

Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff

The Division of Student Affairs



STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Location:

The Student Health and Wellness Center
1714 9th Avenue, South

Phone:

205-934-5816

Website:

www.uab.edu/students/counseling



Student Counseling Services

Supporting Faculty and Staff

Student Counseling Services is available to provide faculty and staff with resources and support in knowing how to best assist a student you are concerned about or who is in distress. Services provided for faculty include consultation, referrals, presentations, and training.

Mission and Vision

Student Counseling Services supports students in achieving personal, academic, and lifelong goals by providing individual and group mental health services, prevention and outreach programming, crisis and emergency support, and consultation services. Student Counseling Services advocates for safe and inclusive learning environments in the university community.

Welcome

Student Counseling Services seeks to provide a safe space where all students feel supported and welcome. Our staff is committed to providing confidential counseling services for students of all backgrounds, races, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds. We recognize the complex intersectionality of all aspects of identity and deeply respect each student we serve.

About Services for Students

Counseling services are available to all enrolled UAB students for no charge. To schedule an appointment, students may call our office at 934-5816 or come by the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1714 9th Avenue South. Services available to students include individual and couples counseling, groups, presentations and outreach, emergency and crisis support, evaluation and assessment and referrals.

A Note on Confidentiality

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Consequently, a counselor cannot discuss the details of a student's situation with others or even indicate whether the student is, in fact, in counseling, without having written permission from the student. Ideally, the student would share important information with you directly based on your need and your relationship.

If a student is in a crisis or emergency situation, please contact 911 or the UAB Police Department at 934-3535 immediately.

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Where to Report a Student of Concern

Student Counseling Services

CARE Team

<http://www.uab.edu/careteam/>

The UAB Care Team (Communicate, Assess, Refer, Educate) helps find solutions for students experiencing academic, social and crisis situations including mental health concerns. Members of the University community can report a concern for a student who might benefit from services. The CARE team steps in to connect students with relevant campus resources and outside agencies. The CARE Team will also outreach to the student to understand his/her situation and develop a plan of action leading towards his/her success. Click the website to report a student of concern.

<http://www.uab.edu/students/counseling>

Student Counseling Services supports students' achievement of personal, academic, and lifelong goals by providing individual and group mental health services, prevention and outreach programming, crisis and emergency support, and consultation services. Student Counseling Services advocates for safe and inclusive learning environments at UAB. **Student**

Conduct

<http://www.uab.edu/students/conduct/>

Student Conduct is responsible for upholding the integrity and purpose of the university through the fair and consistent application of policies and procedures to students' behavior to ensure a community that respects the dignity and right of all persons to reach their highest potential. Through a student-focused and learning-centered lens, we utilize a comprehensive approach to informal and formal options to uphold community standards, foster personal growth and development of life skills, and promote a civil learning environment.

Student Outreach

<http://www.uab.edu/students/outreach>

Student Outreach provides individualized assistance to promote student safety and well-being, collaboration and resilience, personal accountability, and self-advocacy. Student Outreach support students through life challenges and connects them with University and community supports to best address their diverse needs.

Services and support available to faculty and staff

Consultation

If you are concerned about a student and would like to discuss how to help or determine if a student needs additional support, please contact our office at 934-5816 to speak with a licensed clinician about the student of concern.

Presentations

Student Counseling Services is available to provide presentations to your groups, organizations on the topics of resilience, suicide prevention and self-care/life balance. If you are interested in setting up a presentation, please submit a request on our website at

<http://www.uab.edu/students/counseling/presentations-outreach/presentation-and-outreach-request-form>.

Training

Student Counseling Services offers three training formats/topics for faculty and staff. SCS is available to provide a general overview of services (15 minutes). Additionally, two workshops are offered including the Mental Health Matters workshop and the QPR Suicide Gatekeeper training. For more information, go to www.uab.edu/CTL and click the “Mental Health Matters” series. Or, to request a training for your department or group, go to <http://www.uab.edu/students/counseling/presentations-outreach/presentation-and-outreach-request-form>. All trainings are designed to equip faculty and staff with the information needed to help get a student connected to the best resources to assist them during their time of distress.

