

# Helping Students in Distress

RESOURCES FOR FACULTY & STAFF



**Counseling**

# GETTING THE RIGHT HELP

## Who to call if the student ...

**Demonstrates evidence of immediate harm to self or others**

- ➔ CALL Public Safety at x5111 and CALL 911.

If calling the police does not seem the best option, consult with the Good Samaritan Mobile Outreach Crisis Team (M.O.C.T.) Call the Pierce County crisis line 1-800-575-7764 and ask to speak with someone from the M.O.C.T. to consult on a very distressed student after hours.

**Displays evidence of suicidal thoughts or other distressed behaviors that do not present immediate danger but need prompt attention**

- ➔ EMAIL the TCC Counseling Center: [tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu](mailto:tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu)

When on campus CALL 253-566-5122

Student schedules an appointment directly [here](#)

After hours: Call the Pierce County Crisis Line at 1-800-576-7764 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

**Shows signs of emotional distress/mental health-related issues but does not need immediate attention**

- ➔ EMAIL the TCC Counseling Center: [tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu](mailto:tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu)

When on campus CALL 253-566-5122

Student schedules an appointment directly [here](#)

### **Is inappropriate or disruptive in class**

- ➔ Follow syllabus/classroom management protocol.

EMAIL the Student Conduct Administrator:  
jfountain@tacomacc.edu

### **Makes you or others feel unsafe and/or the behavior falls outside the TCC Code of Student conduct**

- ➔ COMPLETE the [TCC Conduct Report Form](#)

### **Appears to have a disability impacting their ability to learn**

- ➔ EMAIL Access Services: access@tacomacc.edu  
CALL 360-504-6357

### **States they have experienced sexual harassment, discrimination and/or assault**

- ➔ EMAIL the Title IX Coordinator:  
ssmith@tacomacc.edu

CALL 253-566-5055

LINK TO [TCC Conduct Report Form](#)

Other resources include Rebuilding Hope,  
The Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County  
253-474-7273.

## **HOW CAN I HELP?**

- Faculty and staff are often first to recognize a problem
- See “Warning Signals” pages 6-7
- Help us identify problems early

# HOW TO REFER TO A COUNSELOR

- CALL 253-566-5122
- EMAIL the TCC Counseling Center:  
tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu
- A student can [schedule an appointment](#) directly
- Read about [TCC counselors](#) and email one directly

If the student is receptive, have them make contact in front of you from your office. Suggest they call or email for an appointment.

If the student is hesitant, it can help considerably if you contact the Counseling Center while the student is with you to arrange an appointment. Obtain the name of a specific counselor they will be seeing. This helps the process be less impersonal.

## Possible Ways to Refer Students to Counseling

- I understand you're upset/angry.  
One of our counselors can help you with that.  
Let's call and make an appointment.
- It sounds like there's a lot going on for you right now. Perhaps one of our counselors can help.  
I'll walk over there with you right now or help connect you via email.
- Could I offer a suggestion? Let's make an appointment for you at the Counseling Center.

## Referrals Are Most Effective When You...

- Talk to the student in private.
- State your reasons for concern.
- Listen carefully.
- Avoid criticizing or sounding judgemental.
- Discuss with the student a referral to the Counseling Center.
- Escort the student to the Counseling Center in Bldg. 7 or make a direct connection via email.

## Confidentiality

If you refer a student to us, we ask the student if we may tell you that contact with the Center has been made.

We do not discuss the particulars of a student's situation or even the fact that counseling is being received without the student's written consent. If you are curious about whether a student followed up on your referral, you can always ask the student.

## Consultation

If you have specific questions about a student and how best to approach that individual and make a referral, do not hesitate to call or email Counseling in order to discuss the situation.

When you call, let the receptionist know who you are and why you need to talk with a member of the Counseling staff. If you believe an emergency exists, please state so.

**TCC Counseling 253-566-5122  
or use direct line or email**

## Suicide

All references to suicide should be taken seriously and referred to a counselor or other mental health professional. At least 70% of all people committing suicide give some clue as to their intentions before they make an attempt.

Immediate referral is indicated when the reference to suicide or your discussion with a student indicates any plans or previous suicide attempts.

### References to Suicide

- Feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness
- Preoccupation with death
- Giving away valued possessions
- Thoughts or threats of suicide or plans for suicide

**24-hour Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
24-hour Pierce County Crisis Line  
1-800-576-7764**

## WHAT TO DO When A Disruption Occurs

It is unfortunate, but today's classrooms and college campuses are not sanctuaries and may be subject to disruptive and violent acts. Despite this truth, it is important to know that disruptive and violent acts of behavior in the classroom and on campus are the exception, not the rule.

