

Assisting Students in Distress

See Something. Say Something. Do Something.



Say Something.

Students exhibiting troubling behaviors in your presence are likely having difficulties in various settings including the classroom, with roommates, with family, and in even in social settings.

Trust your instincts and **SAY SOMETHING** if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened!

See Something.

UC faculty/staff and graduate teaching/research assistants are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for UC students in distress.

Both undergraduate and graduate students may feel *alone, isolated*, and even *hopeless* when faced with academic and life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences.

You may be the first person to **SEE SOMETHING** distressing in a student since you have frequent and prolonged contact with them. The University of California, in collaboration with the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSAs), requests that you act with compassion in your dealings with such students.

Do Something.

Sometimes students cannot, or will not turn to family or friends. **DO SOMETHING!** Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in saving a student's academic career or even their life.

The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize symptoms of student distress and identify appropriate referrals to campus resources.

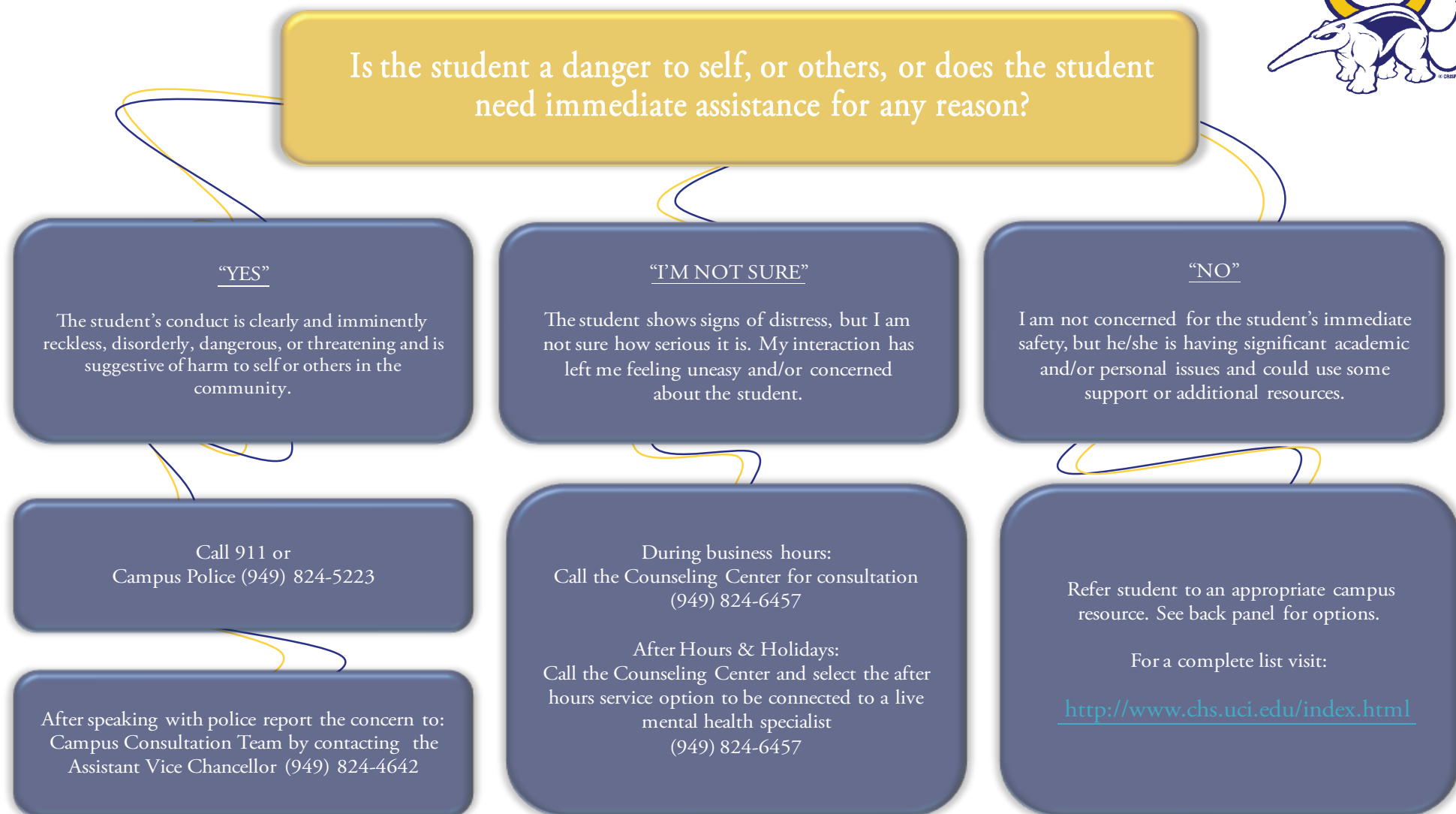
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety emergency. **Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not FERPA protected.** Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.

