**Faculty Referrals to Mental Health Services**

Referrals to the Counseling Center generally fall into two categories, emergency/crisis or non-emergency. Most referrals are non-emergency referrals. Below you will learn more about both and can read through example scenarios.

**Emergency/Crisis Referrals**

If the student is in immediate danger, call 911. For concerns about a student’s immediate safety, call University Police at 410-543-6222 or the police department that is local to the student’s current location and explain the situation.

**Times that an emergency/crisis referral is required:**

* The student expresses thoughts of hurting/killing themselves or others.
* The student is showing symptoms of psychosis (i.e. hallucinations, delusions, or are not making logical sense in their attempts to communicate or through their behaviors).

If you are concerned for a student’s ability to keep themselves or others safe and are currently with, or in contact with, the student, it is strongly recommended that you do not end your contact with them until you know they are connected with Counseling Center staff or another crisis resource.

**Times that a crisis emergency/crisis is optional:**

* The student is in acute distress.
* The student recently experienced a traumatic event such as a sexual assault.

In these cases, you can talk to the student about the different referral options so they can determine what will best fit their needs. Everyone responds to events, and expresses emotions, in different ways. It is important to remember this so you do not make assumptions about their needs based on your personal experiences. For some, seeing another person cry can feel uncomfortable and result in an assumption that the student is in crisis when this may not be the case. By providing students with options, they can know that you are listening and want to help, but you are also empowering them to make their own decisions about their mental health.

**Ways to make a crisis referral:**

If the Counseling Center is open (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.):

* + - * Walk the student to the Counseling Center (Guerrieri Student Union, room 263).
        + Once in the office, state that you are making a referral for the student to attend a crisis appointment.
        + Please wait until a clinician is available so you can explain the situation to the clinician.
      * Call the Counseling Center (410-543-6070).
        + When you call, explain that you are concerned about a student and would like to speak to a clinician.

If the Counseling Center is closed:

* Call TimelyCare’s support line at 1-833-4-TIMELY and select Option 2. Explain the situation to a member of TimelyCare’s Care Coordination Team and follow their recommendations.
* If further, or more immediate, intervention is needed, call University Police at 410-543-6222 and explain the situation.

**What happens after a crisis referral is made to the Counseling Center?**

Once the student is in the Counseling Center, they will be asked to start filling out necessary paperwork and will then meet with the first available clinician. That clinician will then meet with the student to make an assessment about their needs, ensure their safety, and make appropriate recommendations. In most cases, it will be up to the student to decide if they would like to follow through with treatment recommendations.

If you observe, or are made aware of, additional concerns, it is important that you inform the Counseling Center. This new information may make a difference in the clinician’s decisions and recommendations for the student.

**Example:**

*A student comes to their professor’s office hours.*

Student: I am falling behind in your class and cannot finish the next assignment in time. I do not know what to do. I feel like everything is falling apart. Sometimes I think it would be better if I was not here anymore.

Professor: What do you mean by not here anymore?

Student: Like not alive, everything would be so much easier.

Professor: The most important thing is always going to be your safety. It sounds like you are feeling very overwhelmed. I want to make sure you get help so you are able to stay safe and start to feel better. With you mentioning that you are thinking about not wanting to be alive, I need to get you in contact with the Counseling Center on campus.

Student: Oh, no, I don’t have time, I need to get back to the assignment, and I have two papers to write before the end of the day.

Professor: That sounds like a lot to have on your plate, but first we need to make sure that you are safe. I can walk you to the Center and make sure you are set up. You can talk to them about what is going on and come up with a plan. After, we can meet again to discuss a plan for your assignments.

Student: Okay.

Professor: Okay, I am going to call over and let them know we are on our way. When we get there, they will most likely ask you to complete some paperwork and will want to talk to me about why we came over. After, I will head out, does that sounds okay?

Student: Yes, I understand, I will reach back out about the assignment after.

**Non-Emergency Referral**

**When to make a non-emergency referral**

If you observe any indication that a student may be experiencing mental health concerns, it is recommended that you talk to them in private so you are able express your concern and ask about your observation. Remember to avoid judgment, not to make assumptions, and listen empathically. If the student discloses that they are feeling impacted by their mental health, by an external stressor, or is reluctant to open up, then explain that the Counseling Center and TimelyCare are available as supports. If the student has concerns about going, help to address them. If you do not know the answer to address their concern, you can look on the Center’s website (salisbury.edu/counseling) together or call the Center to ask. If the student seems apprehensive, you can offer to schedule a visit while they are in the room or provide them with contact information so it is easily available to the student when they are ready.

**Example:**

*Professor notices that a student who is typically on time has been showing up late and appears distracted while in class. The professor asks the student to stay after class so they can talk and invites the student to talk in the professor’s office.*

Professor: I have noticed that you have arrived 5-to-10 minutes late the past three classes and appear distracted during lectures, so I wanted to check in.

Student: I am sorry, it will not happen again, I have just been having a hard time recently.

Professor: If you think it could be helpful to talk to someone, you can always go to the Counseling Center or use TimelyCare.

Student: Oh, I don’t think it is that bad, I can push through.

Professor: It is completely up to you, but I just want to make sure that you know there are resources that can help. It is all free, confidential, and there is no commitment, so if you go once and that is enough for you to feel better, you do not need to continue.

Student: I thought you needed to have anxiety or depression or something to go there.

Professor: No, they can help with whatever is going on, it can be a one-time conversation to get things off of your chest or a few sessions if you have more that you would like to talk about. They can also help with referrals if you feel you would benefit from something long term.

Student: Okay, well I will think about it.

Professor: Okay, if it would be helpful, you can schedule while you are here, or I have this sheet with the Counseling Center and TimelyCare’s information that you can take with you.

Student: I will take the sheet, thank you again, I will be sure to be on time for our next class.

**For more information on how to make a referral, please visit the Counseling Center’s “Referring a Student” webpage (salisbury.edu/administration/student-affairs/counseling-center/referring-a-student.aspx) or call the Counseling Center at 410-543-6070.**