

The faculty role in responding to student mental health needs

New Faculty Orientation
August, 2016



Agenda

- Information about counseling services
- Mental health and academic success
- Student mental health snapshot
- The faculty role
- Gatekeeper training opportunities



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UNC Counseling Center mission

- The Counseling Center at UNC Charlotte supports the holistic well-being and academic success of students and contributes to a healthy and inclusive campus climate. This is accomplished by providing:
 - short-term individual and group counseling
 - crisis management
 - consultation to concerned third parties (parents, faculty, staff)
 - referral services
 - educational and preventive initiatives for the campus community.
- In addition, the Center supports the academic mission of the University by serving as a training site for graduate students and supports scholarly activity and professional development of staff.



Well-being of UNC Charlotte students

- Is a shared responsibility
- Contributes to student success and retention
- Helps make the campus safe and facilitates free intellectual inquiry



Mental health and academic success

- Students receiving counseling have a significant retention advantage relative to non-counseled students (Kitzrow, 2003).
- Developing depression is the most critical event or “shock” that leads students to consider withdrawing. (Pleskac, et al., 2011).
- Students with mental illness report less campus engagement and poorer relationships, factors that have been associated with lower graduation rates (Salzer, 2012).



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Mental health and academic success

- Of the 32% of clients who said they were having significant academic problems before starting counseling, 75% agreed or strongly agreed that counseling helped them improve their academic performance.
- Of the 20% of clients who said they were thinking of leaving UNC Charlotte before starting counseling, 70% agreed or strongly agreed that counseling helped them stay at UNC Charlotte.

Source: UNC Charlotte Client Satisfaction Survey, 2015-2016



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Mental Health Snapshot

- 86% Felt overwhelmed by all they had to do
- 31% Felt so depressed it was difficult to function
- 48% Felt overwhelming anxiety
- 7% seriously considered suicide (1,940 students*)
- 0.6% attempted (159 students*)

Source: UNC Charlotte Spring 2015 responses to NCHA (n = 1,110)

- Suicide: 3rd leading cause of death among students ages 15-29.
- ~ 80% of students that complete aren't seen by a counselor.
- Suicide rate among college students about ½ the rate of non-college peers.



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UNC Charlotte students

- Factors affecting academic performance*
 - Stress 29%
 - Anxiety 20%
 - Sleep difficulties 18%
 - Depression 12%
 - Concern for troubled friend or family member 9%
 - Relationship difficulties 8%

* (incomplete, dropped course, poor grade)

Source: National College Health Assessment, spring 2015, n = 1,100



How faculty can help

- Faculty are in an ideal position to notice signs of student distress.
 - Changes in academic performance
 - Worrisome comments, writings, or behavior
 - Changes in appearance, attendance, participation
 - Direct expressions of distress such as suicidal thoughts
- Being prepared to notice and refer is crucial.
- A brief gatekeeper training can make a big difference.
 - A research-based approach
 - Understand your role
 - Feel comfortable taking action
 - Be confident in doing the right thing

Kognito At Risk Gatekeeper Training



- Online, 24/7 accessibility

1. Assume the role of a faculty member who is concerned about five students, three of whom need to be referred to the Counseling Center.
2. Analyze profiles of the five virtual students.
3. Engage in simulated conversations with the ones you suspect are at-risk and, if necessary, refer them to the Counseling Center.
4. Learn about our Counseling Center

Course is completed once user refers the 3 at-risk students

Trailer



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<http://vimeo.com/35019671>



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How to Enroll

To access the course, log on to
<http://aruf.kognito.com>

(enrollment key: uncc89)

- Take 45-minute course
- Complete follow up survey
- Return to the course as many times as you wish during the year
- For more information, contact 704-687-0311



at-risk



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[http://counselingcenter.uncc.edu/home/
concerned-about-a-student](http://counselingcenter.uncc.edu/home/concerned-about-a-student)

- Signs and symptoms of distress
- Guidelines for responding
- Consultation
- Referral guidelines



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Counseling Center services

- Individual counseling – up to 12 sessions for students within scope
- Groups:
 - General therapy groups
 - Mood management
 - Social confidence
 - Dissertation support
 - Anxiety management
 - Support groups for LGBTQ students, students of color, military veterans
 - Mindfulness
- Outreach
 - Series of talks and workshops aimed at helping students cope and respond to disappointment, failure, loss, or other obstacles to success



Counseling Center staffing

- 14 Psychologists and Social Workers
- 4 interns and postdocs
- Graduate assistants
- 2 Psychiatrists (located in Student Health)



Consultation

- Consult with the Counseling Center staff by phone (704-687-0311) or in person (158 Atkins) to explore options for responding.
- Counselor is on-call each business day from 8-5.
- In an after hours emergency, call Campus Police (704-687-2200) for assistance, which may include contact with the counselor on-call or other community resource.



Referral

- Recommend an appointment at the Counseling Center.
- Consider helping the student make an appointment by walking the student to the office or letting the student call from your office.
- Normalize the need to ask for help:
 - A large percentage of the student body uses the Counseling Center for support.
 - Even when reluctant, many students make a strong and helpful connection with a counselor.
 - There is no charge for counseling services.
 - By law, information disclosed in counseling is confidential.



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Counseling Center

counselingcenter.uncc.edu

158 Atkins
704-687-0311

Monday – Friday
8 am – 5 pm

Wednesday evenings by
appointment