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A. THE FACULTY ADVISER

At The College of Wooster, all academic advising is done by members of the faculty, and the adviser-advisee relationship is among the most important relationships a student will form. The adviser assists the student in the construction of the academic program in a number of important ways: by providing information about requirements, policies, procedures, and educational options; by assisting students in planning a program that is consistent with their interests and abilities; and by helping students to integrate the resources of the College to meet their educational needs and aspirations. Although decisions about course selection and construction of their program are ultimately the responsibility of the student, the adviser provides an essential resource.

For entering students, the faculty adviser is also the student’s instructor in First-Year Seminar in Critical Inquiry; as such, the adviser will have special insight into the student’s background and interests, goals and needs, strengths and weaknesses. When the student declares a major, a new adviser is assigned who will help to introduce the student into the discipline as a professional, socialize the student into the culture of the department or program, mentor the student closely in the development of an appropriate academic program, and look for special
opportunities that will help the student to grow both as a major in the discipline and as a liberally educated person. When the student undertakes the senior project in Independent Study, the adviser will work extremely closely with the student and mentor his or her final development as a student-scholar in the discipline and to prepare the student for graduation. The adviser will also counsel the student and offer assistance as he or she plans for life and a career after Wooster. Note that in many departments, however, the Independent Study adviser is different from the academic adviser.

In our relationships with our advisees, we serve as agents of the institution. In this capacity, we must fairly and accurately interpret the academic rules and expectations of the institution to the student. At the same time, we also serve as the student’s advocate. In this capacity, we must be sensitive to each student’s background, needs, talents, and personality and work with each student to identify the program of academic and co-curricular experiences that will be most beneficial. We must also use our experience and judgment to help the student through the bureaucratic and procedural complexities that are part of every academic institution.

B. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

It is essential that the faculty adviser become thoroughly familiar with the rules, policies, and curriculum of the institution as described in the Catalogue. Advisers are encouraged to study the Catalogue carefully, in particular the sections on Degree Requirements and Registration, and to regard the Catalogue as a first point of reference in their conversations with advisees. Note that students are bound by the Catalogue for the year in which they entered.

1. The adviser supervises the academic program of the advisee. The responsibilities of the adviser include the following:

a. assisting students in elucidating goals and values;

b. helping students to understand the nature and purpose of a liberal arts education;
c. providing information about requirements, policies, procedures, and educational options;

d. assisting their students in planning a program that is consistent with their interests and abilities;

e. helping students to integrate the resources of the College to meet their educational needs and aspirations;

f. increasing advisees' awareness of abilities and talents through the use of test results and other data (advisers can refer advisees to Career Planning for such tests);

g. assisting advisees to plan each semester’s program of courses, using the Degree Audit;

h. directing students in academic difficulty to the appropriate campus resource;

i. being aware of each advisee's progress by sufficient contact and the keeping of accurate records; and

j. monitoring and evaluating one's own effectiveness as an adviser.

2. Advisers should be aware of the following limitations on their advising responsibilities.

a. An adviser should not make decisions for an advisee, but be a sympathetic listener, direct the student to appropriate resources, offer various alternatives for the student to consider, and recommend what in his or her judgment is the best decision or course of action. Students themselves, however, make final decisions about their education and their academic program, and the final responsibility for these decisions is theirs.
b. An adviser is not expected to have detailed information about all departments, programs, and requirements at the College. The adviser is expected to check the information provided to advisees for accuracy and, as necessary, to direct the student to other sources that can provide accurate information and definitive answers to specific questions. It is the student’s responsibility to take advantage of such counsel and these resources.

c. An adviser should not betray a student’s confidence. This should not preclude exchange of helpful information between adviser and instructor or the Deans. Such exchanges should always be conducted in a professional and discreet manner. Student information should only be shared as educationally appropriate within the College. Outside contacts, including contact with parents, are governed by FERPA regulations, though many students have release forms on record. Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

However, please note that Academic Advisers—like nearly everyone acting in their capacity as College employees—are considered "responsible employees" and therefore are mandatory Title IX reporters. Please see section D.3.a below for further information, as well as this link: http://www.wooster.edu/offices/titleix/sexua-misconduct-policy-2018.pdf

3. Advisers must approve registration for all courses for their advisees. The procedure for registration for courses is as follows:

a. Advisers should meet with all advisees during the times designated for advising conference prior to on-line registration.

