

# RED FOLDER

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Services, Student Health Services

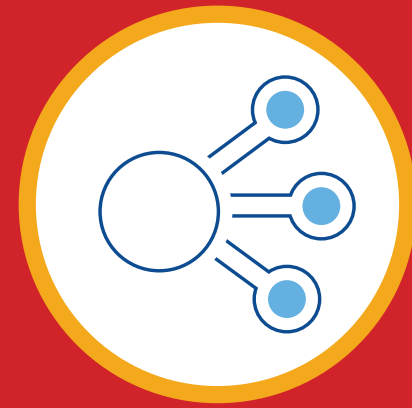
A quick reference guide to recognizing, responding to, and referring distressed students.



## RECOGNIZE



## RESPOND



## REFER

## HOW TO USE

**1**

### **Recognize indicators of distress**

Common indicators are listed inside. Students may present with indicators not listed.

**2**

### **Respond appropriately**

Each situation is unique. Use the tips and decision tree to determine the most appropriate response.

**3**

### **Refer the student**

Use the list of resources on back cover to refer the student to the most appropriate campus or community resource.



# RECOGNIZE

## Indicators of Distressed Students

Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not just isolated symptoms.

### Academic

- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Frequently missed classes and assignments
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations
- Classroom disruptions
- Consistently seeking personal rather than professional advice
- Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations (a change from prior functioning)
- Doesn't respond to repeated requests for contact/meetings

### Physical

- Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g. poor grooming/hygiene or sudden weight loss/gain)
- Noticeable behavioral changes indicating loss of contact with reality
- Visibly intoxicated or under the influence of other drugs
- Rapid speech or manic behavior
- Depressed or lethargic mood or functioning
- Observable signs of injury (e.g. facial bruising or cuts)

### Psychological

- Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g. family problems, financial difficulties, assault, discrimination, legal difficulties)
- Unusual/disproportionate emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions
- Verbal abuse (e.g. taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Expressions of concern about the student by peers
- Self-disclosure of unwanted sexual experience or request(s) for contact\*

### Safety Risk

- Verbal, written, or implied references to suicide, homicide, assault, or self-injurious behaviors
- Unprovoked anger or hostility/physical violence (e.g. shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon)
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, helplessness, isolation, rage, despair, violence, self-injury
- Stalking or harassing
- Communicating threats/disturbing comments via email, correspondence, texting or phone call



# RESPOND

Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response for a distressed student.

## Stay Safe

Call University Police (5511) or 911 if there is an imminent danger to the student, you, or anyone else.

## Give Concrete Help

Help get them to the next step (e.g. contact the academic advisor with the student to make an appointment; help them call Counseling Services to schedule an appointment, or walk them over if you are especially concerned).

## Stay Calm

Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself. Use a calm voice when talking and asking questions.

## Use Active Listening

Make eye contact, give your full attention. Restate what the student says to make sure you understand what is causing the distress and/or what they are asking for help with.

## Student's Choice

The student is the primary decision-maker of any solution. They are in charge of making their own decisions about what is best for them, barring immediate safety emergencies.

## Remember!

In addition to referring a student to resources, any sexual or gender-based harassment or assault requires mandated reporting. For questions regarding mandated reporting, please contact the Title IX Coordinator at (773) 442-5412.

## Take Your Time

If this is NOT an imminently dangerous situation, take time to think through what might be the most helpful next step.

## Seek Consultation

You are not alone. Ask those around you for help. Consult with a colleague, or call another office on campus (see Resources).

## Ask Direct Questions

Don't be afraid to directly ask the student if they are having thoughts of harming themselves or others; you are not instilling the thought by asking.



# REFER

Follow the decision tree to determine who to contact when you are concerned about a student who is distressed and/or disruptive. Resources are listed at right.

## Is the student a danger to themselves/others OR does the student need some other assistance?

**YES**

The student's conduct is clearly dangerous or threatening, including self-harm or harm to others.

Call University Police Emergency Line (5511) or 911 and follow up with the student later.

**NO**

I am not concerned for anyone's immediate safety, but the student is having significant academic or personal issues and could use some support.

Refer students to appropriate resources on the right.

**I'M NOT SURE**

The student is with me currently and shows signs of distress, but it is not clear how serious it is. I feel uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.

Call Student Counseling Services at (773) 442-4650. Then, refer the student to the appropriate campus resources as needed.

The student is **not** with me currently, but I am concerned about what they said (in an email/call) OR what they did (acted bizarrely, were aggressive/disruptive) OR how they looked (unkempt, unwashed, or as if drugged/drunk).

Report to University Police (5511) or Dean of Students Office at (773) 441-4600.

## Campus Resources

### Student Counseling Services (SCS)\*

(773) 442-4650  
Student Counseling Services provides high-quality, inclusive, and responsive counseling services. Call to make an appointment or for consultation; or in emergency walk in during our open hours.

### After-Hours Assistance through SCS\*

(773) 442-4650 (by 24-hour phone; press 2 during outgoing message)

### Student Health Services\*

(773) 442-5800

### Dean of Students Office

(773) 442-4600

### Title IX Coordinator

Natalie Brouwer Potts • (773) 442-5412  
Title IX Coordinator is responsible for enforcing NEIU's Sexual Misconduct policy, investigating sex discrimination complaints, providing interim accommodations, and coordinating educational and prevention efforts regarding sexual misconduct.

### Confidential Advisor\*

Rae Joyce Baguilat • (773) 442-4686  
The Confidential Advisor provides emergency and ongoing support to student survivors of sexual violence; informs survivors of the survivor's rights and reporting options; and, provides resources and services. The Confidential Advisor is exempt from being a Mandatory Reporter so is not required to notify the Title IX Coordinator of any sexual misconduct reports.

### University Police

(773) 442-5511 (emergency)  
(773) 442-4100 (non-emergency)

## Community Resources

### Swedish Covenant Hospital ER

2739 W. Foster Ave.  
(773) 878-8200

### Mercy Hospital ER

2525 S. Michigan Ave.  
(312) 567-2000

### Community Counseling Centers of Chicago

(773) 769-0205

### National Suicide

**Prevention Lifeline**  
(800) 273-TALK (8255) (English)  
(888) 628-9454 (Español)

### Illinois Domestic Violence Hotline

(877) 863-6338  
(multilingual)

### Resilience (formerly RVA)

(312) 442-9603 (English and Español)

### Rape Crisis Hotline (24 hours)

(888) 293-2080

### Emergency Shelter/DHS Helpline

Dial 311

### Life Span

(310) 408-1210

\*=confidential