Referring a Student

Many students develop trusting relationships with faculty and staff and share their personal struggles and concerns. It is important to communicate your concern and care and let them know there are resources available to provide them with support and help. One way you can provide support is to refer them to Student Counseling Services.

Student Counseling Services does not directly contact students for counseling appointments. Students must call and initiate the counseling intake process. The one exception to this practice is if a student is demonstrating suicide threat.

If a student is in a crisis or emergency situation, please contact 911 or the UAB Police Department at 934-3535 immediately.

If you are concerned about a student who you believes needs outreach, and this student is **not** actively demonstrating suicide threat, you may submit a report to the [Office of Student Outreach](#). They will follow up with you and are able to provide direct outreach to a student and help connect them with resources and support on campus. If a student needs counseling services, they will assist in connecting the student with mental health support. You may follow this link to submit a report for a student of concern to the Office of Student Outreach:

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofAlabamaBirmingham&layout_id=2

Refer a Student to Student Counseling Services

Inform Students about Counseling and Provide Encouragement: If you believe a student would benefit from counseling, please let the student know about our services and refer the student to us. Sometimes students are reluctant or afraid to reach out for professional help. Depending on your relationship with the student, you may offer additional support by walking them to our office or encouraging them to call us from your office while you are meeting with them.

Contact Student Counseling Services with a Referral: If you have encouraged a student to seek counseling and you would like for us to be aware of your concern, it is often very helpful to us for you to contact us and let us know more about your concerns. This allows us to better determine how to serve the student when they contact us for counseling services. Information from your experience also lets us know if the student may need an urgent or crisis counseling appointment.

A Note on Confidentiality

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Consequently, a counselor cannot discuss the details of a student's situation with others or even indicate whether the student is, in fact, in counseling, without having written permission from the student. Ideally, the student would share important information with you directly based on your need and your relationship.

Signs a Student May Need Counseling

- The student remains distressed following repeated help from you or other staff.
- 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 on-going counseling rather than consultation or advising.

How to Refer

- Speak to the student in a private setting, away from others
- Share your concerns in a caring, straightforward and direct manner
- Because many students initially resist the idea of counseling, be caring and firm in your recommendation that counseling would be helpful. Be clear about the reasons you are concerned by providing behavioral observations (e.g. missing class, change in behavior, concerning e-mail)
- Suggest that the student call to make an appointment and provide the Student Counseling Services number (934-5816) and location (Student Health and Wellness Center, 1714 9th Avenue, South).
- Remind the student that the services are FREE and CONFIDENTIAL

Recognizing Signs of Distress and How to Help

As students adjust to college and develop personal identities, they typically experience *some* fluctuation in mood, academic performance, and behavior. However, *abrupt* or *prolonged* shifts in attitude and/or behavior may indicate significant signs of distress. If you notice any of the following warning signs, we recommend that you talk to your student about your concerns and about available resources.

Academic Concerns

- uncharacteristically poor work
- difficulty concentrating and/or staying organized
- difficulty completing tasks/assignments
- excessive absences

Interpersonal Concerns

- isolation from family and friends
- fear of social situations
- extreme defensiveness and/or irritability
- inappropriate responses/disjointed thoughts
- difficulty getting along with others

Behavioral Concerns

- difficulty completing activities of daily living or changes in hygiene
- changes in eating patterns
- changes in sleeping patterns (difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, sleeping excessively)
- intense, dramatic, or volatile expressions of emotion
- loss of interest in pleasurable activities/general apathy
- self-harming behaviors (e.g. cutting self)
- lethargy/low energy
- excessive drug or alcohol use
- frequent crying
- panic attacks/extreme anxiety
- homicidal or suicidal statements
- expressed hopelessness
- extreme pessimism

Physical Health Concerns

- frequent headaches
- recurring colds and minor illnesses
- frequent muscle aches
- persistent fatigue