b. Should a student fail to meet with the adviser prior to scheduling, the adviser should place a hold on the student’s registration. Advisers must clear each advisee for registration.
4. Advisers must approve all course changes for their advisees. The procedure for changing a course after the open registration period is as follows:

a. The student must persuade the adviser that the course change is appropriate, and the adviser must agree that the reasons offered for changing the course(s) are valid.

b. The student is to complete the appropriate form (available at the Office of the Registrar).

c. Students who are receiving financial assistance and wish to drop below three courses should be advised to contact the Financial Aid Office to determine what implications there may be for financial aid. *This should be done prior to dropping the course.*

d. The adviser should sign the Registration Adjustment Form (i.e., Add/Drop Form) only after the student has completed it thoroughly.

e. The student is to take the Registration Adjustment (Add/Drop) Form to the instructor involved for his or her signature. If the change involves adding a course, the instructor of the second course has discretion as to whether the student may be admitted. The signature of the adviser does not guarantee admission to a course.

f. The student is to take the completed Registration Adjustment (Add/Drop) Form to the Registrar’s Office. *The change is valid on the date the form is received in the Registrar’s Office.*

5. Advisers may be consulted about the progress of students by the Deans, Registrar, members of the Admissions staff, and by the Committee on Academic Standards.

6. If, after consultation with one of the Deans, a student wishes to change advisers after the end of the first semester and before declaring a major, the student
should use the Change of Adviser form (available in the Registrar’s Office), get the signatures of the original adviser and the new adviser, and return the form to the Registrar’s Office.

C. REFERRALS

Students frequently ask to whom they should turn for the solution of particular problems or for further information on specific programs. There also will be times when the adviser wishes to suggest that the student receives counsel and advice from someone else. The following list identifies personnel at the College to whom you may wish to send students. Note that there is some overlap in areas of interest and concern.

1. **Dean for Curriculum and Academic Engagement**
   All matters relating to the academic procedures and policies of the College that cannot be resolved at the departmental level should be referred to the Office of the Dean for Curriculum and Academic Engagement.

2. **Dean for Faculty Development**
   The Dean for Faculty Development hears student concerns related to faculty performance. Where possible, the student should first try to resolve these concerns in direct and open conversation with the faculty member; if this does not yield satisfactory results, the department chair is usually an appropriate next step. However, if issues still remain after pursuing these options, the student is invited to make an appointment with the Dean for Faculty Development to explore other possible ways to seek a positive resolution.

3. **APEX (Advising, Planning, and Experiential Learning)**
   APEX (in Gault Library, lower level) integrates and coordinates the resources and activities that help students develop a thoughtful educational plan and career planning. APEX complements our one-on-one faculty advising system by providing a centralized location for programs and resources, many of which have been identified as High Impact Educational Practices.
By combining the offices of Academic Advising, the Learning Center, the Registrar, Experiential Learning, Entrepreneurship, Career Planning and Off-Campus Studies, APEX fosters the cultivation of self-reflective and intentional learning throughout a student’s four years at Wooster and prepares them to be lifelong learners and responsible global citizens. One of the goals of APEX is to enable students to translate their liberal arts education at Wooster to life after college through experiential learning programs that foster the integration of theory and practice.

The faculty and staff in APEX sponsor workshops on topics such as developing time management and good study skills, and enhancing their educational experience through a variety of on- and off-campus programs. In addition, the faculty and staff are available for one-on-one consulting appointments.

a. **Advising Center**
   The Advising Center and the Associate Dean for Advising help students develop a comprehensive educational plan. The staff is available for individual meetings and provides programming to meet the challenges of College Life.

b. **Learning Center**
   The Learning Center offers a variety of academic support services, programs, and one-on-one meetings available to all students. Popular areas of support include time management techniques, class preparation tips, and test-taking strategies. In addition, the Learning Center coordinates peer tutoring for several academic departments. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment at the APEX front desk or call x2595.

Additionally, the Learning Center offers English Language Learning support. Students can receive instruction or support with English grammar, sentence structure, writing, reading comprehension, reading speed, vocabulary, listening comprehension, speaking fluency, pronunciation, and American culture through: one-on-one meetings with
the ELL Coordinator; ELL Peer Tutoring; ELL Writing Studio courses; and other programming offered throughout the year. Students seeking ELL support are encouraged to visit the APEX front desk.

