

## **Crisis Situations**

When stressors in a student's life reach a level beyond their ability to use their coping skills successfully, a crisis ensues. This could be due to the cumulative effects of daily hassles, as in "the straw that broke the camel's back," or in response to a critical incident such as the death of a loved one or a personal assault. As a result of the crisis situation, the student may feel depression, anxiety, hostility, or shame.

If you encounter a student experiencing a crisis, there are a number of helpful actions that you can take. Allow the student to discuss the situation and associated feelings. Be attentive and let the student know you are concerned. They most likely chose to talk to you because you are trusted. Remember, unless you are a trained therapist, the student may need additional help outside your ability to respond. A consultation with a counselor from the Center may assist you in determining the best way to help the student. In many cases, a referral to the Counseling Center is the most effective intervention.

Aside from the signs or symptoms that may suggest the need for counseling, there are other guidelines that may help the faculty or staff member define the appropriate limits of involvement with a particular student's problem. A referral is usually indicated in the following situations:

1. A student presents a problem or requests information which is outside your range of knowledge.
2. You feel that personality differences which cannot be resolved between you and the student will interfere with your helping the student.
3. The problem is personal, and you know the student on other than a professional basis (friend, neighbor, relative, etc.).
4. A student is reluctant to discuss a problem with you for some reason.
5. You do not believe your contact with the student has been effective.

When you refer students, ask them to let you know about their experience with us. This is important because we cannot divulge any confidential information (including whether or not counseling was given) without written consent. Please encourage the student to sign the Referral And Authorization To Exchange Confidential Information form giving such permission. (The referral form may be downloaded from this site).

### **COUNSELING CENTER**

Suite 2203, Reng Student Service Center  
972-2318

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Monday-Friday by appointment

Immediate crisis counseling is available during all hours of operation for urgent crisis situations (e.g., suicidal student, homicidal student, the survivor of sexual assault, and the student who has poor contact with reality).

**Emergency: Dial 9-911**

**Or for University Police Dispatcher:**

**Dial 972-2093**