

RED FOLDER

Quick reference guide for recognizing and responding to concerning student behaviors



Recognize

Recognize indicators of distress.
Common indicators are listed inside.
Students may present with indicators not listed.



Respond

Respond appropriately.
Each situation is unique. Use the tips
and decision tree to determine the
most appropriate response.
Seek consultation!



Refer

Refer the student.
Use the resource list to help identify
the most appropriate resource(s) to
assist the student.

RECOGNIZE – Indicators of Distressed Students

Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not just isolated symptoms.
Trust your instincts if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened.

Academic	Physical	Personal/ Interpersonal	Safety Risk
Sudden decline in quality of work and grades	Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g., poor grooming, weight gain / loss, change in dress)	Self-disclosure of distress, family problems, financial stress, or other difficulties	Implied or direct threats of harm to self or others
Repeated absences	Excessive fatigue, falling asleep in class	Expressions of concern by classmates or peers	Unprovoked anger or hostility; physical violence (e.g., shoving, grabbing, assaulting, use of a weapon).
Disturbing or bizarre content in writing or presentations	Noticeably intoxicated, hung over, or smelling of alcohol and/or other drugs	Tearfulness or panic	Assignments dominated by themes of hopelessness, despair, helplessness, isolation, rage, violence, self-injury
Multiple requests for an extension	Rapid speech or manic behavior	Expressions of hopelessness	Stalking / harassing
Classroom disruptions		Unusual / disproportionate emotional response to events	

CONFIDENTIALITY AND FERPA

FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with their health and well-being. Faculty and staff are free to share their observations of a student's conduct and statements made by a student with college administrators, campus police, counseling services, and/or one's supervisor.

Title IX

Should you need to report an incident of sexual violence, it is important to know the university has a formal reporting structure and process which includes confidential and mandatory reporters. Promptly contact the Title IX Coordinator, Public Safety, or the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Office. More information can be found at: www.metrostate.edu/assault-violence-prevention

RESPOND – Guidelines for responding to a variety of concerning student behaviors

Behaviors of Concern	Best Practices	Key Resources
<p>Disruptive Behaviors Behaviors that interfere with teaching and learning environment.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to comply with directives • Argumentative, unruly or abrasive behavior • Monopolizing classroom discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak with student privately • Avoid escalating by debating or engaging • If student continues to disrupt, ask the student to leave • If the student will not leave contact Safety and Security • Consider filing a conduct complaint • Seek consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of Students 651-793-1579 • Center for Faculty Development 651-793-1774 • Dean / Department Chair
<p>Distressed Behaviors Behaviors that cause concern for the personal well-being of that student.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marked changes in performance / appearance • Repeat requests for special considerations • Unusual or exaggerated emotional responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with student in-person, privately • Communicate your concerns to the student, focusing on observable behavior • Encourage student to use Counseling Services • Do not promise confidentiality • Contact your supervisor • Document your observations • Seek consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling Services 651-793-1568 • Center for Accessibility Resources 651-793-1549 • CARE Team dean.students@metrostate.edu
<p>Irrational Behaviors Behaviors that cause others to feel uncomfortable or scared.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confused speech / difficulty communicating • Incongruent / inappropriate emotional responses • Suspicious or paranoid thoughts • Assignments with unusual or concerning themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there's no immediate threat, speak with the student privately • Express concern about behavior and set limits • Do not reinforce or challenge delusions • Acknowledge feelings without supporting thoughts or conclusions (e.g., "It sounds like you're really scared right now.") • Seek consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling Services 651-793-1568 • Behavioral Intervention Team www.metrostate.edu/BIT • CARE Team dean.students@metrostate.edu
<p>Threatening Behaviors Behaviors that threaten safety or well-being</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment or stalking • Brandishing a weapon • Specific threats of physical harm • Intimidating behaviors • Suicidal threats / behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Safety and Security immediately • If student poses a danger to others, dismiss the class • Avoid contact and speak calmly • Do not attempt to keep the student from leaving class • Seek consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Safety and Security / 911 • Counseling Services 651-793-1568 • Behavioral Intervention Team www.metrostate.edu/BIT

REFER – Guidelines for referring students to the most appropriate resources

General Guidelines for Referrals	
Stay Safe	Call Safety and Security or 911 if you have any concerns about safety for yourself, the student, or anyone else.
Take Your Time	If this is not an emergency, take time to gather information, consult with colleagues, and develop a plan.
Seek Consultation	You are not alone. Use the resource list to identify resources that can support you and provide consultation.
Be Honest and Direct	It usually makes the most sense to start the conversation by sharing your observations about the behaviors that are concerning. Don't be afraid to ask directly if a student is considering suicide (you won't instill the thought).
Consider Culture	Respect the student's value system and cultural beliefs.
Instill Hope	Communicate hope by reminding the student that there are options. Express confidence in campus and off-campus resources.
Suggest Resources	Help the student get connected to the next step (e.g., help call Counseling to schedule an appointment; contact academic advisor, etc.).

NOTES:

**Is the student in imminent danger to self or others?
Does the student need immediate assistance?**



Yes



Student is imminently dangerous and threatening harm to self or others.



**Call 911 or Campus Security
651-793-1717.**



Not Sure



Student has shown several indicators of distress and my interaction left me worried. I am very concerned.



Call Counseling Services at x1568.
Mental Health Counselors are available 24/7/365 for consultation.



No



I'm not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but I believe that they could benefit from support.



Refer student to appropriate campus resource.

Key Resources:

MetroCARES Support Line

Mental health support is available 24/7/365
651-793-1568, choose option zero

Counseling Services

651-793-1568
Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

Dean of Students

651-793-1579

Behavioral Intervention Team

Behavior.InterventionTeam@metrostate.edu

Office of Equity and Inclusion

651-793-1270

CARE Team

CARE.Team@metrostate.edu

Center for Accessibility Resources

651-793-1549

University Ombudsperson

651-793-1517

Campus Safety and Security Office

Saint Paul - 651-793-1717
Midway - 651-775-6122