The Learning Center also coordinates accommodations for students with diagnosed disabilities. At the beginning of the semester, students should contact Amber Larson, Director of the Learning Center (x2595; alarson@wooster.edu), to make arrangements for securing appropriate accommodations. Although the Learning Center will notify professors of students with documented disabilities and the approved accommodations, it is the responsibility of the students to speak with professors during the first week of each semester. If a student does not request accommodations or does not provide documentation to the Learning Center, faculty are under no obligation to provide accommodations.

c. **Registrar**

Questions and concerns involving course schedules and the completion of requirements should be referred to this office. Forms for adding and dropping courses, S/NC grading status, tutorials, and the Teaching Apprenticeship are available here. The Registrar’s Office also produces the *Course Schedule*.

d. **Experiential Learning**

Experiential Learning is grounded in the ideal of ‘learning by doing.’ Wooster provides an array of experiential learning opportunities that range from teaching apprenticeships and on-campus leaderships roles to field experiences, off-campus study, global entrepreneurships, and off-campus internships. The Associate Dean for Experiential Learning assists students in finding and selecting appropriate programs.

e. **Center for Entrepreneurship**

The Center for Entrepreneurship cultivates students’ innovative ideas and helps them integrate theory and practice. The Director of
Entrepreneurship assists, educates, nurtures, and empowers students in their efforts to bring an idea into reality.

f. Career Planning
The faculty adviser plays a critical role in helping students explore and select career options consistent with their abilities and goals. This section outlines resources available to faculty advisers from Career Planning. Please encourage any student who desires help to make an appointment with us.

- Assessment Tools such as StrengthsQuest, Myers-Briggs, Self-Directed Search, and Campbell Interest and Skill Survey help students gain a clearer focus on their interests, skills, and abilities in relation to many occupations.
- A Career Library filled with career exploration materials, graduate school program information, internships, and summer and fulltime job opportunities.
- The Scots Career Network offers current students access to over 800 alumni nationwide who serve as career mentors.
- Career Services Homepage will give students access to thousands of career-related links.

g. Off-Campus Studies Office
This office provides information on all international and domestic off-campus study programs. For further information, contact the Director of Off-Campus Studies.

4. Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of First-Year Students, Associate Dean of Students, Assistant Dean of Students
Student personnel deans are committed to the development of the student and may become involved in the counseling program at any level of concern. Students are welcome to consult with them.
5. **Concerns Regarding Academic Success and Retention**

Advisers who are concerned that a student may be seeking to transfer or withdraw from the College should contact the Office of the Dean of Students and convey the concerns.

6. **Financial Aid**

Inquiries related to financial aid should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid. Students needing employment on campus should be directed to the Student Employment Office. Students with work-study awards will receive priority in placement referrals if they report to the Student Employment Office prior to the seventh day of class in the Fall Semester.

7. **Residence Life and Housing**

In general, questions concerning a student’s housing or residential community issues should be directed to the Director of Residence Life and Housing.

- **Housing Placement**: Each year, this office works to place students in residential environments that match closely with the students’ needs and interests. Questions regarding room draw, first-year housing, program housing, or room changes should be directed to the Residence Life and Housing office.

- **Staffing**: This office includes over 75 staff members, including professional staff (many of whom live on campus) and undergraduate Resident Assistants. Each year applications for RA positions are available for rising juniors and seniors who have proven themselves as student leaders and role models. Often, RA candidates seek out reference letters from faculty members. If you have questions pertaining to departmental staffing, please contact our Assistant Director for Staffing and Training.

8. **Faculty Advisers for Scholarships, Fellowships, and Special Programs**

Faculty members serve as advisers for a number of scholarships, fellowships, and programs. Consult the *Catalogue* and the Appendix of the *Handbook*. 
9. **Professional Counseling**
The College offers professional counseling services. Offices are located in the Longbrake Student Wellness Center. Students should call the Center to arrange for an appointment or come in between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on weekdays. In the event of an emergency, the counselor on call may be reached through the nurses or the administrative coordinator at the Center when classes are in session. Students can receive 5 free sessions each semester (10 per year), after which there is a $20 fee per session. On occasion, students may wish to arrange for off-campus counseling. In such an event, referrals can be arranged through Counseling Services. Off-campus counseling services are subject to standard fees assessed the general public.

