

Dear Colleagues:

We only have to ask faculty and staff this simple question to elicit a heartfelt, concerned, and often frustrated response: How much time are you spending with distressed students? Students in need of more than just teaching and learning have become such a constant in the landscape of our work that we sometimes feel like our academic purpose takes a back seat to other issues. But their issues and needs are critical to their academic success, and so they should be important to us, too. Our students struggle with anxiety, depression, physical illness, family problems, financial crisis, and other significant challenges. All of these have the potential to significantly affect their academic performance.

For instance, a recent research study* of college students showed that diagnosed depression was associated with a decrease of student GPA of 0.49 points – half a letter grade. Considering the steady increase in the number of students dealing with symptoms of depression, this effect profoundly impacts the learning environment at UCONN. The good news, also cited in this study, is that treatment of depression was associated with a positive effect on GPA of 0.44.

We all can feel overwhelmed by the challenges our students may present to us. It is important, though, to understand that your responsibility is not to diagnose or provide Counseling Intervention. Your interaction with students involves honest and compassionate conversation that ultimately helps a student in crisis find understanding, support and the appropriate services here on campus and in the community.

This Guide is designed to put useful information at your fingertips - the kind of information students often seek from you, their trusted mentors and advisors. We have crafted this Guide in the spirit of collaboration, community, and communication.

We would like to acknowledge our colleagues at the University of Maryland/College Park, whose similar Guide we have liberally borrowed from, as well as those here at UConn who wrote and edited the content of our version. Thanks especially to Assistant Dean of Students Karen Bresciano at Storrs, who oversaw the production of this Guide. Finally, thanks to the following persons who worked with us to make the Guide appropriate for our UConn/Stamford population: Halina Hollyway, Rita Koenig, Dr. James Perrone, Dr. Ingrid Semaan and Commander Walter Young.

Best Wishes,

Dr. Sharon J. White
Director of Student Services

Dr. Michael Ego
Associate Vice Provost

*Hysenbegasi, A., Hass, S.L., & Rowland, C.R. (2005). The impact of depression on the Academic Productivity of University Students. J. of Mental Health Policy and Economics, vol. 8, issue 3. Pp.145-151.

▶ HELPING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

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▶ RESPONDING TO STUDENT EMERGENCIES

The University encourages and will support faculty/staff decisions to respond to students in distress. Students in distress often display behavior that may pose a threat to self or others. Such behavior may include the following:

- Suicidal gestures, intentions or attempts
- Other behavior posing a threat to the student (e.g., abuse)
- Threats or aggression directed toward others
- Demonstrated inability to care for oneself

Campus resources for responding to mental health emergencies are:

For consultation with the campus psychologist, call (203) 251 – 8484.

If the student requires immediate medical attention or hospitalization, is unmanageable (e.g., aggressive, hostile, refusing care) or if you feel directly threatened by a student or feel others are at risk, call campus police (203) 251 - 9508, call 911, or use the red phones. The student will be assisted and transported to the appropriate facility.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Move the student to a quiet and secure place, if possible.
- Enlist the help of a co-worker so that the student isn't left alone and you aren't left alone with the student.
- When contacting a campus resource, have available as much information as possible. Information should include, your name, the student's name and location, a description of the circumstances and the type of assistance needed, the exact location where assistance is needed, the exact location of the student in the building, and an accurate description of the student.
- Alert **Dr. Sharon J. White in Student Services room (2.01)** or call (203) 251 – 8484 as soon as possible.

► REFERRING A STUDENT FOR PROFESSIONAL HELP

When to refer

In many cases of student distress, faculty and staff can provide adequate help through emphatic listening, facilitating open discussion of problems, instilling hope, conveying acceptance, giving reassurance, and offering basic advice.

In some cases, however, students need professional help to overcome problems and to resume effective functioning. The following signs indicate that a student may need counseling:

- The student remains distressed following repeated attempts by you and others to be helpful.
- The student becomes increasingly isolated, unkempt, irritable, or disconnected.
- The student's academic or social performance deteriorates.
- The student's behavior reflects increased hopelessness or helplessness.
- You find yourself doing ongoing counseling rather than consultation or advising.
- The student shows significant and marked changes in behavior and mood.

