

Brief and Crisis Counseling Services

Introduction

Though the college years can be fun and exciting, they also can be trying times. Students must deal with multiple stressors in regard to managing their time, money, academics, relationships and the new burdens that go with new freedoms. For returning adults, there are the realistic demands of their multiple responsibilities and challenges. In addition, a student's capacity to cope is affected by their overall mental and emotional adjustment, past experiences, and the level of their social support.

Students who become overwhelmed by the pressures they experience bring their confusion, anger, frustration and anxiety into the classroom with them. Faculty and staff are often the first point of contact for these students and the first to notice students who are disruptive or in distress. These leaders can play a key role in linking students with Delta's Counseling services.

Eligibility for Service

Students eligible for service are actively enrolled in an academic program focused on completion of a certificate or degree.

Description of the Service

Counselors assist students when emotional events in their life cause a significant disruption to their academic pursuits or when their level of distress may threaten their safety or the safety of others. Through short term counseling, crisis intervention, and referrals to appropriate community services, Counselors help students to cope with disruptions and assist them to return to productive and safe levels of functioning.

In situations in which the student's personal needs require multiple services, example: a trial on psychotropic medication, Counselors will refer them to agencies in their community.

Location, Availability and After-hours Service

Brief and Crisis Counseling services are available to active Delta students during regular business hours in the office of Counseling/Advising & Career Services. The office is located in D-102 and the office phone number is 1-989-686-9330. Faculty, staff and/or students can call or walk in to request service for an active student.

Emergency services after business hours will be provided through the Delta Public Safety Office. Their phone number is 1-989-686-9111.

Recognizing Students in Distress

Faculty and staff are in a unique position to observe student behavior patterns and to identify students experiencing distress.

Some indicators of distress are:

- A marked change in dress or hygiene
- Persistent sadness, depression, lethargy and/or social withdrawal
- Noticeable confusion or disorientation to present circumstances
- A sudden drop in performance or responsiveness in the classroom
- Rapid changes in mood accompanied by agitation, anger and/or disruptive behavior
- Obsessive preoccupations and/or compulsive behaviors that interfere with the student's ability to function socially or academically
- High states of anxiety or panic which hampers attendance or performance in the classroom
- Statements, writings or drawings that focus on suicidal or homicidal themes
- Direct threats of harm to self or others

By referring students to the Counseling staff, faculty, staff and students can help to provide support and assist the student to resolve problems in a safe and constructive manner.

Making a Referral

To refer a student, faculty and staff can directly contact the Counseling/Advising & Career Services and complete the Counseling Referral Form. This provides the student's name, student number and identifies the nature of the concern. This information will be forwarded to the Office Coordinator and the Director of the Counseling/Advising & Career Services for statistical recording and assignment to a Counselor. See the attached Counseling Referral Form.

Non-emergency situations

Faculty and staff can make non-emergency referrals by:

- Providing information about the location, availability and nature of counseling services and advising students that they can initiate their own request for service.
- Faculty and staff can facilitate a referral by calling the Counseling/Advising & Career Services to identify a student who may be in distress. It is best to advise the student of the referral and to ask that they initiate contact with the Counseling/Advising & Career Services office.
- Faculty or staff can escort the student to the Counseling Office located in D-Wing at D-102 on Delta's campus.

Emergency Situations

Crises are the easiest form of student distress to identify and, in some ways, the easiest to handle. When student reactions indicate that there is the potential for imminent harm to self or others take the following steps:

- Stay calm and stay with the student until help arrives. If you have to leave them to seek assistance, enlist the help of others to stay with the student.
- If the student displays adequate self control and is able to cooperate with directions, then contact Counseling/Advising & Career Services by phone and identify the student and the situation. A Professional Counselor will be

designated to respond and will speak with the student either at your location or in the Counseling/Advising Office.