10. **Medical Services**
The Longbrake Student Wellness Center is open 24/7, is staffed by a registered nurse, and includes overnight rooms for care when classes are in session. In addition, the College maintains a contractual arrangement for physician care and referrals with the Cleveland Clinic Wooster, a private multi-specialty group of physicians located several blocks from the campus. Physicians, including OB/GYN practitioners, are available at scheduled times. Students who are unable to visit the Wellness Center during the regular hours, or who become ill or injured at a time when the physician is not at the Center, will be seen and treated by the nurse on duty and, as necessary, referred to the Cleveland Clinic Wooster or Wooster Community Hospital. Students should note that visits to providers outside the Longbrake Student Wellness Center (including the Wooster Community Hospital emergency room) will be their own financial responsibility.

11. **Clergy**
Clergy are available for consultation with students on personal and religious issues and questions, including the Campus Minister, the Minister of Westminster Presbyterian Church, the Rector of St. James Parish, the Newman Campus Minister, and the Rabbi of Knesseth Israel Temple.
Other clergy in the community are available to meet with students and are identified in the Church Directory distributed by the Office of Campus Ministries.

D. DEALING WITH DISTRESSED AND DISTRESSING STUDENTS

Faculty, staff, parents, and friends of students are often among the first to notice students who are encountering overwhelming amounts of stress in their lives. This stress can seriously disrupt academic progress and success, personal relationships, and enjoyment of daily life. Below are some indications of students in distress and guidelines to follow if you are concerned about a student.

1. Resources

**EMERGENCY ON OR OFF CAMPUS: PLEASE CALL 911**

*On-Campus*
- Longbrake Student Wellness Center: x2319 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2319
- Security and Protective Services: Culbertson/Slater, x2590 or 330-263-2590
- Anonymous Tip Line: x2337 or 330-263-2337
- Dean of Student’s Office: Galpin Hall, x2545 or 330-263-2545
- Academic Advising: APEX, Jennifer Griffin, x1919 or 330-287-1919
- Learning Center: APEX, Amber Larson, x2595 or 330-263-2595
- Title IX Coordinator: Lori Makin-Byrd, x2017 or 330-263-2017
- College Chaplain: Alex Serna-Wallender, x2558 or 330-263-2558
- Human Resources: Marcia Beasley, x2016 or 330-263-2016

*Community*
- Wooster City Police: 330-287-5720
- OneEighty (formerly Every Woman’s House and STEPS; 104 Spink St.)
  - Office: 330-264-8498
  - Crisis Hotline: 800-686-1122
  - [www.one-eighty.org](http://www.one-eighty.org)
2. What Should I Look For? What Are Indicators of a Student in Distress?

**Academic Indicators**

- Excessive procrastination
- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Repeated requests for special consideration or accommodations
- Excessive absence or tardiness
- Excessively anxious when called upon in class
- Unusual or changed interaction patterns
- Inability to stay awake in class
- Disruptive or threatening behavior
- Late work or incomplete work
- Written work with reference to self-harm or content that appears strange
- Dependency (e.g., individual hangs around or makes an excessive number of appointments to see you)

**Physical and Behavioral Indicators**

- Change in appearance and hygiene
- Dramatic weight gain or loss
- Swollen or red eyes
- Change in mood
- Impaired speech
- Withdrawn or painfully shy
- Inappropriate or exaggerated emotional reactions or outbursts that are obviously inappropriate to the situation
- Smell of alcohol/marijuana or evidence of excessive alcohol/drug use
• Difficulty concentrating
• Disrupted sleep or appetite
• Undue aggressiveness
• Hyperactivity or very rapid speech
• Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
• Repeatedly fails to attend appointments with staff and/or faculty

Safety Risk Indicators

• Unprovoked anger or hostility
• Physical violence (shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon)
• Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others
• Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors—a "cry for help"
• Stalking or harassing
• Communicating threats via email, correspondence, texting, or phone calls

3. Specific Guidelines for Helping Distressed Students

a. The Student Reporting Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is sexual contact by one person against another without consent. The law defines consent as positive cooperation in act or attitude pursuant to an exercise of free will. Consent may not be inferred from silence or passivity. A current or previous relationship does not constitute consent. The majority of assaults are committed by an acquaintance of the victim and involve the use of alcohol by one or both persons.

State law defines various violent and/or non-consensual sexual acts as crimes. Additionally, The College of Wooster has defined categories of sexual misconduct for which sanctions may be imposed under its Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination policy. Categories include sexual
harassment, non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, and consent.