How to refer

- Speak to the student in a direct, concerned and caring manner.
- Because students may initially resist the idea of counseling, be caring but firm in your judgment that counseling would be helpful. Also be clear about the reasons that you are concerned.
- Be knowledgeable in advance about the services and procedures the campus psychologist and other campus resources. The best referrals are made to specific people or services.
- Suggest that the student make an appointment and provide the phone number to Student Services (203) 251-8484.
- Sometimes it is useful to more actively assist students in scheduling an initial counseling appointment. You can offer the use of your phone or call the receptionist yourself while the student waits in your office. In some situations, you may find it wise to walk the student over to Student Services Room 2.01. You could review the Student Services website with the student as well.
- If you need help in deciding whether or not it is appropriate to make a referral, call Student Services (203 251- 8484) for consultation.
- You may also refer directly to a particular staff member by name.

▶ AWARENESS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Race, ethnicity, cultural background, nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other cultural identities are important to keep in mind as you help a distressed student. Reactions to racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, etc., can affect the way in which emotional distress is manifested and also can impact help-seeking behavior. General barriers to seeking help – e.g., denial, fear of being labeled in a negative way, lack of information about campus resources – may be even more troublesome for students from underrepresented groups, especially if counseling is not a culturally relevant choice to make when help is needed. Communicating support, concern, and understanding is critical in reaching students who may feel isolated and/or marginalized.

Your sensitivity to the unique needs of international students, LGBTQ students, students of color, non-traditional-aged college students, and other underrepresented groups can be important in helping students get assistance. Furthermore, being knowledgeable about campus resources that address the unique needs of underrepresented students is also important.

STAMFORD RESOURCES

James Perrone/Psychologist
University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251- 8490

Center for Women Studies

<http://www.stamford.uconn.edu/ws.htm>
University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251 - 8411

Student Services/Disabilities

www.stamfordstudentlife.uconn.edu
University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251-8484/ 8566

Bachelor of General Studies/ Non degree Programs

Center for Continuing Studies
www.stamford.uconn.edu
University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251 - 8550

C.A.P.

University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251-8488

Students Activities

University of Connecticut
One University Place
Stamford, CT 06901
Phone: (203) 251-8489

STORRS RESOURCES

Asian American Cultural Center (www.asacc.uconn.edu)
Student Union, Unit 3186
Storrs, CT 06269-3186
(860) 486-0830

H. Fred Simons African American Cultural Center (www.aacc.uconn.edu)

Student Union, Unit 3180
Storrs, CT 06269-3180
(860) 486-3433

Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center

(www.latino.uconn.edu)
Student Union, Unit 3188
Storrs, CT 06269-3188
(860) 486-1135

Department of International Services and Programs (DISP) (www.disp.uconn.edu)

Student Union, Unit 3083
Storrs, CT 06269-3083
(860) 486-3855

Rainbow Center (www.rainbowcenter.uconn.edu)

Services for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and Allied Community
Student Union, Unit 3096
Storrs, CT 06269-3096
(860) 486-5821

Veterans Benefits

(www.veterans.uconn.edu)
233 Glenbrook Road, Unit 4116
Storrs, CT 06269-4116
Phone: (860) 486-2442 | Fax: (860) 486-6253

Women's Center

(www.womenscenter.uconn.edu)
Student Union, Unit 3118
Storrs, CT 06269-3118
(860) 486-4738

Muslim Student Association /

Islamic Center of the University of Connecticut
28 North Eagleville Road
Storrs, CT 06269
Phone: 1(860)208-6373

► THE STUDENT WHO IS ANXIOUS

FACTS ABOUT ANXIETY

Anxiety can be generalized across a range of situations, or it may be situation-specific (e.g., test anxiety, social anxiety, public speaking anxiety).

Symptoms of anxiety include:

- stress
- panic
- avoidance
- irrational fears
- fear of losing control
- ruminations
- excessive worry
- sleep or eating problems

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- First, talk to the student in private. Listen to what the student is saying.
- Remain calm and take the lead in a soothing manner.
- Focus on relevant information, speaking correctly and concisely.
- Help the student develop an action plan that addresses his/her main concerns.
- Refer the student to Dr. Sharon White or Dr. James Perrone at (203) 251-8484.

AVOID

- Overwhelming the student with information or complicated solutions.
- Arguing with student's irrational thoughts.
- Devaluing the information presented.
- Assuming the student will get over the anxiety without treatment.

► THE STUDENT WHO IS DEMANDING

Facts about students who are demanding:

- Students who are demanding can be intrusive and persistent and may require much time and attention.
- Demanding traits can be associated with anxiety, depression, personality problems, and/or thought disorders, mania, drug use/abuse.

