

# REFERRAL GUIDE FOR FACULTY & STAFF

<https://caps.sdes.ucf.edu/>



Counseling and Psychological Services

*The role of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is to enhance the lives of students by reducing the impact of a phase of life and mental health challenges, elevating resiliency, and minimizing the interruption of their academic pursuits. This guide is intended to help faculty, staff, and others who are concerned about students know what to look for and when/how to refer them to CAPS for mental health services.*

## WHY MIGHT A STUDENT SEEK COUNSELING SERVICES?

- Many students have issues related to their normal development, such as identity or relationship issues. Others are dealing with more specific concerns such as depression, anxiety, stress, childhood or adult trauma, loss, substance abuse, or eating & body image concerns
- Some students are not sure what the problem might be - they just know they are having a hard time studying, concentrating, eating, sleeping, adjusting, or getting along in general

## WHAT ROLE DO FACULTY, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATORS PLAY IN THE REFERRAL PROCESS?

- As members of the UCF community, you play a vital role in helping students find the appropriate assistance. The following guide identifies examples of behaviors that indicate that a student may be experiencing difficulties and guidelines on how to refer them for mental health services at CAPS

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I MAKE A REFERRAL TO CAPS?

*When a student visits CAPS, a counselor will assess their well-being and make recommendations for appropriate services. The decision about which type of service may be appropriate is based on many factors, including current concerns and needs, counseling history, scheduling considerations, and availability of resources.*

**Please note: Mental health information disclosed at CAPS is confidential and is considered protected health information. CAPS cannot release protected information regarding the student (including attendance at appointments) unless the student gives written permission via our Release of Information form.**

**If it is difficult to determine the student's level of distress, please call CAPS at 407-823-2811 to talk to the Counselor on Duty**

## CAPS SERVICES

- The decision about which type of service may be appropriate is based on many factors, including current concerns and needs, counseling history, scheduling considerations, and availability of resources.
- CAPS offers initial assessments, brief individual counseling, single sessions, group therapy, workshops, crisis intervention, and drop-in services.
- Services are offered in an atmosphere that is welcoming and comfortable for all students regardless of race, gender, ethnic background, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, citizenship, or physical status

## WHEN SHOULD I REFER A STUDENT TO CAPS?

- Many college students experience times of stress, sadness, anxiety, etc. When these feelings increase in severity or duration, this may indicate the need for professional mental health services.
- The following are two types of referrals that you can make for students, including possible behaviors that indicate distress and the steps that should be taken at each level.

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## GENERAL CAPS REFERRAL

These behaviors may not be disruptive to others; however, they may indicate help is needed:

- *Academic difficulties, including missing assignments, excessive absences from class, and/or significant changes in performance*
- *Unusual or disruptive behavior in class*
- *Sudden or significant change in behavior, appearance, hygiene, patterns of interaction, etc.*
- *Student expresses being in distress via assignments and/or via written or verbal communication to others*
- *Student reports wanting to talk with a counselor*

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- *Talk to the student privately and let them know you are concerned that they may be struggling.*
- *Offer to sit with the student if they would like to call to schedule an appointment.*
- *Students interested in receiving counseling services are encouraged to make an initial assessment appointment at CAPS.*
- *During this appointment, their treatment needs will be determined and recommendations for next steps will be made.*
- *If the student does not want you to sit with them as they make the call, give them the information on how to schedule an initial assessment at CAPS (407-823-2811).*
- *It may be helpful to check in with the student after a referral is made to CAPS to ask if they were able to connect with a counselor.*

## CRISIS REFERRAL

*NOTE: If you or someone else is in immediate danger, contact UCF Police, or dial 911*

- *These behaviors usually indicate that students are in crisis and need emergency intervention:*
- *Verbal or written statements about self-harm, suicide, harm to others, and/or homicide*
- *Expressing or appearing unable to care for basic needs*
- *Highly disruptive behavior*
- *Highly unusual or odd behavior*
- *Seeing/hearing things that are not present, beliefs or actions greatly at odds with reality*
- *Student reports or appears to be in crisis*

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- *If the student is aggressive, belligerent or acting in a threatening manner, or refusing to go to CAPS, do not leave the student unattended. Please call UCF Police Dispatch at 407-823-5555 or dial 911.*
- *Provide the student's identifying information and discuss their situation with UCF Police. Then, give the phone to the student when asked. Do not leave the student alone while they speak to the police on the phone.*
- *If the student is experiencing suicidal thoughts or a mental health emergency, contact CAPS at 407-823-2811 and ask to speak to the Counselor on Duty. Do not email or leave a voicemail about a student in crisis.*
- *You may be asked to escort the student to CAPS office (Building 27).*
- *If after-hours or on a weekend, please call UCF Police for a wellness check on a student.*



**Counseling and  
Psychological Services**

**For more support, information, and step-by-step,  
please visit our Faculty Referral FAQ**

**<https://caps.sdes.ucf.edu/resources/referrals/> or our website <https://caps.sdes.ucf.edu/>**