Complainants have the right, and can expect, to have complaints taken seriously by The College of Wooster when formally reported, and to have those incidents investigated and properly resolved. Victims of campus crime should be aware that they have the option to pursue an investigation through the College’s conduct system, through the state judicial system, or both. When you become aware that a student has experienced a sexual assault or has been the recipient of inappropriate and/or unwelcome physical contact:

— DO —

- Believe them. Listen to and support them. Do not be judgmental; what happened is not their fault.
- Help them review their options for reporting, medical care, and available support resources. Remember, it is their decision about what the next steps will be.
- Inform them that you are required to report the information to the Title IX Coordinator and that Ohio State Law requires that the College reports any felonies to the police.
- Be patient; it takes time to process what has happened, and it takes time to heal. Continue to be supportive and continue to encourage them to seek help through the resources that are available on campus, in the local community, and/or through national hotlines/websites.
- Supporting someone through a traumatic experience like sexual assault is stressful. Support services are also available to you.
- Be aware that when a student discloses information about an assault to you, they are demonstrating trust in you and the desire for help.
- When possible, speak to the student in private.
- Refer the student to on-campus resources:
  - Campus Security and Protective Services: 2590 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2590
Anonymous Tip Line: 2337 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2337
Dean of Students Office: 2545 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2545
Longbrake Student Wellness Center: 2319 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2319
Title IX Coordinator – Lori Makin-Byrd: 2017 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2017
College Chaplain – Alex Serna-Wallender: 2558 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2558
Human Resources – Marcia Beasley: 2016 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2016

- Provide information on off-campus resources:
  - Emergency: 911
  - OneEighty (rape crisis center, 104 Spink Street) 24-hour hotline: 330-264-8498 or 1-800-686-1122; www.one-eighty.org/
  - Wooster City Police: 330-287-5720; Emergency 911
  - Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network: National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673), online.rainn.org
  - National Sexual Violence Resource Center: www.nsvrc.org
  - Specifically for male survivors: 1in6.org, https://1in6.org (includes 24/7 online support)

- Inform the student that the College of Wooster’s Sexual Assault Policy and Procedures can be accessed on the web at https://www.wooster.edu/offices/discrimination/sexual/

- Recognize that by law you are obligated to report the incidence to College officials. You may, however, initially withhold the name of the student unless there is concern for the safety of the student or others.

— DON'T —

- Minimize the situation.
- Convey negative judgment about any behavior surrounding the incident.
b. **The Student Who Has Been Sexually Harassed**

Sexual harassment involves unwelcome and unwanted sexual attention and/or advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct. It is usually found in the context of a relationship of unequal power, rank or status. It does not matter that the person's intention was not to harass. It is the effect it has that counts. As long as the conduct interferes with a student's academic performance, and creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment, it is considered sexual harassment.

A sexual relationship between a student and a faculty member may or may not be classified as sexual harassment, depending on the context. However, any sexual relationship between a student and a faculty member is prohibited by the College's Consensual Relationships Policy.

Sexual harassment may be a severe one-time incident or a repeated pattern of behavior. The repeated pattern of behavior may include:

- Comments about one's body or clothing
- Questions about one's sexual behavior
- Demeaning references to one's sex, gender, identity, or sexual orientation
- Sexually oriented jokes or language
- Conversations filled with innuendoes and double meanings
- Displaying of sexually suggestive pictures or objects
- Repeated non-reciprocated demands for dates or sex
Common reactions by students who have been harassed is to doubt their perceptions, wonder if it was a joke, or wonder if, in some way, they have brought it on themselves. A student may begin to participate less in the classroom, drop or avoid classes, or even change majors.

— DO —

- Let the student know that you are taking their report seriously and that you will inform the Title IX Coordinator.
- Separate your personal biases from your professional role.
- Listen carefully to the student and assure the student you understand.
- Encourage the student to document any incidents of harassment.

— DON’T —

- Ignore the situation: Taking no action reinforces the student's already shaky perception that they have been wronged. Any situation should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator.
- Become defensive or upset. (Remain calm and focus on the student instead.)

c. The Verbally Aggressive Student

Students sometimes become verbally abusive when confronted with frustrating situations that they perceive as beyond their control; anger and frustration become displaced from those situations to you. Typically, the anger is not a personal attack, although it may be directed at you.