Communicating Concerns to Your Student

- Familiarize yourself with resources available at UAB.
- Talk to your student privately. Share your observations and express your concern. Be direct and specific.
- Ask open-ended questions to understand your student's point of view. Avoid judgment, minimization, or advice-giving. Remember, you don't have to solve your student's problems; rather, steer them in the appropriate direction.
- Normalize your student's experience; if possible, remind your student that they are not alone and do not need to go through problems alone.
- Discuss available services/resources and encourage your student to seek support.
- Make a firm plan for when and how your student is going to contact the identified service. Ask how you can support your student.
- Instill hope; and encourage help-seeking behavior.

Important Information about Suicide

Suicide has become a prevalent mental health concern in the United States with over 30,000 people taking their lives each year. If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, it is important to get help. You can save a life, maybe your own.

How to Identify the Risk Factors for Suicide

- Depression
- Previous suicide attempt
- Excessive alcohol or other drug use
- Ending of a significant relationship
- An organized suicide plan
- Isolating himself/herself from friends and family
- Neglecting appearance and hygiene
- Expressing the belief that life is meaningless
- Talking about suicide or death
- Obtaining a weapon or other means of hurting oneself

How to Help Someone

1. Listen intently and let the person express their feelings and emotions.
2. Practice reflective listening - reflect back to them what you think they are saying in a non-judgmental manner.
3. Validate their feelings and help them to calm and slow down.
4. Help them gain understanding of the situation and regain a sense of control.
5. Directly ask them if they have considered suicide (do not just wonder, ask).
6. In an immediate emergency situation contact the UAB Police Department at 934-3535.
7. Be willing to go with them to get help. Go to Student Counseling Services in the Student Health and Wellness Center (205-934-5816)

Need Help?

The University of Alabama at Birmingham offers free and confidential counseling services for our enrolled students. To schedule an appointment, call Student Counseling Services at 205-934-5816 or stop by the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1719 9th Avenue, South.

Resources

Birmingham Crisis Line: 205-323-7777

The Birmingham Crisis Center offers support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year. Click here to learn more about what to expect when you call the crisis line:

<http://www.crisiscenterbham.org/crisis-intervention-prevention/crisis-line.htm>.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-Talk (8255)

This national crisis line offers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week support. Click here for more information about this lifeline: <http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Knowing When to Refer a Student for Professional Help

When students express personal concerns, faculty and staff can provide help through empathic listening, facilitating open discussion of problems, instilling hope, conveying acceptance, and offering basic advice. Often times, this type of help is adequate. In other cases, however, students need professional help to overcome problems and to resume effective coping.

Signs that indicate that a student may need counseling:

- The student remains distressed following repeated help from you or other staff members.
- 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 on-going counseling rather than consultation or advising.

A Note on Confidentiality

CSC Counseling Services are required by law and by professional ethics to protect the confidentiality of all communication between counselors and clients (except in cases where harm to self or harm to others is involved).

Consequently, a counselor cannot discuss the details of a student's situation with others or even indicate whether the student is, in fact, in counseling, without having written permission from the student. Ideally, the student would share important information with you directly based on your need and your relationship.

How to Refer

- Speak to the student in a direct, concerned, straightforward manner.
- Because many students 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.
- Suggest that the student call to make an appointment, and provide the counseling services number (934-5816) and location (Student Health and Wellness Center).
- Remind the student that services are FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

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 the Health Center.

When In Doubt, Consult

If you need help in deciding on whether or not it is appropriate to make a referral, call Student Counseling Services at 205-934-5816 for consultation with a Student Counseling Services licensed counselor.

Mental Health Related Crisis and Emergency

Student Counseling Services (SCS) maintains emergency services throughout the year. SCS keeps the same calendar as the university and is open when the university is open. If you or someone you know is experiencing an urgent crisis, then SCS provides consultation, assessment, and evaluation as needed.