Characteristics of students who are demanding include:

- a sense of entitlement
- an inability to empathize
- a need for control
- difficulty in dealing with ambiguity
- perfectionism
- difficulty with structure and limits
- dependency
- fears about handling life
- elevated mood
- drug use or abuse

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Talk and listen to the student in a place that is safe and comfortable.
- Remain calm and take the lead.
- Set clear limits up front and hold the student to the allotted time for the discussion.
- Emphasize behaviors that are and aren't acceptable.
- Respond quickly and with clear limits to behavior that disrupts class, study sessions, or consultations.
- Be prepared for manipulative requests and behaviors.
- Call Student Services (203 251- 8484) for help with identifying strategies for dealing with disruptive behaviors.
- Refer the student to Dr. White or Dr. Perrone (203 251- 8484).

AVOID

- Arguing with the student.
- Giving in to inappropriate requests.
- Adjusting your schedule or policies to accommodate the student.
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior that has a negative impact on you or other students.
- Feeling obligated to take care of the student or feeling guilty for not doing more.
- Allowing the student to intimidate you to not deal with the problematic behavior.

▶ THE STUDENT WHO IS DEPRESSED

Facts about depression

- Depression is a common mental health problem that varies in severity and duration.
- In its less serious form, depression is a temporary reaction to loss, stress, or life challenges. It can be alleviated through the passage of time and/or the natural healing effects of social support, daily routines, and simple coping strategies like distraction and exercise.
- Severe or chronic depression usually is ongoing and does not abate. It requires professional help.

Symptoms of depression can include:

- feelings of emptiness, hopelessness, helplessness, and worthlessness
- a deep sense of sadness
- an inability to experience pleasure
- irregular eating and sleeping
- difficulties with concentration, memory, and decision-making
- fatigue and social withdrawal

Sometimes depression includes irritation, anxiety, and anger.

In its most serious form, depression can be accompanied by self-destructive thoughts and intentions as a way to escape from the emotional pain.

Research shows that depression can be highly responsive to both therapy and medication.

AVOID

- Downplaying the situation.
- Arguing with the student or disputing that the student is feeling depressed.
- Providing too much information for the student to process
- Expecting the student to stop feeling depressed without intervention.
- Assuming the family knows about the student's depression

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Talk to the student in private.
- Listen carefully and validate the student's feelings and experiences.
- Be supportive and express your concern about the situation.
- Discuss clearly and concisely an action plan such as having the student immediately call for a counseling appointment.
- Refer the student to Dr. James Perrone at (203) 251-8484.
- Be willing to consider or offer flexible arrangements (e.g., extension on a paper or exam), if appropriate, as a way to alleviate stress and instill hope.
- Ask student if he/she has thoughts of suicide. If so, do not leave the student alone. Walk him/her over to room 2.01. If it is after 5 call James Perrone (203 251-8490), or campus police (203 251-9508).
- If you feel overwhelmed or unprepared to help a depressed student, call Dr. Sharon J. White or Dr. Perrone at (203) 251-8484, who will maintain your confidentiality and arrange a meeting with that student.

▶ **THE STUDENT WHO MAY BE SUICIDAL**

Facts about suicide

- Although suicide is a rare event, it is the second leading cause of death among college students.
- Suicidal states are often associated with major depression, a combination of acute anxiety and depression, post traumatic stress disorder, and bipolar disorder.
- People who are suicidal often tell people about their thoughts or give clues to others about their feelings.

Some factors associated with suicide risk are:

- suicidal thoughts
- pessimistic view of the future
- intense feelings of hopelessness, especially when combined with anxiety and/or feelings of alienation and isolation
- viewing death as a means of escape from distress
- previous suicide attempts
- personal or family history of depression or suicide
- personal or family history of suicide attempts
- substance abuse
- history of self-mutilation
- Don't be afraid to ask about suicide. Asking a student if he/she is suicidal will not put the idea in their head if it isn't there already.

A student who is suicidal and who confides in someone is often not ambivalent about suicide and open to discussion.

Students who are at high risk usually have a specific plan, have a means that is lethal (e.g., medication, knife, gun), and tend to be or feel isolated.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Call campus police at (203 251-9508) or 911 if the student is in immediate danger to him/herself.
- Talk and listen to the student in private.
- Remain calm and take the lead.
- Take a student's disclosure as a serious plea for help.
- Ask the student directly about feelings and plans.
- Express care and concern, and assure the student that you will help him or her reach a professional.