— DO —

- Acknowledge their anger and frustration: e.g., "I hear how angry you are."
- Rephrase what they are saying and identify their emotion, e.g., "I can see how upset you are because you feel your rights are being violated and nobody will listen."
• Allow them to ventilate, get the feelings out, and tell you what is upsetting them.

• Reduce stimulation; invite the person to your office or some other quiet place if it is comfortable and reduce your movements so as to maintain a calm atmosphere.

• Tell them that you are not willing to accept their verbally abusive behavior, e.g., "When you yell and scream at me that way, I find it hard (impossible) to listen."

• Tell them they are violating your personal space and to please move back (if they are getting physically too close): e.g., "Please stand back—you're too close."

• Help the person problem-solve and deal with the real issues when he/she becomes calmer. Decide on one or two small, manageable things to do when they leave your office, such as making a schedule for the next week, or free-writing about why they are angry.

— DON'T —

• Get into an argument or shouting match

• Become hostile or punitive yourself: e.g., "You can't talk to me that way!"

• Press for explanation or reasons for their behavior: "Now I'd like you to tell me exactly why you are so obnoxious."

• Look away and not deal with the situation

• Give away your own rights as a person

d. The Anxious Student

Anxiety is a normal response to a perceived danger or threat to one's well-being. For some students, the cause of their anxiety will be clear, but for others it is difficult to pinpoint the source of stress. Regardless of the cause, the resulting symptoms are experienced as similar and include rapid heart palpitations; chest pain or discomfort; dizziness; sweating; trembling or shaking; and cold, clammy hands. The student may also complain of difficulty concentrating, always being "on the edge," having difficulty making decisions, or being too fearful to take action. In rare cases, a student may experience a
panic attack in which the physical symptoms occur spontaneously and intensely in such a way that the student may fear she/he is dying. The following guidelines remain appropriate in most cases.

— DO —

• Let the student discuss their feelings and thoughts. Often this alone relieves a great deal of pressure.
• Provide reassurance.
• Be clear and directive.
• Provide a safe and quiet environment until the symptoms subside.
• If appropriate, ask student what a next step might be

— DON'T —

• Minimize the perceived threat to which the student is reacting.
• Take responsibility for the student's emotional state.
• Overwhelm the student with information or ideas to "fix" their condition.

e. The Depressed Student

Depression, and the variety of ways it manifests itself, is part of a natural emotional and physical response to life's ups and downs. With the busy and demanding life of a college student, it is safe to assume that most students will experience periods of reactive depression in their college careers. It is when the depressive symptoms become so extreme, or are so enduring, that they begin to interfere with the student's ability to function in school, work, or social environments, that the student may exhibit signs of distress and may come to your attention and be in need of assistance. Due to the opportunities that faculty and staff have to observe and interact with students, they are often the first to recognize that a student is in distress. Look for a pattern of those indicators.

• Tearfulness / general emotionality
• Dependency (a student who makes excessive requests for your time)
• Markedly diminished performance
- Lack of energy / motivation
- Infrequent class attendance
- Increased anxiety/test anxiety/performance anxiety
- Irritability
- Deterioration in personal hygiene
- Alcohol or drug use

Students experiencing depression often respond well to a small amount of attention for a short period of time. Early intervention increases the chances of the student’s rapid return to optimal performance.

— DO —

- Let the student know you’ve noticed that they appear to be feeling down and you would like to help.
- Reach out and encourage the student to discuss how they are feeling.
- Listen.
- Offer options to further investigate and manage the symptoms of the depression (e.g., referral to the Wellness Center) and ask what the student might do.
- If appropriate, help the student decide on a next step.

— DON’T —

- Minimize the student’s feelings: e.g., "Don’t worry. Everything will be better tomorrow."
- Bombard the student with “fix it” solutions or advice.
- Chastise the student for poor or incomplete work.
- Be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think they may be. (See next section, e.g., "Have you thought of harming yourself?")

f. **The Student Who Feels or Appears Suicidal**

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among college students. It is important to view all suicidal comments as serious and make appropriate
referrals. High risk indicators include feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and futility; a severe loss or threat of loss; detailed suicide plan; a history of a previous attempt; history of alcohol or drug abuse; feeling of alienation and isolation; and preoccupation with death.

