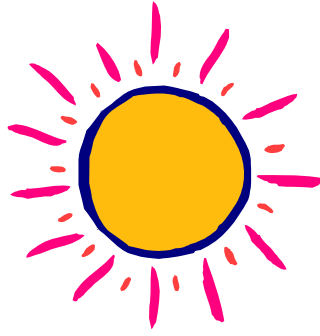


COUNSELING SERVICES



Ohio Wesleyan University Faculty / Staff Referral Guide

Staff

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Services Offered

Counseling Services offers a wide range of services to the Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) community. These services include: individual counseling, group counseling, consultation, crisis intervention, training, referral resources, and outreach programming.

Individual Counseling provides students with the opportunity to maximize their potential by addressing personal and/or professional concerns which may interfere with their progress. Students meet with a trained professional to discuss issues such as stress management, interpersonal relationships, assertiveness, self-esteem, eating concerns, depression, as well as a variety of other emotional and developmental concerns.

Group Counseling allows students the opportunity to interact with peers who may be struggling with similar issues or concerns. Groups are facilitated by professional counselors and are tailored to meet the needs of OWU students.

Consultation offers assistance to faculty, staff, parents, and students who are concerned about psychological issues on campus. Typically, consultation involves talking with a skilled counselor or psychologist and developing a plan to address those concerns.

Crisis Intervention provides students with emergency services weekdays 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m. After hours and on weekends students may contact Public Safety (740) 368-2222, The Delaware County HelpLine (740) 369-3316, or Residential Life staff for assistance.

Training is provided on a variety of professionally related topics to faculty, staff, and student groups. Additionally, Counseling Services facilitates the professional development of doctoral students through participation in our practicum training program.

Referral Resources offers the Ohio Wesleyan community referrals to outside mental health resources. Referrals are made when it is determined that our services are not appropriate.

Outreach Programming offers the University community outreach programs on a variety of relevant topics. Programs can be presented in various settings including the classroom, residential halls, or Counseling Services itself. Some possible topics include: stress management, assertiveness skills, conflict management, and acquaintance and date rape.

Other Resources

Counseling Services has a reading and relaxation room containing books, videos, and cassettes on a wide variety of psychological issues. This room also serves as a quiet place for relaxation and meditation and includes a calming water fountain, nature sounds, and tapes with relaxation and guided imagery exercises. Students can utilize this room at any time during our regular business hours.

Hours of Operation, Location, and Phone Number

Hours of Operation

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Location

Hamilton Williams Campus Center, Room 324

Phone Number

(740) 368-3145

How Should Our Services be Utilized?

What is the Role of the Faculty and Staff in Assisting Students with Mental Health Concerns?

Students often experience significant changes in their lives during the course of their education. Sometimes these changes become stressful enough to pose serious threats to a student's academic progress. The combination of academic and interpersonal stresses, which are typical in the college years, can often feel overwhelming and may result in a student requesting your help.

Due to your position, status, and visibility on campus, students experiencing emotional distress may turn to you for help. Expressions of interest and concern may be a critical factor in helping students solve problems that are interfering with academic success and survival.

How Do I Know When Counseling Should Be Recommended?

Due to the complexity of problems with which students present, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive list of criteria for referring a student to counseling. Nevertheless, the following indicators might be useful in making a decision to refer a student to Counseling Services.

1. Stated Need for Help

Due to personality differences students may be more or less comfortable requesting help, and as a result, some students may have difficulty expressing their needs directly. For this reason, it is important to attend not only to the content of what a student may say, but also to the feelings underlying his or her message. Tone of voice and non-verbal behaviors such as body language and facial expressions may also provide important information regarding the student's emotional status.

2. References to Suicide

Regardless of the circumstances, any reference to suicide should be considered serious. If an individual talks about, or alludes to details of how, when, or where he or she may be contemplating suicide, immediate referral is necessary. To conclude that a student's suicidal talk is simply a bid for attention is extremely risky, and a judgment about the seriousness and possible lethality of the suicidal thought or gesture should not be made without consultation with a professional mental health worker. In the case of an actual suicide attempt, immediately call an ambulance *911, and contact Counseling Services at 368-3145.

3. Changes in Mood and Behavior

Actions which are inconsistent with an individual's normal behavior may indicate that he or she is experiencing psychological distress. An individual who withdraws from normal social interaction, demonstrates an unwillingness to communicate, commits asocial acts, has episodes of unexplained crying or outbursts of anger, or demonstrates unusual irritability may be suffering from symptoms associated with a psychological problem.

4. Anxiety and Depression

Anxiety and depression are two common psychological disturbances that present significant problems for students. Both of these emotional conditions can impair an individual's normal functioning when they become prolonged or severe. If an individual's normal functioning is impaired by anxiety or depression, counseling should be recommended.