AVOID

- Minimizing the situation. All threats must be considered potentially lethal.
- Arguing with the student about the merits of living.
- Allowing friends to assume responsibility for the student without getting input from a professional.
- Assuming the family knows that the student has suicidal thoughts.

▶ **THE STUDENT WHO IS SEVERELY DISORIENTED OR PSYCHOTIC**

Facts about psychotic thinking

- The main feature of psychotic thinking is being out of touch with reality.

Symptoms include:

- speech that makes no sense
- extremely odd or eccentric behavior
 - inappropriate or complete lack of emotion
 - bizarre behavior that could indicate hallucinations
 - strange beliefs that involve a serious misinterpretation of reality
- social withdrawal
 - inability to connect with or track normal communication
 - extreme or unwarranted suspicion

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Speak to the student in a direct and concrete manner regarding your plan for getting him/her to a safe environment.
- Recognize that psychotic states can involve extreme emotion or lack of emotion and intense fear to the point of paranoia.
- Recognize that a student in this state may be dangerous to self or others.
- Consult Dr. Perrone at (203 251-8490) or campus police (203 251-9508).

Bipolar disorder involves periods of serious depression combined with periods of extreme euphoria and frenzied thinking and behavior, the latter of which can reflect a poor reality. A person with bipolar disorder can become psychotic.

Psychological illnesses that involve psychotic features often have an onset between the late teens and early thirties.

AVOID

- Assuming the student will be able to care for him/herself.
- Agitating the student with questions, pressure, etc.
- Arguing with unrealistic thoughts.
- Assuming the student understands you.
- Allowing friends to care for that student without getting professional advice.
- Getting locked into one way of dealing with the student. Be flexible.
- Assuming the family knows about the student's condition.

► **THE STUDENT WHO IS AGGRESSIVE OR POTENTIALLY VIOLENT**

Facts about aggression

- Aggression varies from threats to verbal abuse to physical abuse and violence.
- It is very difficult to predict aggression and violence.

Some indicators of potential violence may include:

- Paranoia/mistrust
- An unstable school or vocational history
- A history of juvenile violence or substance abuse
- Fascination with weapons
- History of cruelty to animals as a child or adolescent
- Impulsive control problems
- Fire-starting behaviors
- Verbally or aggressive behavior

AVOID

- Staying in a situation in which you feel unsafe.
- Meeting alone with the student.
- Engaging in a screaming match or behaving in other ways that escalate anxiety and aggression.
- Ignoring signs that student's anger is escalating.
- Touching the student or crowding his or her sense of personal space.
- Ignoring a gut reaction that you are in danger

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Assess your level of safety. Call campus police (203) 251-9508 or 911 if you feel in danger.
- If you feel it is appropriate to stay with the student, remain in an open area with a visible means of escape (sit closest to the door).
- Enlist the help of co-worker or other responsible person
- Explain to the student the behaviors that are unacceptable.
- Use a time-out strategy (that is, ask the student to reschedule a meeting with you once he/she has calmed down) if the student refuses to cooperate and remains aggressive or agitated.

▶ RESPONDING TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Signs that a student may have an alcohol problem

- Failure to fulfill major work, school, or home responsibilities.
- Specific school problems such as poor attendance, low grades, and/or recent disciplinary action.
- Drinking in situations that are physically dangerous, such as driving a car.
- Having recurring alcohol-related legal problems, such as being arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or for physically hurting someone while drunk.
- Continued drinking despite having ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by drinking.
- Mood changes such as temper flare-ups, irritability, and defensiveness.
- Physical or mental problems such as memory lapses, poor concentration, bloodshot eyes, lack of coordination, or slurred speech.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Treat the situation as serious.
- Share your concern and encourage the student to seek help.
- Recognize that denial is a powerful aspect of substance problems and that it can involve conscious or unconscious lying and distorting the truth.
- Call the Student Services office at (203) 251-8484 to discuss the situation.

