacks motivation or concentration; seeks constant attention; demonstrates bizarre or erratic behaviors; or expresses suicidal thoughts.

GETTING HELP

Consultation and Referrals:

- Dean of Students Office
- Counseling Center
- Office of Disability Resources
- Housing and Residence Life
- Office of Public Safety

FEDERAL MANDATED REPORTING

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act or Clery Act

is a federal statute that requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. The University of Southern Indiana encourages all faculty, staff, students, and guests to report criminal incidents, accidents, and any other emergencies to the *Office of Public Safety* either by telephone, e-mail, or in person. The *Office of Public Safety* also provides ways to report non-emergency criminal or USI policy/code of conduct violations anonymously through the "Silent Witness" program or through their telephone Tip Line (812/228-5029 or x5029). Any incident may also be reported directly to a uniformed Office of Public Safety campus protection officer. For more information, visit www.usi.edu/security.

ASSISTING STUDENTS

IN GENERAL

Safety first: The welfare of the student and the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. The most effective means of preventing violence is providing coordinated professional help and follow-up care.

Trust your instincts: If you experience any sense of uneasiness about a student, or about what to do, it is important to pay attention to those signals. Seek consultation from your department chair, or supervisor, the *Dean of Students Office* or the *Counseling Center*. Report safety concerns and conduct violations promptly.

Listen sensitively and carefully: Distressed students need to be seen, heard, and helped. Many students will have trouble articulating their feelings. Don't be afraid to ask students directly if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feel confused, or have thoughts of harming themselves or others.

Avoid escalation: Especially with disruptive students, avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses. Use a non-confrontational approach. Help students connect with the necessary college resources for assistance.

Be proactive: Engage students early on, setting limits on disruptive or self-destructive behavior. Use the class syllabus to inform students in writing of standards and expectations for classroom conduct and of possible consequences for disruptive behavior.

Disability Resources: If you are concerned about, or have questions about assisting a student who has or may have a disability, contact the *Office of Disability Resources*.

Help them get help: Be available. Show interest and offer support. Refer the students to campus departments or offices that have the necessary expertise and personnel to help. Use one of the *Telephone Numbers at a Glance* on the front of this folder.

Work as a team: Share information and consult with the *Dean of Students Office* to coordinate care for students, including when to reach out to parents. Safeguard students' privacy rights. Serious or persistent inappropriate behavior should always be reported and may result in disciplinary action.

Don't agree to keep secrets when it comes to matters of safety.

What about Privacy Laws and Confidentiality?

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern under the following circumstances:

- USI may disclose personal identifiable information from an "educational record" to appropriate individuals in connection with a **health and safety emergency**. Information may be released to parents, police, or others, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.
- Information can be released to college personnel when there is a specific need to know and should be limited to the essentials of college business.
- Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not "educational records" or FERPA protected. Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.
- If you have any questions about FERPA, please contact the *Dean of Students Office*.

USI C.A.R.E. Team

<p><i>Dean of Students—Chair</i></p> <p>Academic Affairs</p> <p>Counseling Center</p> <p>Housing and Residence Life</p> <p>Multicultural Center</p> <p>Office of Public Safety</p> <p>Student Affairs</p>	<p>Consultation Partners: <i>(as needed)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Colleges • International Programs & Services • Office of Disability Resources • Religious Life • University Health Center • Veteran Student Support Services
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For more information, go to www.usi.edu/deanofstudents.

ASSISTING STUDENTS



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BE ALERT TO WARNING SIGNS OF A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

You may be the first, or only, person in a position to help a student in need. Even if you are not an expert, it is important to remember that you have the ability to help. Being aware of distress signals, ways to intervene, and resources will assist you in responding effectively. If you find yourself feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened, take these signals seriously. Help the student by calling the *Dean of Students Office* and sharing your concerns. You will be making a positive difference, maybe even saving a student's life by being available at the right place at the right time.

INDICATORS OF DISTRESS

Look for multiple indicators and consider the frequency, duration, and severity—not just isolated symptoms.