Academic Indicators	Physical Indicators	Safety Risk Indicators	Psychological Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Sudden decline in quality of work and grades✓ Repeated absences✓ Bizarre content in writings or presentations✓ Multiple requests for extensions✓ You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours✓ Overly demanding of faculty/staff attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain✓ Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance✓ Intoxication, hang over, or smelling of alcohol✓ Disoriented or "out of it"✓ Garbled, tangential, or slurred speech	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Unprovoked anger or hostility✓ Implying 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"✓ Communicating threats via email, correspondence, texting, or phone calls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Self-disclosure of personal distress - family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief✓ 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

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Response Protocol: Follow the chart to determine what to do when faced with a distressed or disruptive student.



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How To Refer: Use these tips to help you refer a student in need of assistance.

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Preparing to reach out to the student	Connecting with the student	Making the referral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with the Consultation Team to explore the issues involved and course of intervention. Know the available campus resources and the referral process. Seek suggestions from experienced colleagues and the department chair. Allow sufficient time to thoroughly address the issues of concern. Review your physical environment and make provisions for your safety and that of others. If necessary, notify colleagues in close proximity of your intended intervention. Remain calm and know whom to call for help in case of need. When a student expresses a direct threat to self or others, or acts in a bizarre, highly irrational and disruptive way, contact UCIPD. If you decide not to have direct contact with the student, refer incident to the proper resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen supportively. Repeat the student's statement to clarify and to demonstrate an understanding of the student's perspective. Do not challenge, shock, or become argumentative with the student. Do not try to minimize the student's distress. If safe, meet and talk in private to minimize embarrassment and defensiveness. Clearly express your concerns focusing on the behavior in non-disparaging terms. Ask if the student wants to hurt himself. Asking does not plant ideas in the student's mind. Offer supportive alternatives, resources and referrals. Respect the student's privacy without making false promises of confidentiality. Explore the student's support system(s). Emphasize the importance of professional help for the student. Document all incidents and attempts to resolve the situation. Be factual and objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend services and provide student with realistic expectations. Note that some campus resources can offer confidential support while others are required to respond or report. Reassure the student that students often seek help over the course of their college career to effectively achieve their goals. Direct the student to a preferred assistance source. Be frank with the student about your limits (time, expertise, student's reluctance to talk). Frame any decision to seek and accept help as an intelligent and wise choice. Make sure the student understands what actions are necessary. Encourage and assist the student to make and keep an appointment. If necessary, find someone to stay with the student while calls to the appropriate resources are made, and offer to escort the student. Set a follow-up appointment with the student.

Support for faculty and staff after working with a distressed or disruptive student:
UC Irvine/EAP administered by, Cascade Centers (800) 433-2320

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Disruptive or Distressed?: Use this information to determine.

Disruptive Student

A student whose conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disordered, dangerous, or threatening, including self-harmful behavior.

To get help

If you are concerned for your or others' safety due to a student's disruptive and/or threatening behavior, call 911 or the UCI Police Department.

Report incident to

- The Office of Student Conduct
- UCI Police Department

For Consultation or Emergency Counseling

- Clinical Social Worker
- UCI Consultation Team

For illness or injury:

Non-urgent
Student Health Center
824-5301

Medical Emergency: 911

Distressed Student

A student with persistent behaviors such as

- unduly anxious
- sad
- irritable
- withdrawn
- confused
- lacks motivation and/or concentration
- seeks constant attention
- demonstrates bizarre or erratic behavior
- expresses suicidal thoughts

To get help

Consultation and Referrals

- Counseling Center
- UCI Police Department
- Student Health Center
- Campus Assault Resources and Education (CARE)

Administrative/Student Conduct:

- Office of Student Conduct
- Office of the Ombudsman

Academic Issues:

- School Academic Advisor
- Department of Undergraduate Education
- Graduate Department Chair
- Graduate Advisor
- University Registrar

If a student is causing a disruption but does not pose a threat

- 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 or her that official action may be taken.
- If the disruptive behavior persists, notify the student that disciplinary action may be taken. Ask the student to leave. Inform him or her that refusal to leave may be a separate violation subject to discipline.
- Immediately report the incident to the appropriate resource.

If you believe there is a safety risk, contact UCI Police Department.