Signs that a student may have a drug problem

- Experiencing withdrawal symptoms (e.g., nausea, restlessness, insomnia, concentration problems, sweating, tremors, and anxiety).
- After reducing or stopping chronic drug use, taking a drug in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms.
- Spending a lot of time getting, using, and recovering from the effects of a drug.
- Abandoning previously-enjoyed activities, such as hobbies, sports, and socializing, in order to use drugs.
- Neglecting school, work, or family responsibilities.
- Taking risks while high, such as starting a fight or engaging in unprotected sex.
- Continuing to use, despite physical problems (e.g., blackouts, flashbacks, infections, injuries) or psychological problems (e.g., mood swings, depression, anxiety, delusions, paranoia) the drug has caused.
- Legal troubles because of drug use, such as arrests for disorderly conduct, driving under the influence, or stealing to support drug habit.

▶ THE STUDENT WHO HAS AN EATING DISORDER

Facts about eating disorders

Eating disorders are not necessarily about food, but food is the substance that people with eating disorders abuse. Eating disorders have both physical and psychological symptoms. They are characterized by problematic attitudes and feelings about food, weight and body shape, a disruption in eating behaviors and weight management, and intense anxiety about body weight and size.

Eating disorders usually refers to Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and/or Binge Eating Behavior.

Anorexia Nervosa is characterized by restricted eating, self-starvation and excessive weight loss.

Bulimia Nervosa is characterized by recurrent episodes of overeating large amounts of food in a short period of time (the binge) followed by some form of purging.

Binge Eating Behavior is characterized by recurrent episodes of binge eating that are not followed by inappropriate compensatory behaviors (purging) to prevent weight gain.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Select a time to talk to the student when you are not rushed and won't be interrupted.
- In a direct and non-punitive manner, indicate to the student all the specific observations that have aroused your concern.
- Your responsibilities are not to diagnose, label or provide therapy; it is the development of a compassionate and forthright conversation that ultimately helps a student in trouble find understanding, support, and the proper therapeutic resources.
- If the information you receive is compelling, communicate to the student your tentative sense that he or she might have an eating disorder as well as your conviction that the matter clearly needs to be evaluated.
- If you have any questions regarding the resources available or approaching a student, call the Student Services Office or Dr. Perrone at (203) 251-8484.

AVOID

- Avoid conflicts or a battle of the wills with your student.
- Avoid placing shame, blame, or guilt on your student regarding their actions or attitudes.
- Avoid giving simple solutions. For example, "If you'd just stop, then everything would be fine!"
- Do not intentionally or unintentionally become the student's therapist, savior, or victim.

► **RESOURCES FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE**

The campus provides assistance to survivors of sexual assault, stalking, sexual harassment and dating or domestic violence. Assistance include counseling, advocacy, medical care, academic interventions as well as referrals to the University's Police and to the student conduct system.

Campus Resources:

Center for Women's Studies, Room 311

The Center for Women's Studies provides advocacy, information, and referrals for individuals who have, or who think they may have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating or domestic violence. The Center also works toward the prevention of violence against Women.

Campus Psychologist, Room 2.01

Dr. James Perrone is the campus consulting psychologist and is available and is available to assist students with short term counseling, crisis intervention, study skills, and anxiety reduction techniques. He also offers specialized counseling for students encountering academic or personal difficulty. All sessions are voluntary and confidential.

Student Services, 2.01

The Department of Student Services at the University of Connecticut/Stamford is a team of professional and support staff committed to the personal, social and academic development of students. Through our programs and services, we assist students through each stage of their academic transition. Programs and services with the department are geared toward helping students to become responsible, productive, well- educated citizens who contribute to their various communities. The department also oversees the university's code and conduct.

Campus Police, 3rd floor of parking garage

The University of Connecticut Police Department is responsible for all criminal investigation and apprehensions. Regardless of whether charges are filed, the police are available to answer your questions about the legal process and your legal options regarding an incident.

The Community Resources provides assistance to people who have experienced sexual assault or abuse in a relationship.

The Domestic Violence Crisis Center of Stamford provides counseling and advocacy for people who are or have been abused in a relationship. 24 hour hotline: 1-888-774-2900

Sexual Assault Crisis and Education Center of Stamford provides counseling and advocacy to people who have experienced sexual assault. 24 hour hotline: 1-888-999-5545

▶ **THE VICTIMS OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP**

Facts about abusive relationships

Abusive relationships often involve a repeating pattern of verbal, sexual, emotional and physical abuse that increases over time.

Indicators of abusive relationships include:

- verbal abuse
- isolation from friends and family
- fear of abandonment
- fear of partner's temper
- fear of intimidation
- feeling controlled by partner's behavior
- assuming responsibility for partner's abusive behavior
- feeling trapped
- fear of leaving the relationship

Although most abuse in relationship is committed by men against women, men can be abused by women and same-sex abuse can also occur. Advise without conveying judgment.