- If the student directly threatens himself/herself or others, or behaves bizarrely, then immediate attention is needed. Call Delta's Public Safety Office immediately (1-989-686-9111). After that, call the Counseling/Advising & Career Service's to notify the office of the problem if it occurs during hours of operation.
- If the student continues to be at risk after evaluation by a Professional Counselor, the Counselor will attempt to contact the student's significant others and will contact the Emergency Services Unit of the Bay Arenac Community Mental Health Authority (1-989-895-2300) or the emergency service unit of the county of residence. See the attached "Emergency Service Sites". Delta's Public Safety Office may need to transport the individual for further evaluation and possible hospitalization. (Note: The Bay-Arenac Emergency Services Unit has agreements with other counties to provide emergency evaluations and hospitalization of non-Bay County residents.)
- If the student refuses service and/or refuses to go for hospital evaluation and is judged to present an imminent threat to his/her safety or the safety of others, the Public Safety Office can assume custody and transport the student to the Emergency Services Unit at Bay-Arenac Community Mental Health.
- If the emergency occurs after 11:00 p.m., then call 911 for police agencies in Bay County. If further evaluation appears necessary, the responding department should transport the student to the Bay-Arenac Emergency Services Unit at the Bay Regional Medical Center. Their phone number is 1-989-895-2300.
- If an emergency situation occurs at an off-campus Delta College Center, staff or faculty will call 911 to reach the local police department in that area. As soon as possible, staff or faculty should contact the Public Safety Office to advise of the situation. The Public Safety Office will dispatch an officer to the site to further investigate. The local police or Delta's Public Safety Officer may need to transport the student to the emergency services site located in the county where the off campus site is placed. See the attached, "Emergency Service Sites". The Public Safety Office will advise the Counseling/Advising and Career Services unit of the incident, identify the student involved and then develop a plan to follow up with needed service.

If a staff or faculty member refers a student for Brief or Crisis Counseling, they will be notified by email of the student's contact or lack of contact with our service. However, due to the limits of confidentiality, without specific written permission, we can not share information from our conversations with the student.

Registering the Referral

At the time a request for service or a referral is received, the Counseling Office Coordinator will record the Referral and advise the Director or designee of the request. The student referral will be assigned to a Professional Counselor for further action. When a specific Counselor is requested and that assignment is feasible, that Counselor will be assigned to provide service to the student.

If the student is not present at the time of the request/referral, the Counselor will make reasonable attempts to contact the student by phone or email to arrange an appointment. When there is direct contact with the student, the Counselor will determine the nature of the problem and the type of services needed and recommend a course of action. The course of action will be based on the level and immediacy of the need, the motivation of the student, and the resources available.

Informed Consent

Counseling services are voluntary and confidential. The use of Delta Counseling services and/or referral services for personal issues requires that the student give their consent to participate. Students will need to read and sign the "Consent for Participation & Referral Services". Counselors will witness and sign the Consent also.

Students deemed to be disruptive or to present a potential threat of harm to himself/herself or others may be referred to Counselors by Delta faculty, staff or students. These students will be given an "Information Disclosure Advisement" which advises them that information may be disclosed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 34 CFR Part 99.36.

If the disruptive or threatening student refuses to participate, they will be advised that this may affect their enrollment and access to Delta's campus. In addition, given the level of judged risk of harm, the Public Safety Office may decide to assume custody of the student and to transport them to a center to be evaluated.

Confidentiality

Students requesting personal counseling are advised of their rights of confidentiality. They are also advised of the exceptions to confidentiality. Disclosure of personal counseling information is permitted under the following circumstances:

- The student or guardian authorizes release of the information by signing a subject- specific, time-limited release to a designated agency or individual.
- The student dies and his or her spouse or other close relative requests information about his/her treatment.
- If a court order requires the release of treatment records.
- Reporting of such information is required by law. In response to suspected child abuse or neglect, the Counseling staff will contact the Children's Protective Services Unit in the county in which the student resides and complete required reporting forms.
- If the student's statements suggest a credible and significant threat to another individual, under the Duty to Warn statute, the Counselor will contact the threatened party and the appropriate police department.
- The student's actions or statements indicate that they may pose an imminent threat to their safety or the safety of others. In the event that a student is judged to pose a risk and they refuse to cooperate, Counselors will share clinical information with the Public Safety Office to facilitate the student's need to be evaluated for hospitalization.

To guard against unauthorized disclosure of student information in physical or electronic form, records will be maintained in a manner that limits access to those who are authorized either by professional role, written consent and/or the criteria defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). See Part 34 CFR 99.3. Records will be stored in a designated secure area in a locked cabinet designated for that purpose with limited access. If stored electronically, such storage is secured with limited, and password protected, access.

Records will be maintained for at least seven years and will be destroyed in a manner that protects the privacy of the student. Records are the property of Delta College.

Students will be treated in a manner that is respectful of their need for privacy and dignity. Whenever possible, students will be interviewed in a private setting that protects the privacy of their responses and disclosures. Information will be shared on a need to know basis unless otherwise permitted by the disclosure exceptions or by an appropriate release.

