

The following scenarios are broken down into emergency situations (**red**), non-emergency situations requiring a prompt response (**orange**), and additional situations requiring attention and probable referral (**green**).

### **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS**

An emergency involves immediate danger to someone's health or safety.

#### **EXAMPLES:**

- Possession of a weapon
- Suicidal action/threat
- Violent act/threat

# CALL 911

AFTER CALLING 911, CONTACT CAMPUS SECURITY AT **403.680.1451**

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE COUNSELLOR BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 TO 4:00 MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT **403.284.7666**

## **NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS REQUIRING A RESPONSE**

These scenarios involve threat or a possibility of threat to health/safety that is not immediate and may be less clear than those in emergency situations.

### **EXAMPLES:**

- Statements that reflect suicidal thoughts
- Erratic behaviour that may disrupt classes or typical classroom/studio function
- Intoxication within classrooms, studios, etc.

### **MISCONDUCT, ASSAULT, HARASSMENT:**

- Sexual harassment
- Emotional abuse
- Stalking, verbal assault, threats towards others
- Discrimination
- Obstruction of university activities
- Vandalism

CONTACT CAMPUS SECURITY AT [403.680.1451](tel:403.680.1451)

They will attempt to ensure the safety of the person(s) at risk and determine if medical or protective services are required (i.e., 911)

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT THE [COUNSELLOR](tel:403.284.7666) BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8:00 TO 4:00 MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY AT [403.284.7666](tel:403.284.7666)

**If an urgent situation develops during a time the Counsellor is unavailable (away, ill, after hours, holiday/closure, attending to other crisis, etc.),** contact the [Distress Centre: 403.266.4357](tel:403.266.4357)

The Distress Centre can provide guidance regarding how to respond to the situation and can dispatch EMS or CPS while remaining on the phone. One of their mottos is, “No problem is too small to call,” so if in doubt, this is never a bad option.

## **SITUATIONS REQUIRING ATTENTION AND PROBABLE REFERRAL**

### **ACADEMIC/LEARNING CHALLENGES:**

- Frequent absences
- Failing/at risk of failing class
- Considering withdrawal from class/University
- Request for academic accommodations

**Manager Learning Assistance Resources:  
403.338.5512**

**Academic Advising:  
403.338.5506**

**Counselling:  
403.284.7666**

### **SIGNS OF DISTRESS:**

#### **SITUATIONS:**

- Experience of abuse or trauma
- Dissolution of relationships
- Loss
- Legal/financial problems

#### **BEHAVIOURS:**

- Emotional outbursts
- Withdrawal – from relationships, work, hobbies, interests
- Frequent conflict
- Self-harm
- Deterioration of academic performance/participation in class
- Frequent absences/incomplete assignments
- Recklessness/impulsiveness
- Drug/alcohol abuse
- Extreme behavioural change

- Rapid, incoherent speech
- Paranoia
- Extreme agitation (pacing, clenched teeth, jaws, fists)

**PHYSICAL:**

- Rapid weight loss/gain
- Lack of attention to physical appearance (particularly if a change from “normal”)
- Loss of appetite
- Sleep disturbance
- Listlessness/lack of energy
- Frequent/sudden illness
- Excessive dieting
- Binge eating
- Induced vomiting
- Chronic nausea, headaches

**EMOTIONAL:**

- Sadness
- Apathy
- Anger/irritability
- Shame/guilt
- Loneliness/isolation
- Hopelessness
- Worthlessness
- Despair

A warning sign in isolation is not predictive of concerning behaviour; rather, a pattern of behaviour is most significant. While it is not up to a student, faculty member, staff member to assess the risk, a general rule of thumb is if you are in doubt or concerned, reach out. It is better to err on the side of caution.

**Campus Security:**  
**403.680.1451**

**Counselling:**  
**403.284.7666**

## **RESPONDING TO A SITUATION REQUIRING ATTENTION:**

### **OBSERVE:**

- Know the warning signs
- Trust your judgment

### **APPROACH**

- Make it private and respectful (provided you feel safe doing so)
- Wait until the student is calm enough to communicate
- Inquire – it is okay to approach someone and express concern
- Be specific about the behaviour that is concerning you

### **LISTEN**

- Try to be open and non-judgmental

### **SUPPORT**

- Acknowledge the person's thoughts and feelings
- Offer hope and reassurance

### **REFER**

- Don't get in over your head and/or become over-involved
- Don't take responsibility for someone else's actions and choices
- Consult with a supervisor
- Consult with the Counsellor
- Provide the student with resources
- Offer to accompany him/her to the appropriate student services personnel (if you feel comfortable doing so; see protocol on Assisting Students in Distress, which is sent to staff/faculty at the start of each academic year)

### **MAKING A GOOD REFERRAL:**

- Identify your concern: “I’ve noticed that you have missed a few classes, which seems unlike you. I’m concerned. Is there anything I can do to help?”
  - **NOTE:** the help you will provide would not be to counsel the student; rather, it would be to listen long enough that they feel supported and then connect them to the appropriate resource
- Point out that help is available and that seeking help is a sign of strength and courage, not weakness. Normalize any resistance.
- Invite, don’t mandate support: “Do you think it might help to talk to someone about this?” Rather than, “You need to talk to the Counsellor.”
- Highlight the confidential nature of counselling
- Remind them that counselling is not just for students with serious mental health issues and that students can benefit from even just a few sessions
- Remind them that Counsellors can also make referrals to external agencies, if the student would prefer
- Remind them that support services are free

### **AVOID:**

- Advising students on what they should do (unless within your role)
- Minimizing: “it’s not that bad.”
- Judging: “that is just silly.”
- Diverting: “just try to focus on something else.”

### **FINAL THOUGHTS:**

- Except in rare circumstances when someone’s health/safety is imminently in danger, adults have a right to decline a referral to support. This is not personal
- The situations outlined above are stressful. Ensure that you are taking care of yourself as well. Consult with colleagues, supervisors, the counsellor, and/or the EFAP.