AVOID

- Downplaying the situation.
- Lecturing the student about poor judgment.
- Expecting the student to make quick or any changes
- Pressuring students to follow any particular course of action.
- Suggesting that the victim is responsible for the abuse

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- See the student in private.
- Emphasize that the abuse is not the student's fault.
- Recognize that the student may be fearful and vulnerable.
- Remember that abusive relationships involve complex dynamics, including high levels of denial and, thus, are difficult to change.
- Be aware that interventions from a variety of sources increase the chances for change.
- Refer the student to the appropriate resources.
- Encourage the student to connect with family and friends.

► THE SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Facts about sexual assault

- Sexual assault is sexual contact initiated against a person without consent.
- The University of Connecticut defines consent as follows:
 - Consent must be informed, freely and actively given, and an understandable exchange of affirmative words or actions, which indicate a willingness to participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity.
 - It is the responsibility of the initiator to obtain clear and affirmative responses at each stage of sexual involvement.
 - The lack of a negative response is not consent.
 - Consent may not be given by any individual who is intoxicated or incapacitated by drug and/or alcohol, both voluntarily and involuntarily consumed.
 - Past consent of sexual activities does not imply ongoing future consent.

Examples of sexual assault include:

- completed or attempted rape
- threats of rape
- sexual coercion
- unwanted sexual contact with force or threat of force
- unwanted sexual contact without consent•

Although most assaults are committed by men against women, men can be assaulted by women, and same-sex assaults also occur. Advise without conveying judgment.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Listen without conveying judgment and be aware that victims can feel shame and anger.
- If the student needs immediate medical attention, call 911.
- Refer the student to Dr. Perrone (203) 251-8490) for assessment and counseling options.
- If the student wants to file a police report, the student must go to the hospital so evidence can be collected.
- If the student needs help dealing with academic issues as a result of the sexual assault and/or if they would like to learn about the campus Community Standards options refer them to the Student Services Office at (203) 251-8484.
- Inform the student of other resources.

AVOID

- Expressing judgment even when high-risk behaviors on the part of the victim (e.g., intoxication) were involved.
- Pressuring the student to file a police report.

► THE VICTIM OF STALKING

Facts about stalking

- Stalking is repeated following or harassment of an individual and is designed to instill a sense of fear or danger.
- Stalkers often have an irrational obsession with the victim and try to gain power and omnipotence through control and intimidation.
- Stalking behavior includes tailing the victim; harassment via phone, email, FAX, and letters; unwanted gifts; and unwanted attentiveness.
- Stalkers can be male or female and targets can be of the same or opposite sex.

AVOID

- Ignoring or minimizing the situation.
- Suggesting that the victim is responsible for the unwanted attention.
- Taking responsibility for protecting the student.
- Failing to encourage the student to alert the proper authorities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Encourage the victimized student to trust his / her instincts.
- Advise the student to contact the University Police.
- Advise the student to document unwanted contacts and maintain evidence of harassment.
- Advise the student to take precautions to ensure safety, including a change in routine travel routes and schedules, and making use of a police escort, when possible.
- If you feel overwhelmed or unprepared to help a victim of stalking, call the Student Services Office 203- 251-8484 or Campus Police at 203- 251-9508 who will maintain your confidentiality and arrange a meeting with that student.

▶ THE VICTIM OF A HATE INCIDENT

Facts about hate incidents

- A hate crime is a criminal act against a person or her/his property because of that person's actual or perceived race, color, religion, nationality, gender identity, or sexual orientation.
- A hate incident is an act that, while not meeting the legal definition of crime, involves the same types of behavior and targeting of underrepresented groups. Hate incidents are more common on college campuses than crimes.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Talk to the victimized student in private.
- Recognize that the student is probably experiencing a range of intense feelings, including shame, anger, fear and denial.
- Explain the importance of notifying the Campus Police (203) 251 – 9508.
- Refer the student to Student Services (203) 251 - 8484 for assessment and counseling.

AVOID

- Downplaying the situation.
- Expressing personal biases.
- Getting caught up in the technicalities or legalities of the situation.