— DO —

- Take the student seriously—80% of suicides give warning of their intent.
- Be direct—ask if the student is suicidal, if they have a plan, and if they have the means to carry out that plan. Exploring this with the student may actually decrease the impulse to commit suicide.
- Be available to listen, and take the student to the Wellness Center for a formal suicide screen and possible full assessment if they are willing. See that the student, at a minimum, connects with some support like friends or family as a preventive measure.
- Take care of yourself. Debrief with department chair, available colleagues, or your personal support system.
- Follow up with the student to see how they are doing after the intervention.

— DON’T —

- Minimize the situation.
- Be afraid of planting the idea of suicide in an already depressed mind by inquiring about it (they will very likely feel relieved that someone has suspected).
- Ignore your limitations. Recognize that most of us are not trained to handle such situations and thus we should seek help immediately.

g. The Student Suspected of Substance Abuse/Addiction

Alcohol is the most widely used psychoactive drug. Alcohol abusers in college populations abuse other drugs, both prescription and illicit. Patterns of use are affected by fads and peer pressure. Currently, alcohol is the preferred drug
on college campuses. The effects of alcohol on the user are well known to most of us. Student alcohol abuse is most often identified by faculty when irresponsible, unpredictable behavior affects the learning situation (i.e., drunk and disorderly in class 2), or when a combination of the health and social impairments associated with alcohol abuse sabotages student performance. Because of the denial that exists in most substance abusers, it is important to express your concern about the student not in terms of suspicions about alcohol and other drugs but in terms of specific changes in behavior or performance.

— DO —

- Confront the student with the behavior that is of concern.
- Address the substance abuse issue if the student is open and willing.
- Offer support and concern for the student’s overall well-being.
- Maintain contact with the student after a referral is made.

— DON’T —

- Convey judgment or criticism about the student’s substance abuse.
- Make allowances for the student’s irresponsible behavior.
- Ignore signs of intoxication in the classroom.

h. The Student in Poor Contact with Reality (e.g., Psychotic Disorders)

These students have difficulty distinguishing fantasy from reality, the dream from the waking state. Their thinking is typically illogical, confused or irrational; their emotional responses may be incongruent or inappropriate; and their behavior may be bizarre and disturbing. They may experience hallucinations, often auditory, and may report hearing voices. While this student may elicit alarm or fear from others, they are generally not dangerous and are more frightened and overwhelmed by you than you are by them. If you cannot make sense of their conversation, they may be in trouble.
— DO —

- Respond with warmth and kindness, but with firm reasoning.
- Remove extra stimulation from the environment (turn off the radio, step outside of a noisy classroom).
- Acknowledge your concerns and state that you can see they need help.
- Acknowledge their feelings or fears without supporting the misperceptions, e.g., "I understand you think someone is following you, but I don't see anyone and I believe you're safe."
- Acknowledge your difficulty in understanding them and ask for clarification or restatement.
- Focus on the "here and now." Ask for specific information about the student's awareness of time, place, and destination.
- It's OK to laugh and joke when appropriate.
- Call Security, Wellness, Dean of Students, or 911 if you feel the individual is a threat to themselves or others.

— DON'T —

- Argue or try to convince them of the irrationality of their thinking, since this response commonly produces a stronger defense of the false perceptions.
- Play along, e.g., "Oh yeah, I hear the voices (or see the devil)." Encourage further discussion of the delusion processes.
- Demand, command, or order.
- Expect customary emotional responses.

i. The Violent Student

Violence because of emotional distress is rare and typically occurs when the student's level of frustration has been so intense or of such an enduring nature as to erode all of the student's emotional controls. The adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" best applies here. This behavior is often associated with the use of alcohol and other drugs.
— DO —

- Prevent total frustration and helplessness by quickly and calmly acknowledging the intensity of the situation: e.g., "I can see you’re really upset and may be tempted to lash out."
- Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable: e.g., “You certainly have the right to be angry, but breaking things is not OK.”
- Get necessary help (send a student for other staff, Security, etc.).
- Stay safe: have easy access to a door; keep furniture between you and the student. Keep door open if at all possible/appropriate. As with the verbally aggressive student, make certain that a staff or faculty person is nearby and accessible. In some instances, you may wish to see the student only with another person present.
- Do not see the person alone if you fear for your safety.

— DON’T —

- Ignore warning signs that the person is about to explode, e.g., yelling, screaming, clenched fists, threats.
- Threaten or corner the student.
- Touch the student.