Campus Resources For Students

AVC Wellness, Health & Counseling Services	949.824.4642
Campus Assault Resources & Education (C.A.R.E.)	949.824.7273
Clinical Social Worker	949.824.1418
Counseling Center	949.824.6457
Dean of Students	949.824.5590
Office of Ombudsman	949.824.7256
LGBT Resource Center	949.824.3277
International Center	949.824.7249
Student Health Center	949.824.5301
UCI Police Department	949.824.5223

Campus Resources For Faculty/Staff

Cascade Centers/EAP	800.433.2320
Campus Counsel	949.824.2880
Workplace Violence Prevention Information	949.824.5223

Resources in the Community

Irvine City Police Department	949.724.7000
National Suicide Prevention Hotline	800.273.8255
Hoag Memorial Hospital	949.764.4624
UC Irvine Medical Center	714.456.7890
Western Medical Center Hospital	714.835.3555
Sexual Assault Victims Services	714.834.7991

UCI CONSULTATION TEAM

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Consultation Team is to bring the collective wisdom, professional perspectives, campus management and agency responsibilities to bear on a crisis that, because of its reach, complexity, or potential for risk, demands the involvement of multiple campus departments. The UCI Consultation Team meets to discuss crisis management issues, to review hypothetical and actual cases, and to update campus protocols for responding to these crises. Members adhere to legal, ethical, professional laws and guidelines while working together.

The UCI Consultation Team was established in the early 1990s by Dr. Thomas Parham in response to a UCI staff member who requested a consultation concerning a threat of violence. Since its inception, the team continues to address crises that demand a sense of urgency and require the involvement of various department heads both during and after these emergent situations concerning students and university personnel.

STRUCTURE

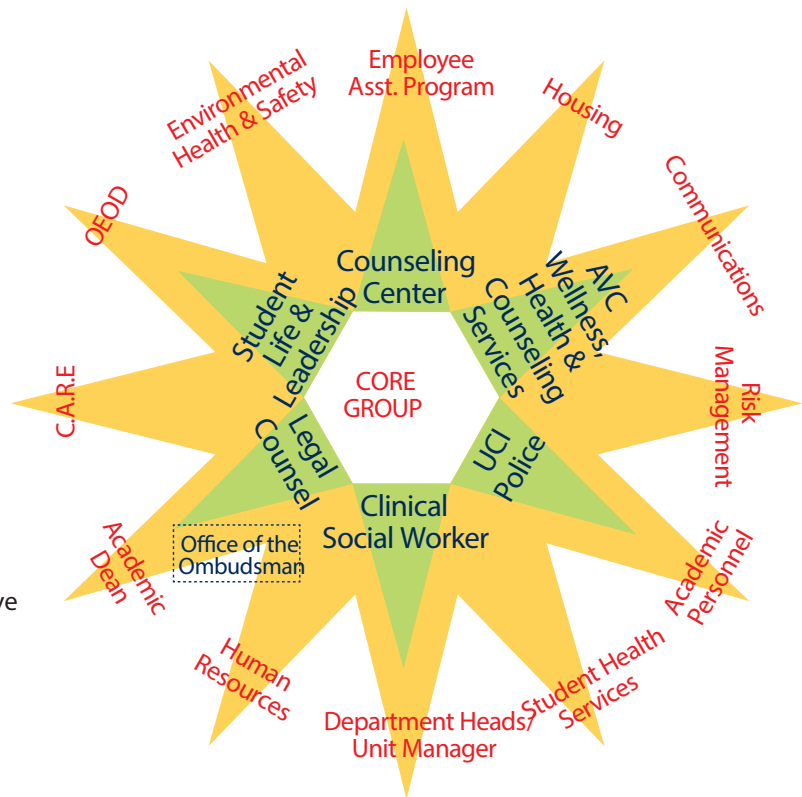
CORE GROUP

The Core Group collaborates to create a plan to address the situation.

ACTIVATED MEMBERS

Those departments not included in the Core are activated as needed or on a need-to-know basis. Activation of the Consultation Team typically begins by a Point of Contact where the critical incident or issue begins.

*The role of the University Ombudsman is to observe the discussion and bring up areas which should be considered. Due to impartiality, however, the Ombudsman does not participate in any decisions made during the meetings.



UCI CONSULTATION TEAM ACTIVATION

When a student or personnel issue rises and poses the potential for risk or harm to others, and where University liability is a possibility, the Consultation Team coordinates multiple units and services in an effort to take a proactive stance in preventing and managing the issue.

TO ACTIVATE THE CONSULTATION TEAM

CRITICAL INCIDENT & CIRCUMSTANCE

- ① A faculty or staff member – Point of Contact – believes that a critical incident or circumstance has reached a high level of concern.
- ② Point of Contact consults a member of the UCI Consultation Team Core Group.
- ③ The Core Group may activate some (or all) members of the UCI Consultation Team, including those areas determined to have a need to know and/or are relevant for the planning of interventions.
- ④ Point of Contact personnel receive coordinated plans of action for various critical scenarios, with duties and responsibilities assigned to the appropriate unit.