► THE STUDENT WHO IS STRUGGLING ACADEMICALLY

Facts about the student who is struggling academically

- Students generally have one of two problems
 - **Content** - they don't understand the course material
 - **Process** - they have problems with learning, retaining, or recalling information (i.e. note taking, study skills, test-taking anxiety, learning disabilities)
- They are most often motivated to succeed; they just need to have the right tools.

How to identify a process problem

Difficulty with the process can take a variety of forms ranging from a first semester freshmen with inadequate note taking skills to a graduating senior who has put off taking a required statistics course. He or she feels especially anxious in classes that require advanced math skills. In either case it is essential that the student connect with a University staff member who will help them take the necessary steps to learn the required skills and/or compensating strategies that will allow them to be successful.

Students experiencing problems with the "process" may present a variety of issues. The most common (represented by actual quotes from UConn students) are presented below:

- I have too much reading. I can't tell what's most important.
- I'm struggling to keep up with the lecture and take notes at the same time.
- I am not a math person and get really nervous just thinking about a math course.
- I have so much time but I still end up putting everything off to the last minute.
- I studied for 12 hours for the exam and still didn't do well.
- My grades are always lower due to final exams.
- I know that I know the material, but when I get handed the test I just freak out.

A PROACTIVE APPROACH: UCONN

LINKS*

UConn Stamford LINKS is an academic intervention program that connects degree students with mentors (faculty, staff and advanced students) who will provide guidance and support for the duration of an academic term. First and second year students who are on probation at the end of the fall or spring term are automatically invited to participate in the UConn Stamford LINKS program but any student who would like to work with a facilitator is welcome to join. The goal of UConn LINKS is to get students off of academic probation as soon as possible and introduce them to the strategies, skills and resources that will help them achieve long-term success. Students can enroll by contacting Student Services (203 251-8484)

*Coming in Fall '09

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Refer to the Source for Active Learning to receive support services tutoring evaluation

Help for students with problems with content

- The class instructor and advisor
- Tutoring Resources
- The Math/ Science Source
- The Writing Source

The Writing Center includes a faculty-led staff of undergraduate tutors from disciplines across the university, available to support students at all stages of writing process. Tutorials create a unique learning environment that offers one-on-one attention, a good conversation around writing, and thoughtful answers to questions.
<http://www.serkan.gorkemli@uconn.edu>

The campus psychologist Dr. Perrone (203) 251 – 8484.

The campus Academic Services Center (203) 251-8400.

- Refer to advisor/counselor to discuss nature/source of academic difficulties and develop plan and action.

► RESPONDING TO STUDENTS WITH TRANSITION ISSUES

Facts about transitions

- Transitions are times of change that usually involve both loss and opportunity.
- Entering or reentering college is one of life's most demanding transitions; arguably the most significant transition since the start of kindergarten.
- College students face many challenging transitions including graduating and entering or reentering the work force.
- The changes inherent in a transition produce stress and challenge a student's coping resources.
- Students commonly experience a decline in functioning (academic, social, emotional) during transitions.
- Transition stress can be compounded by counterproductive coping mechanisms such as avoidance of stress-producing situations and people, excessive partying, and alcohol abuse.
- Transitions can pose greater problems to students who have existing psychological problems or difficult life circumstances.
- Students going through a transition may benefit from counseling to enhance their coping efforts or to prevent the onset of serious problems.

Signs that a student is having transition problems include:

- Anxiety symptoms such as nervousness, irritability, tearfulness, and sleep problems.
- Depressed mood.
- Difficulty managing responsibilities or relationships.
- Exhibits "boundary issues" (challenges).
- Exhibits inappropriate behavior for a college campus.
- Decreased ability to succeed academically
- Time management

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Convey to the student that transition stress is normal and often brings a temporary decline in performance.
- Encourage that student to use positive coping strategies to manage transition stress including: regular exercise, use of social support, a reasonable eating and sleeping regimen, and scheduling pleasurable activities.
- Refer student to the campus Student Services Department at (203) 251 – 8484 or appropriate counselor.

AVOID

- Assuming that the student understands the impact of transitions and is aware of the source of stress.
- Minimizing or trivializing the student's feelings and reactions.
- Discounting or overlooking factors that put the student at risk of more serious problems.

► RESPONDING TO THE STUDENT WITH CHOICE OF MAJOR OR CAREER CONCERNS

The Career Center provides comprehensive services for students who have the following issues:

For the student who is undecided about a major:

- The majority of the student population is undecided about choice of major.
- Many students will change their major several times prior to choosing one that is right for them.
- Self-exploration is the course of action for students seeking to identify a potential major. The Career Center can help assist students with navigating exploration and strategizing on initiatives for students to pursue to assist them with declaring a major.