- Remain calm.
- Do not allow the other person to "hook" your emotions or involve your ego.
- Maintain a firm but moderate voice level.
- Do not get into a shouting match.
- Do not threaten, demean or use vulgarity.
- Do not touch the person or invade their personal space.
- If you feel threatened, back off.
- When meeting with a student who may be disruptive, tell someone. Have them check on you.
- Have the meeting where there is an escape route that is not blocked.
- Keep your office blinds open at all times.
- Speak to the behavior and do not stereotype or generalize about a particular group.
- Exchange information with those teaching in adjacent classrooms.
- Provide students with a general understanding of the Code of Student Conduct (WAC 132V-121). Clearly outline classroom expectations, rules, policies, etc.

### **Campus Public Safety x5111**

If you call Campus Public Safety and say "**red file**," they will come immediately.

If you say "**yellow file**" they will monitor your space.

## WARNING SIGNALS (student needs help)

### Life Circumstance Concerns

- Death or serious illness of a family member or close friend
- Illness (loss of health)
- Problems in dating or marital relationship, problems with roommates or family members, parents divorce
- Overwhelming financial difficulties
- Extreme shyness, lack of social skills, difficulty in making and keeping friends
- Presence of anxiety, depression and stress.

## Unusual Behavior

- Dependency (wants to be around you all the time)
- Loss of interest in prior activities, withdrawal from usual social interactions, seclusion
- Significantly increased activity (extreme restlessness, nonstop talking, inability to relax)
- Suspiciousness or feelings of being persecuted
- Inappropriate or bizarre conversation
- Of anger, unexplained crying, aggressiveness, excessive worrying or anxiety
- Significant decline in personal hygiene, standard of dress, or grooming
- Signs of eating disorders
- Alcohol or drug abuse or other self-destructive behavior
- Unusual irritability, outbursts

## Problems with Academics

- Dramatic decline in academic performance
- Sudden drop in class attendance
- Pattern of dropping classes or asking for extensions
- Incapacitating test anxiety
- Severe reaction to a poor grade on a test or paper
- Overly high academic standards that aren't being met
- Chronic indecisiveness regarding career/major
- Unrealistic career goals
- Inadequate study skills, reading speed, or comprehension
- Extreme fear of speaking or participating in class
- Doubts about ability to succeed in school

## Signs of Depression

- Inability to concentrate, impaired memory, indecisiveness, confusion
- Complete loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- Inability to find pleasure in anything
- Extreme guilt or self-blame for present or past events
- Extreme feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Crying spells or marked lack of response to normally upsetting events
- Sleeping difficulties
- Unexplained headaches, digestive problems, anxiety or panic attacks, or other physical symptoms
- Chronic fatigue and lack of energy
- Neglect of responsibilities and appearance

## **COUNSELING**

Counseling.....	tccpersonalcounseling@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5122
Running Start .....			253-566-6061
Nigeria Bell .....	nbell@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5046
Lexie Generous .....	lgenerous@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5337
Dr. Dave Howard.....	dhoward@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5339
Dr. James Mendoza.....	jmendoza@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5062
Mary Pedersen.....	mpedersen@tacomacc.edu	.....	253-566-5334

## **CAMPUS PUBLIC SAFETY**

TCC Campus Security .....			253-566-5111
Tacoma Police Dept. ....			9-911
Non-emergency (Police & Sheriff communications) .....			253-798-4721

## **ADDITIONAL CAMPUS RESOURCES**

Access Services .....			253-566-5328
Multi-Ethnic & Cultural Affairs .....			253-566-5025
Student Conduct .....	jfountain@tacomacc.edu		
Student Engagement.....			253-566-5322
Veteran Services .....			253-566-5033

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

### **EMERGENCY**

Crisis Line Pierce County .....			800-576-7764
Crisis Line King County.....			866-427-4747
United Way Helpline .....			877-211-9274

### **COUNSELING (SLIDING SCALE)**

Catholic Community Services .....			253-502-2696
Hope Sparks (Couples and Family Guidance Center).....			253-565-4484

<https://therapists.psychologytoday.com>

(browse directory of therapists and psychologists near you)

### **OTHER**

Sexual Assault Center .....			253-474-7273
Domestic Violence Helpline.....			253-798-4166
YWCA (24-hour hotline) .....			253-383-2593
Child Protective Services (CPS).....			800-422-7517
Rainbow Center (GLBTQ).....			253-383-2318
Volunteer Legal Services.....			253-572-5134
Veterans Crisis Line .....			800-273-8255