In case of a life-threatening emergency day or night, immediately call the UAB Police Department (934-3535) or go to the UAB Emergency Department (on the corner of 6th Ave. South and 18th St. South), the UAB Highlands Emergency Department (1201 11th Ave. South) or the nearest Emergency Department.

During Regular Business Hours: 205-934-5816

To access emergency services during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 am-Noon and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm), students can either call our office at **205-934-5816** or come directly to Student Counseling Services to consult with a counselor regarding an urgent need for services or to schedule an appointment. Our offices are located in the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1719 9th Avenue, South.

When Student Counseling Services is closed and after-hours

When Student Counseling Services is closed go to the UAB Emergency Department, UAB Highlands Emergency Department or the nearest Emergency Department. UAB Police Department can also assist in directing you to the appropriate resources at 205-934-3535.

If someone been sexually assaulted

Please contact the UAB Police Department at 934-3535 or dial 911; they will direct you appropriately.

Crisis Hotlines

These crisis lines offer 24-hour support for anyone who needs to talk to someone.

Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-8255

Birmingham Crisis Line: (205) 323-7777

Transgender Crisis Hotline: (877) 656-8860

LGBTQ+ Hotline: (866) 488-7386

Rape Response: (205) 323-7273

Graduate Student Help Line (800) 472-3457

Veterans Help Line: (800) 838-2838

Crisis Text Line: 741-741

Self-Care and Boundaries: Know your Limits

You will be able to assist many distressed students on your own by simply listening and referring them for further help. Some students will, however, need much more than you can provide.

Respect any feelings of discomfort you may have.

Focus on getting them the assistance they require

- Reinforce them for confiding in you
- Be accepting and nonjudgmental
- Try to identify the problem area
- Indicate that seeking professional help is a positive and responsible thing to do.

Some signs that you may have over-extended yourself include:

- Feeling stressed out or overwhelmed by the situation
- Feeling angry at the student
- Feeling afraid
- Having thoughts of “adopting” or otherwise rescuing the student
- “Reliving” similar experiences of your own

Consult with Student Counseling Services regarding any students in distress.

Enlist your own support, including talking to your supervisor about your concerns.

Take care of yourself and ensure you are taking a break.

Communicate care and concern while also communicating the limits of your ability to help.

Faculty and Staff Resource:

UAB Employee Assistance and Counseling Center

Magnolia Office Park, Ste. 330

2112 11th Ave. S.

205-934-2281

www.uab.edu/eacc

Provides confidential support services for employees and members of their immediate household with free resources for resolving work-related and personal problems.

Sample Syllabus Statements

Statement Encouraging Resiliency

Source: Rochester Institute of Technology

Success in this course program depends heavily on your personal health and wellbeing. Recognize that stress is an expected part of the college experience, and it often can be compounded by unexpected setbacks or life changes outside the classroom. Your instructors and I strongly encourage you to reframe challenges as an unavoidable pathway to success. Reflect on your role in taking care of yourself throughout the term, before the demands of exams and projects reach their peak. Please feel free to reach out to me about any difficulty you may be having that may impact your performance in your courses or campus life as soon as it occurs and before it becomes too overwhelming. In addition to your academic advisor, I strongly encourage you to contact the many other support services on campus that stand ready to assist you.

Sample #1

Student Counseling Services offers students of all backgrounds, races, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, gender identities, abilities, ethnicities, and cultures a safe place to discuss and resolve issues that interfere with personal and academic goals. Student Counseling Services recognizes and honors the complex intersectionality of all aspects of a person's identity and presenting concerns. All enrolled UAB students are eligible for counseling. Students can schedule an appointment through their patient portal and learn more about services on the Student Counseling Services webpage at www.uab.edu/students/counseling.