For the student who is undecided about a career path:

- Many students will choose a major but need assistance with understanding traditional and non-traditional career paths.
- Students often associate the more well known professions with their course of study and need assistance with career exploration to understand professions that they did not know existed.
- Students will often need assistance in realizing that the path to a particular career is not necessarily linear. A major in “X” does not limit you to a profession in “Y”.

For the student who is looking to gain experience or employment:

- Students may want to clarify their career goals and utilize experiential learning opportunities to confirm their choice of major and occupational interests.
- Students may need assistance with developing a comprehensive job search process utilizing various methods and resources to assist with obtaining employment.

Students who are faced with these issues may be referred to

UConn Stamford Career Center
One University Place, Room 219
Stamford, CT 06901-2315
Phone: 203-251-9549
Fax: 203-251-9596

www.stamford.uconn.edu

Click on “Career Center” on the lower right

► RESPONDING TO THE STUDENT WITH CHOICE OF MAJOR OR CAREER CONCERNS (cont'd)

Career Center resources to address students' concerns

- **Career Center Staff:** Professional staff skilled in the area of career counseling are available to assist **some** students with all phases of the process to choose a major or career direction
- **Career Resource Library:** The Career Resource Library is open from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM Monday through Friday. There is personalized assistance to help students locate resources that relate to fields of study.
- **Assessments:** Available to assist students with identifying either their personality type or area of interest.
- **What Can I Do With This Major? :** Go to www.stamford.uconn.edu click on “Career Center” on lower right has information about majors offered at the UConn, information about traditional and non-traditional career paths, and a direct link to the appropriate academic department to assist students with choosing the correct course of study.
- **Career Panel and Symposia:** Each semester a career panel composed of experienced professionals addresses students concerns to share their career experiences. This is an excellent resource for students deciding on a major and/or career path.
- **Workshops:** The Career Center offers career-related programs, events, and workshops. Topics include “How to Write a Winning Resume and Cover Letter” and “Successful Interviewing.” Students should visit www.stamford.uconn.edu/careerevents.htm for event and workshop schedules.
- **Career Fairs:** Several recruitment events are held each semester on campus giving students multiple opportunities to connect with potential employers. Direct students toward www.stamford.uconn.edu/careerevents.htm to gain additional information about these events.
- **Internships:** Information and instruction is available to **some** students on the importance of gaining an internship. The Career Center also has resources available to identify potential opportunities. 650 internship sites list opportunities at the UConn- Stamford Career Center. Students may also be directed towards www.internships.uconn.edu.
- **Husky Career Link:** HuskyCareerLink is a web-based recruiting system which allows management of many of the recruiting-related activities we offer to students. HuskyCareerLink may be accessed for students seeking internships, or full time or part time job opportunities. Students interested in participating in on-campus interviews and/or viewing electronic job postings may do so through HuskyCareerLink. (Note: Husky Career Link is administered centrally through UConn-Storrs.)

*Students who are faced with these
issues may be referred to*

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Stamford, CT 06901-2315
Phone: 203-251-9549
Fax: 203-251-9596
www.stamford.uconn.edu

▶ **CAMPUS RESOURCES**

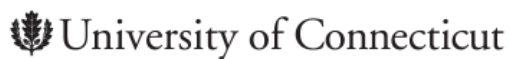
Any emergency – call 911.

Stamford Campus Resources

Student Resources

Bachelor of General Studies/ Non Degree Studies	251- 8550
Campus Police	251-9508
Career Services	251-9549
Center for Academic Programs	251-8488
Center for Students with Disabilities	251-8566
Counseling and Mental Health Services	251-8490
Information Desk	251- 8400
Office of the Associate Vice Provost	251-8510
Student Activities	251-8489
Student Services	251-8484
Veterans Benefits	251-8405
Women Studies	251-8411

HELPING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS



Campus Psychologist
James Perrone Ph.D
(203) 251-8484
251 – 8490
Uconn/Stamford

Student Services Dept.
Dr. Sharon J. White Ed.D
Director of Student Services
Sharon.white@uconn.edu
(203) 251-8484

Counseling and Mental Health Services
Student Health Services Annex Uconn Storrs
234 Glenbrook Road, Unit-2011
Storrs, CT 06269-2011
(860) 486-4705