Record Keeping

Professional Counselors will use standardized recording formats when documenting services. See the attached formats.

Completing an Assessment

During the process of assessing the student the following assessment tools may be used:

- The Clinical Interview by Counselor
- Completion of Medical Social History by the student
- Completion of the Assessment Summary by the Counselor
- Completion of a Counseling Plan by the Counselor and signed by the student
- Diagnostic formulation through use of DSM IV criteria by the Counselor
- Completion of Lethality Scale by the Counselor
- Completion of Brief Assessment and Referral Form by the Counselor
- Completion of Consent and Releases of Information by the student

Assessments

Brief Assessment and Referral

After obtaining a written consent, the Counselor completes a brief assessment and determines that the service needs are more appropriately met by community-based services. With the student's written consent, the Counselor will contact the receiving agency and initiate a referral of the student for service. The student and the counselor may agree on follow-up contacts to monitor or further assist the student.

If it is determined that the student is presently receiving counseling or mental health services from another provider, the student will be referred back to that provider for any additional services.

Brief and/or Crisis Counseling

The Counselor completes the Assessment Summary and Counseling Plan and determines that the issues can be resolved with short term counseling and support. Consistent with this focus, issues should be resolved in six sessions or less. Additional sessions require the authorization of the Director of Counseling/Advising & Career Services.

Emergency Evaluations and Interventions

Counselors evaluate students when the student's behavior or statements suggest the potential for harm to the student or to others. As part of the assessment process, the Counselor will determine the level of possible risk and will attempt to reduce the level of risk through direct interventions or by referral to other services including referrals for evaluation for hospitalization.

If the Counselor determines that the student poses an imminent and significant risk of harm to self or others and this risk is not reduced by the Counselor's interventions, the Counselor will refer the student for further evaluation to the Emergency Services Unit of the Bay-Arenac Community Mental Health Authority or to the emergency service unit in the county of their residence. See the attached, "Emergency Services Sites". In addition, the Counselor will attempt to involve the student's significant others to develop a safety plan for the student. The Counselor may need to contact the Public Safety Office to transport the student for further evaluation.

Involuntary Hospital Evaluations

If the student is judged to present an imminent risk of significant harm to himself/herself or others due to his mental state or developmental disability, and refuses to use services or cooperate with a hospital evaluation, the Public Safety Office may assume custody of the student and transport the student to be evaluated by the Bay-Arenac Emergency Services Unit of the Bay-Arenac Community Mental Health Authority.

(Of note: If the student has no insurance or is covered by Medicaid, they must be evaluated by the county community mental health agency. If they are covered by commercial insurance, the hospital personnel can complete the evaluation.)

After evaluation at that site, the hospital or emergency services unit will decide on an involuntary admission and will follow through with services. The Public Safety Officer will complete an Application for Hospitalization.

Follow up and Monitoring

After evaluation and /or hospitalization, the Counselor may need to continue to meet with the student to monitor their functioning. Such monitoring will be authorized after review of the circumstances by the Counselor, Director and Safety Team.

Termination and Referral

Given the brief nature of counseling services, the termination of services and/or referral to other services is part of the initial plan. Termination of services occurs when the student reports improved functioning and/or when additional services are needed beyond the scope of Delta's Counseling Service.

A description of the termination process and/or referral process will be recorded in the last counseling note.

Training

Staff will receive regular training appropriate to performing the above roles in a competent manner.

Emergency Service Sites

Saginaw County

The Crisis Intervention Center, Saginaw County Community Mental Health
During the day (7:45 a.m. until 4:45 p.m.) at 500 N. Hancock Street, Saginaw
During the evening (4:45 p.m. until 7:45 a.m.) Covenant-Cooper Hospital ER
Phone: 1-989-792-9732 or 1800-233-0022 or TDD: 1-989-797-3460.

*Student with commercial insurance coverage, would be evaluated at the White Pine Psychiatric Unit in Health Source Hospital, 3340 Hospital Road, Saginaw, Michigan
Phone: -1-989-790-7700

Midland County

The Access Center of Midland Mental Health Center and Mid Michigan Regional Hospital ER, 4005 Orchid Street, Midland, Michigan. Phone: 1-989-631-2320

Bay County

The Emergency Services Unit of Bay Arenac Community Mental Health at Bay Regional Medical Center ER (24 hour coverage) 1900 Columbus Street, Bay City
Phone: 1-989-895-2300

*If the student resides in county out of district, Bay County will be the receiving site.