Main office location: 3rd Floor LRC, 1714 9th Avenue South

Office hours: Monday-Friday 8 – 5

www.uab.edu/students/counseling

Sample #2

We all experience stressful and difficult events as a normal part of life. As your instructor, I believe your mental health is an important part of your academic success. UAB offers counseling services on-campus that are available to you at no cost. All counseling services provided are completely confidential and in no way connected to your academic record. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this valuable resource if you are interested or find yourself struggling and in need of additional support. Students can schedule an appointment through their patient portal and learn more about services on the Student Counseling Services webpage at www.uab.edu/students/counseling.

Main office location: 3rd Floor LRC, 1714 9th Avenue South

Office hours: Monday-Friday 8 – 5, Closed 12 - 1

www.uab.edu/students/counseling

Resources

Student Counseling Services

<http://www.uab.edu/students/counseling>

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Wellness Promotion

<http://www.uab.edu/students/wellness>

Wellness Promotion focuses on the primary prevention of interpersonal violence through education and awareness events and the Collegiate Recovery Community for students in active recovery from alcohol and substance abuse and misuse. The Promoters of Wellness (POW) program trains students to provide peer education through outreach and coaching services.

Student Health Services

<http://www.uab.edu/students/health>

UAB Student Health Services delivers comprehensive, high quality, confidential, evidence based primary healthcare in an efficient, friendly, and caring manner to students so that they may succeed in their studies and professional lives at UAB and beyond. By promoting health education, prevention and wellness, Student Health Service contributes to student development and success.

Disability Support Services

<http://www.uab.edu/students/disability>

Disability Support Services promotes self-awareness, self-determination and self-advocacy by providing education to students with disabilities about their rights and responsibilities so they can make informed choices.

Student Outreach

<http://www.uab.edu/students/outreach>

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Title IX

<http://www.uab.edu/titleix>

UAB Division of Student Affairs oversees the University's compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The Title IX Office works with students, University administration, departments, faculty, staff, campus police, and other support services to ensure that University policies and programs foster a campus community free of sex discrimination including gender-based assault, harassment, exploitation, dating and domestic violence, stalking as well as discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identify and gender expression, and related retaliation.

CARE Team

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The UAB Care Team (Communicate, Assess, Refer, Educate) helps find solutions for students experiencing academic, social and crisis situations including mental health concerns. Members of the University community can report a concern for a student who might benefit from services. The CARE team steps in to connect students with relevant campus resources and outside agencies. The CARE Team will also outreach to the student to understand his/her situation and develop a plan of action leading towards his/her success. Click the website to report a student of concern.

International Student and Scholar Services

<http://www.uab.edu/global/international-students-and-scholars>

International Scholar and Student Services serves UAB's community of international students, scholars, faculty, staff and physicians in every aspect of immigration services as well as providing orientation and advising in matters ranging from obtaining a Social Security card, applying for post-degree work authorization, filing an H-1B petition to obtaining a green card. ISSS hosts weekly Coffee Hours in the international center lobby every Friday.

Crisis Center Birmingham

<http://www.crisiscenterbham.org/>

The Crisis Center's mission is to serve the unmet needs of people experiencing personal crisis or mental health issues and respond with services that promote coping, emotional health and well-being.

UAB Police Department

www.uab.edu/police

205-934-3535

Vulcan Materials Academic Success Center

<http://www.uab.edu/students/academics/student-success>

The Vulcan Materials Academic Success Center (VMASC) fosters undergraduate student success by creating a supportive environment and delivering academic services that encourage goal achievement and degree completion. Services provided include tutoring, supplemental instruction, academic advising, success advising, workshops and study hours.

Additional Resources

ULifeline: www.ulifeline.org/uab

JED Foundation: <https://www.jedfoundation.org/>

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: <https://afsp.org/>

Active Minds: www.activeminds.com

Campus Pride: www.campuspride.org

Crisis Hotlines

These crisis lines offer 24-hour support for anyone who needs to talk to someone.

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Graduate Student Help Line (800) 472-3457

Veterans Help Line: (800) 838-2838

Crisis Text Line: 741-741

National Professional Organizations

American Counseling Association: <https://www.counseling.org/>

American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/>

National Association of Social Workers: <http://www.naswdc.org/>