ACADEMIC INDICATORS may include:	PHYSICAL INDICATORS may include:	PSYCHOSOCIAL INDICATORS may include:	SAFETY RISK INDICATORS may include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decline in quality of work/grades. Repeated absences. Disorganized thinking in writings/presentations. Repeated requests for extensions. Overly demanding of faculty/staff time and attention. Conduct that interferes with classroom (or activity) engagement. Bizarre content in writings/presentations. Meetings with the student are dominated by personal content rather than educational matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marked changes in physical appearance. Includes a deterioration in grooming, changes in hygiene, and weight loss/gain. Excessive fatigue, listlessness. Sleeping too much or too little. Intoxication, hang over, smelling of alcohol. Disoriented, "out of it," or forgetful. Garbled, rambling, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech. Behavior out of context. Strange ideas/beliefs or paranoia. Isolation/withdrawal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive self-disclosure of personal distress, losses, family problems, or financial difficulties. Withdrawal or agitation. Unusual/disproportional emotional response to events. Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or apathy. Antagonistic and impulsive behavior. Verbally abusive. (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation) Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers. Loss of pleasure. Major shifts in mood. Recent major stressor, such as: loss of loved one, relationship break-up, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anger or hostility with little provocation. Physical violence (e.g., shoving, grabbing, assault, use of a weapon). Direct threat to harm self or others. Vague statements about suicide or homicide (e.g., "Can't go on like this"). Academic assignments dominated by themes of hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out suicidal ideations/violent behaviors—a "cry for help". Stalking or harassing others. Communicating threats via e-mail, correspondence, and phone calls. Appears hopeless or helpless.

ASSISTING STUDENTS

USI C.A.R.E. Team Campus Action Response and Engagement of Students in Distress

Preparing to reach out to the student:

- Know the available campus resources and the referral process.
- Consult with the *Counseling Center* to explore the issues involved and your options.
- With disruptive students, review your physical environment and make provisions for your safety and that of others. If necessary, notify colleagues in close proximity of your intended course of action.
- Allow sufficient time to thoroughly address the issue(s) of concern.
- Remain calm and know who to call for assistance in case of need.
- Review the *Counseling Center* flow chart.
- When a student expresses a direct threat to self or others, (the red path on the *Counseling Center* flow chart), or acts in a bizarre, highly irrational, or disruptive manner, call the *Office of Public Safety*.
- If you decide not to intervene with the student, report the situation to the *Dean of Students Office*.

When engaging with the student:

- Connect with the distressed student. If safe, meet and talk in private to minimize embarrassment and defensiveness.
- Clearly express your concerns, focusing on the behavior in non-disparaging terms.
- Help the student to see a different perspective, but do not challenge, shock, or become argumentative with the student.
- Use open-ended questions with empathy and be supportive.
- Repeat the student's statement in your own words to demonstrate an understanding of the student's perspective, and to help him/her feel heard.
- Do not minimize the possibility of suicide. If at all worried ask—it does not implant the idea! Ask about suicide in a direct manner. (e.g., "When feeling really bad, people often wish they were dead and they may think about suicide. I'm wondering if you're feeling that way too?")
- Offer supportive alternatives/resources, but only after listening and fully understanding.
- Respect the student's privacy without making false promises of confidentiality.
- Explore the student's support system.
- Emphasize the importance of professional help for the student (as needed).
- Attempt to foster a sense of hope.
- Normalize distress—everyone struggles at challenging times.

Making a referral:

- Be frank with the student about your limits (time, expertise, student's reluctance to talk).
- Review the *Counseling Center* flow chart and direct the student to assistance.
- Recommend services and provide the student with realistic expectations.
- Frame any decision to seek and accept help as a positive, intelligent, and wise choice.
- Reassure them that students often seek help over the course of their college career to effectively achieve their goals.
- It is normal to experience distress during times of crisis. If comfortable, share your own story while normalizing struggle and fostering a sense of hope.
- Make sure the student understands what actions are necessary.
- As necessary, encourage and assist the student to make and keep appointments with USI support staff.
- If necessary, find someone to stay with the student while calls to the appropriate resources are made. Offer to accompany the student.
- Set a follow-up appointment with him/her even after you have connected them to resources (e.g., counseling).