5. **Psychosomatic symptoms**

Psychological disorders sometimes mask themselves in physical symptoms. Individuals who experience excessive sleeping, tension induced headaches, nausea, or other physical pains which have no apparent medical cause may be experiencing psychosomatic symptoms. Such psychosomatic symptoms are physically real, including the pain. Other physical symptoms of possible problems may include a loss of appetite, excessive eating, insomnia, or gastrointestinal distress. If a student presents with these types of symptoms, a referral to Counseling Services is indicated.

6. **Traumatic Changes in Personal Relationships**

Personal problems resulting from a traumatic change in a personal relationship may lead to psychological concerns. The death of a family member or close friend, difficulties in marriage or family relationships, divorce, changes in family responsibilities, and difficulties in other significant relationships can all result in increased stress and psychological difficulties. If you are aware that a student is struggling with relationship concerns, a referral to Counseling Services is appropriate.

7. **Drug and Alcohol Abuse**

Indications of excessive drinking, drug abuse, or drug dependence are almost always indicative of psychological problems which may benefit from counseling. If you are concerned that a student may be suffering from a substance abuse problem, a referral to Counseling Services for an evaluation is indicated. In the case of a drug overdose or a severe drug emergency, call an ambulance.

8. **Learning Problems**

Many students find the demands of college level academic work to be greater than they anticipated. While it is expected that all students will go through some adjustment in this regard, those who demonstrate a consistent discrepancy between their performance and their potential may need additional assistance. Poor study habits, incapacitating test anxiety, procrastination, or repeated absences from class are all difficulties that might benefit from counseling.

9. **Retention Issues**

Research has suggested that counseling services are effective in combating student attrition. Students who are considering dropping out of school, contemplating a transfer to another institution of higher education, or worrying about possible academic failure may find counseling to be a useful resource in their decision-making process.

In any case where you are unsure of whether or not a referral is appropriate, we suggest that you contact Counseling Services for a consultation with a counselor. We will be happy to discuss situations on a case by case basis.

What Other Factors Indicate a Referral?

Aside from the signs or symptoms that may suggest the need for counseling, there are other guidelines which may help you determine when a referral is appropriate. A referral is usually indicated in the following situations:

1. A student presents a problem or requests information outside of your range of professional expertise.
2. You feel that personality differences will interfere with your ability to help the student.

3. A student seems hesitant to discuss details of his or her problems with you.
4. You do not believe your interaction with the student has been effective in alleviating the student's concern.

How Do I Refer?

Once you have determined that a student might benefit from professional counseling, it is usually best to approach the student directly and express your concern. When referring a student, make it clear that this recommendation represents your best judgment based on your observations of the student's behavior. Be specific regarding the behaviors that have raised your concerns, and avoid making generalizations about the individual.

Except in emergencies, it is crucial to remember that the student has the right to accept or refuse your referral. If the student is skeptical or reluctant for any reason, express your acceptance of those feelings so that your relationship with the student is not jeopardized. Give the student the opportunity to consider other alternatives by suggesting that the student might need some time to think it over. If the student says "no" then respect that decision, and again leave the situation open for possible reconsideration at a later time.

If the student agrees to the referral, the student may call or go to Counseling Services to make an appointment. The student's first contact with the center will typically be an intake interview during which the student and the intake counselor make decisions about the type of help needed. Intake appointments are typically scheduled within a week of the student's request to be seen. Students who require immediate help are usually seen on the same day on an emergency basis.

In emergency situations involving students who are unwilling or unable to seek help on their own, faculty or staff members may call Counseling Services. In situations where that person is a danger to themselves or others, you may contact the Delaware Police Department and/or Public Safety.

What about Confidentiality?

Information regarding whether or not a student was seen at Counseling Services, or about the content of counseling interviews, cannot be released without a student's written permission. Exceptions are made only when the individual presents a danger to him or herself or others, or when the law requires. While we understand that this can be very frustrating to faculty and staff members providing referrals, we hope that you will understand that strict adherence to confidentiality is required by law. If a faculty or staff member is interested in a student's contact with Counseling Services, information can usually be obtained directly from the student.

Are Referrals to Other Sources of Assistance Possible?

Sources of assistance for students are not limited to Counseling Services, and may include referrals to local mental health providers. When it is determined that our services are not the most appropriate for the treatment required, a referral to an outside mental health professional or agency will be made. If you have questions or concerns regarding the most appropriate referral, please contact our agency.

When appropriate, students may also be referred to other individuals or agencies on campus. These referrals might include: a physician, health services, academic advising, the office of residential life, etc.. For this reason, knowledge of persons, offices, and agencies that can be of service to students is extremely important. Students can become discouraged and frustrated when they are unnecessarily referred from office to office or fail to receive the assistance they need. If you are unsure of the most appropriate place for a referral, call Counseling Services (740-368-3145) for information or consultation as to the various sources of help on campus.

Are Counseling Services Available to Faculty and Staff?

While Counseling Services does not provide ongoing counseling services for University employees, we will meet with faculty and staff members in order to assess the problem and make an appropriate referral to an outside agency for help.

Other Emergency Services Include:

The Delaware County 24-hour HelpLine 369-3316
Grady Memorial Hospital Emergency Room 368-5100
Public Safety 368-2222