

Student Life Professional Development Conference
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Recognizing and Responding to Distressed and/or Disruptive People

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From Your Experience as a Student Life Staff Member...

- What have you found challenging about assisting distressed and/or disruptive people?
- How does it feel?
- What opportunities exist?



Levels of Distress

- At one time or another everyone feels upset or distressed...
- However, there are three levels of student distress which, when present over a period of time, suggest that the problems are more than the "typical" ones



Level One

- Changes in academic performance in the classroom
- Change in pattern of interaction
- Changes in physical appearance
- Problems concentrating & remembering things or making decisions



Level Two

- New or regularly occurring behavior may interfere with office business or be disruptive to other students, faculty or staff
- Unusual or exaggerated emotional responses
- Persistent sadness or unexplained crying
- High levels of irritability or inappropriate excitement



Level Three

- Outbursts of anger
- Inability to communicate clearly
- Loss of contact with reality (seeing/hearing things that are not there, beliefs or actions at odds with reality)
- Statements related to death or dying or feelings of hopelessness
- Threats of harming self or harming others



You Can Help

- When stress exceeds coping resources = crisis
- You may be in a position to identify students in distress
- You may be perceived as role model, advisor, source of support
- You can help a student re-establish emotional equilibrium



CARE Team

- Resource for faculty & staff to report and/or get guidance on how to respond to concerning student behavior
- Proactive approach to respond to non-emergency concerns and to develop appropriate courses of action for referred students
- Goal is to support students who may be in distress and/or whose behavior is of concern to others **before** they rise to crisis levels
- <http://www.calstatela.edu/careteam>
- Emergencies in progress-call 911 or University Police at (323) 343-3700.



CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services)

- Student Health Center, Top Floor, Station #4
- Hours:
 - Monday-Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 5:45 p.m.
 - Friday: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.
- Appointments by phone (3-3314) or In Person



Please Don't...

- Put yourself in an unsafe situation
- Ignore warning signs
- Become hostile, or escalate the situation
- Touch the person or invade personal space
- Minimize the person's feelings
- Respond to threats of legal action



Strategies

- Lower your voice and speak slowly
- Remain calm; detach (it's most likely not about you)
- Watch your own body language/space
- Acknowledge the problem; respect the person
- Practice empathy/active listening



Strategies (Cont.)

- You may (gently) communicate that their behavior is inappropriate, establish boundaries and expectations
- Refer to the Student Code of Conduct as necessary
- Be aware of gender/cultural aspects
- Know your limitations; know when to stop



Your Realities, Concerns, What-ifs?



Surviving an Active Shooter

RUN

HIDE

FIGHT



Reporting Crime and Emergencies on Campus

Call 9-1-1

- From a campus office phone, campus emergency phone or elevator. The call will connect to University Police.
- From a cellular phone, callers may be connected to the California Highway Patrol who will then transfer the call to University Police
- (NEW) “Text to 911”



Reporting Crime and Emergencies on Campus

Call University Police directly

- 323-343-3700
- Or ext. 3-3700



Emergency Notification System (ENS)

Golden Eagle Alert

- Used in situations where immediate notification is required for life-saving situations, or any other emergency situation in which information needs to be disseminated quickly to the campus community.
- Updated weekly with information from the Student Administration and Human Resources systems.
- To make changes please log in to your MyCalStateLA portal and click the 'GET' button.



RED Folder – On Your Desktop



RED FOLDER

SEE SOMETHING

SAY SOMETHING

DO SOMETHING

ASSISTING STUDENTS IN **DISTRESS**



RED Folder – On Your Desktop

RESOURCES & TIPS:

BE PROACTIVE: Engage students early on, pay attention to signs of distress, and set limits on disruptive behavior.

BE DIRECT: Don't be afraid to ask students directly if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feeling confused, or having thoughts of harming themselves or others.

LISTEN SENSITIVELY AND CAREFULLY: Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice. Avoid threatening, humiliating and intimidating responses.

SAFETY FIRST: The welfare of the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call for help.

FOLLOW THROUGH: Direct the student to the physical location of the identified resource.

CONSULTATION AND DOCUMENTATION: Always document your interactions with distressed students and consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incident.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

SELECT CAMPUS ▾

Los Angeles

University Police	(323) 343-3700
Office for Student Conduct	(323) 343-3103
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	(323) 343-3314
Dean of Students	(323) 343-3103
Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)	(323) 343-3140
Office for Student Support	(323) 343-3103

[Responding to Disruptive or Threatening Student Behavior: A Guide for Faculty and Staff](#)



Your Realities, Concerns, What-ifs?



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