

Behavior Review Committee

The Behavior Review Committee was established to offer a coordinated and comprehensive approach to addressing students in extreme distress. These students may be dangerous to themselves or others, disruptive to the university community, or unresponsive to other interventions. The committee, chaired by Dr. Jeff Janz, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, meets throughout the year and coordinates interventions to respond to these students' needs in the hope of fostering a return to productive academic functioning.

If a student you know seems to be in distress or needs assistance, and may not be responding to other interventions, please contact Dr. Jeff Janz at the Office of Student Affairs, at 414-288-7206 or the Dean of Students, at 414-288-1412.

Campus Resources

Department of Public Safety

749 N. 16th St.

Emergency: 414-288-1911

Non-Emergency: 414-288-6800

Counseling Center

Holthusen Hall

1324 W. Wisconsin Ave., Room 204

414-288-7172

Office of Student Affairs

Alumni Memorial Union, Room 437

414-288-7206

Office of Residence Life

Carpenter Tower, Room 203

414-288-7208

Office of the Dean of Students

Alumni Memorial Union, Room 329

414-288-1412

Aurora Sinai Medical Center Emergency Room

N. 13th St. (North of Kilbourn Ave.)

414-219-2000

Helping Students in Distress:

A Guide for Faculty and Staff

College Students and Mental Health

In recent years, students have been coming to college with increasingly complex mental health issues. In addition to resolving the developmental issues that are part of becoming young adults, students may also be managing an ongoing emotional disorder or may be facing a significant emotional disorder for the first time. The 2009 National College Health Assessment informed us that 7% of Marquette students have been diagnosed or treated for depression. Other common issues that affect academic functioning, and sometimes the larger academic environment, are stress and anxiety, alcohol and drug use, eating disorders and trauma. Although many students may negotiate these challenges without bringing themselves to your attention, you may become concerned about others. You can help. You have a relationship with the student. Your expression of concern for the student's well-being and your offer to connect the student with help can make a difference.

What You Might Notice

The following symptoms and behaviors may indicate a mental health problem:

- Depressed, apathetic mood
- Intense stress and anxiety
- Excessive alcohol/substance use
- Low weight, preoccupation w/weight
- References to suicide
- Missing class or assignments
- Alarming writings, emails or comments
- Crying and tearfulness
- Odd or bizarre behavior
- Threatening comments and behavior

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Many university personnel are concerned about FERPA violations when discussing distressed students. However, FERPA does allow exceptions to privacy or the sharing of information when there are legitimate educational interests and/or health and safety concerns. Furthermore, while FERPA covers educational records, it does not include "observations" (unless they are stored electronically or in writing).

How To Help

Helping a Student with a Personal Issue

In a private setting:

1. Express your concern for the student and observations of them, "I'm a little worried about you. You have been missing class, you seem down and you wrote a lot about death in your paper. How are things going for you?"
2. If it seems the student needs professional help, e.g., s/he says "I've been feeling depressed;" "I'm so stressed;" "I've been missing most of my classes;" then make a referral to the Counseling Center. State, "I'd like you to talk to a professional." Provide the number or have the student call from your office.
3. Follow up with the student later. "Did you make an appointment at the Counseling Center?" Further persuade the student to get help if s/he did not.
4. If the student continues to be of concern and does not follow up with a referral, contact Dr. Jeff Janz, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, and chair of the Behavior Review Committee (288-7206)
5. Consult with the Counseling Center at any time.

Helping a Student with Suicidal Thoughts

The student **must** be assessed by a professional

1. Contact the Counseling Center and arrange for an immediate appointment with the on-call counselor.
2. Escort the student to the Counseling Center.
3. If after 4:30 p.m., contact the on-call counselor through Public Safety at 414-288-1911
4. If the student has written suicidal thoughts (e.g., email, paper) contact him/her immediately and direct the student to the Counseling Center. If after 4:30 p.m., contact the on-call counselor through Public Safety at 414-288-1911.
5. If a student has already attempted suicide (e.g., overdosed, cut wrists) contact Public Safety at 414-288-1911 or call 911.
6. An additional option is to direct the student or accompany him/her to the nearest Emergency Room. Tell the intake worker that the student is suicidal.

If You Feel Threatened By A Student

Distinguish between whether you feel threatened or are actually being threatened by the student.

If you feel threatened or uncomfortable with a student's behavior (e.g., loud talk, yelling, confrontational):

1. Give feedback: "You are shouting." "You are talking disrespectfully to me."
2. Ask for appropriate behavior: "I want you to lower your voice." "I'd like you to stop swearing."
3. Set limits: "I will have to ask you to leave; if you continue, I will talk to the dean about your behavior."
4. Inform your dean/chair/supervisor and document the encounter. Be clear with the student that this behavior is unacceptable in the future.
5. Consider consulting with the Counseling Center, the Department of Public Safety, or the Behavior Review Committee at any point.
6. Consider contacting the Dean of Students (414-288-1412) to activate the conduct process.

If You Feel You Are At Risk To Be Hurt Physically:

1. Immediately call the Department of Public Safety at 414-288-1911 and ask for assistance.
2. Try to calm the student and avoid conflict.
3. Try to exit the situation and attain safety as soon as possible.

Possible Strategies For Distressed Students:

1. Consult with your dean/chair/supervisor about contacting parents if the student is unresponsive to a referral and you remain concerned, or if the student is severely distressed (e.g., suicidal, not making sense).
2. Have your dean/chair/supervisor contact the Behavior Review Committee to facilitate a coordinated effort to help the student.
3. Document encounters with the student.
4. Keep your dean/chair/supervisor informed of events.