Faculty/Staff Reference to Assist Students in Distress

Indicators of Distress: What to look for

Be aware of the following indicators of distress. Look for groupings, frequency, duration and severity — not just isolated symptoms.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Academic Indicators</th>
<th>Physical Indicators</th>
<th>Psychological Indicators</th>
<th>Safety Risk Indicators</th>
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<tr>
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Indicators of Distress: What to look for — continued

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disorganized performance
- Multiple requests for extensions
- Overly demanding of faculty and staff time and attention
- Bizarre content in writings or presentations
- You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours

Academic Indicators

- Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain
- Excessive fatigue/deep disturbance
- Intoxication, hangovers, or smelling of alcohol
- Disoriented or "out of it"
- Garbled, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech
- Behavior is out of context or bizarre
- Delusions and paranoia

Physical Indicators

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated absences
- Disorganized performance
- Multiple requests for extensions
- Overly demanding of faculty and staff time and attention
- Bizarre content in writings or presentations
- You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours

Psychological Indicators

- Self-disclosure of personal distress such as family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief
- Unusual/disproportional emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions
- Irritability or unusual apathy
- Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers

Safety Risk Indicators

- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Physical violence (shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon)
- Imposing or making a direct threat to harm self or others
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors — a "cry for help"
- Stalking or harassing
- Communicating threats via email, correspondence, texting, or phone calls

WHAT ABOUT PRIVACY?

Compassion.

Change. Action.

Photo courtesy: University of California, Berkeley

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows University faculty and staff to share observations about the behavior of students, statements made by students, and concerns about students generally with UC personnel who have responsibility for the welfare of students, and with law enforcement, as suggested in this document.

FERPA and other student privacy regulations generally allow the University to release such information to parents, police or others whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

Appropriate consideration for student privacy should be given before information is shared with people other than those suggested in this document, and questions about when such disclosure is appropriate can be answered by the campus Office of Legal Affairs.
Resources & Tips

Use the tips below to help you refer the student to one of the resources listed on the right.

- **Safety First:** The welfare of the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call for help.

- **Listen S sensitively and Carefully:** Use a non-confrontational approach, and a calm voice. Avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.

- **Be Proactive:** Engage students early on, setting limits on disruptive behavior.

- **Be Direct:** Don’t be afraid to ask students directly if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feeling confused, or having thoughts of harming themselves or others.

- **Follow Through:** Direct the student to the physical location of the identified resource.

- **Consultation & Documentation:** Always document your interactions with distressed students and consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incident.

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**Campus Resources for Students**

- **Counseling and Psychological Services**
  For consultation about students of concern and for help connecting students to counseling or other resources
  $10,642.9494

- **After-Hours Assistance Line**
  For consultation after CPS business hours and as a crisis resource
  855.817.5667

- **Students of Concern Committee**
  For campus support with distressed or disruptive students and for cross-departmental sharing of information
  $10,664.4218

- **UC Police Department**
  For concerns about students who may pose an immediate danger to hurtself or others
  Emergency 911
  510.642.3333 (from cell phone)

**Campus Resources for Faculty/Staff**

- **CARE Services Employee Assistance**
  For concerns about a colleague and referrals to counseling
  $10,643.7754

- **Manager, Employee Relations Unit, Human Resources**
  For assessment of threatening or potentially violent faculty/staff behavior
  510.647.7163
  510.647.6760

**Community Resources for Students, Faculty/Staff**

- **Berkeley Police Department Non-Emergency**
  For off-campus concerns about safety and well-being
  510.981.9900

- **Alameda County 24-hour Crisis Hotline**
  National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  For immediate, confidential crisis support and intervention
  800.309.2131
  800.273.TALK (8255)

- **Alta Bates Summit Medical Center**
  This is the closest hospital and ER to campus, located at 2450 Ashby Ave., just east of Telegraph Ave.
  510.204.4444

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**Campus Protocol**

**Who To Contact:**

Follow the chart to determine who to contact when faced with a disruptive or distressed student.

**Is the student a danger to him/herself or others or for any other reason does the student need immediate assistance?**

- **YES**
  The student’s conduct is clearly and immediately reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or distressing— including self-harm.
  **Call 911 or UC Police Department 510.642.5555**

- **I’M NOT SURE**
  The student shows signs of distress, but I am unsure how serious it is. My interaction has left me feeling uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.
  **Call 911 or UC Police Department 510.642.5555 or UC Police Department Non-Emergency 510.981.9900**

- **NO**
  I am not concerned for the student’s immediate safety, but he/she is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.
  **Refer student to an appropriate campus resource.**
  See above panel for options.
  For a complete list visit the CARE Services website.

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**Support for faculty & staff after working with a disruptive or distressed student:**

CARE Services 510.643.7754
Students of Concern Committee (SOCC)

STUDENT OF CONCERN RESPONSE

When a student exhibits behaviors of high concern and could potentially be a risk to self and others the SOCC coordinates a proactive effort to prevent and/or manage the situation. SOCC is NOT for emergencies if there is an emergency call UCPD 510-642-3333.

Referable Concerning Behaviors

• Unusual or erratic behavior in class, in the residence halls, during advising sessions, etc
• Extended absence from class or activities by a typically engaged student
• Written work or creative expression with troubling themes or references
• Verbal or written threats made by a student toward another student, faculty, and/or staff
• Written or verbal expressions of suicidal ideation or intent
• Other actions which cause an alarm or call into question the safety of the student or their peers

PROCESS

A faculty or staff member (hereafter Point of Contact) believes that a critical incident or circumstance has reached a high level of concern.

Point of Contact submits Care & Concern report through the following portal: https://berkeley-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Once a report is accepted and assessed, a member of the SOCC team may call the point of contact to gather more information if needed.

The SOCC chair will evaluate the situation and consult with team members to determine what further steps are required.

Point of Contact will receive coordinated plans of action for various critical scenarios, with duties and responsibilities assigned to the appropriate unit as needed.

For consultation only call 510-664-4218
Students of Concern Committee (SOCC)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this team is to provide a means for early intervention of at-risk students through collaboration with campus departments, faculty and staff.

Students exhibiting behaviors that are of concern in relation to their personal, physical and emotional well-being should be referred to this team of professionals.

The Students of Concern Committee is not meant to be the sole mechanism of communication and will not take the place of services provided by Counseling & Psychological Services, Center for Student Conduct, University Police or other established student services.

SOCC Responsibility to the Campus

- To provide a centralized structure for campus departments and offices that need help dealing with a student who is displaying concerning, disruptive and/or distressed behavior.
- To develop a strategic plan of action to ensure the safety of the student and the campus at large.
- The committee would ensure that information is shared among strategic partners concerned about student welfare.

STRUCTURE

SOCC Team Members

- Center for Student Conduct
- Counseling & Psychological Services
- UC Police Department
- Disabled Students Program
- Office of the Dean of Students
- Residential Programs
- Berkeley International Office
- Graduate Division

The SOCC also consults with:

- Academic Advisors
- Athletics
- Fraternity & Sorority Life
- Gender Equity
- Campus Ministry Representatives
- Student Life Advising Services/EOP