Recognizing & Helping Students in Distress

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Student Mental Health Needs

- >60% of students meet criteria for one or more mental health problems.
- \( \frac{3}{4} \) of students report moderate or severe psychological distress.
- Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders and substance use are associated with lower GPA and higher probability of dropping out of college.
- Students of color have the lowest rates of mental health service utilization.

Healthy Minds Study (HMS, 2021); National College Health Assessment, American College Health Association, 2021.
Why CSI Students Seek Counseling

• STRESS! academic, financial, family, etc.
• Trauma/Loss
• Adjustment to college/Academic struggles
• Relationship difficulties/ Interpersonal violence
• Identity/ self-esteem
• Mental health issues: depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, substance use
Counseling Center Services

www.csi.cuny.edu/counseling

- Individual, Group and Couples Counseling – in person and teletherapy
- Drop-in sessions
- Crisis Management
- Medication Evaluation & Management
- Consultation/Referrals
- Outreach – orientation, psychoeducational workshops, events
Meet the Counselors

https://www.csi.cuny.edu/students/counseling-center/staff

Dr. Ann Booth, Psy.D., Director
Mary Murphy, LMHC, Associate Director
Dr. Daphney Rene, LCSW, Psy.D.
Dr. Sergey Profis, Ph.D.
Danielle DePalma, LCSW
Dr. Kimberly Montagnino, Ph.D.
Meet the Counselors

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PLUS

• 10 Part-time Counselors
• 7 Pre-Doctoral Externs and Fellows
• 2 Support Staff
Signs & Symptoms of Student Distress

- Aggressiveness, agitation, hyperactivity
- Listlessness/Sleeping in class
- Decline in academic performance/attendance
- Talk of suicide /death such as: “No one cares about me.” "Life isn’t worthwhile." "People are better off without me."
- Noticeable sadness, tearfulness, distraction, weight loss, social withdrawal
- Strange behavior or speech
- Troublesome content in an academic paper
- Decline in physical appearance/hygiene
Signs of a Mental Health Crisis

- Signs of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Loss of contact with reality
- Stalking or highly disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate communications
- Suicide plan or threats to harm others
- Destruction of property /criminal acts
- Extreme anxiety resulting in panic reactions
- Inability to communicate
Approaching a Student

• Approach student with an attitude of respect and concern

• Meet in a safe and private environment

• Express concern in an honest and direct manner: Say you "noticed" or "observed" that the student "appears" to be upset, very distracted etc.

• Listen, empathize, and provide non-judgmental support

• Refrain from giving advice
Addressing Concerns about Counseling

• Speak positively about counseling: “Many students I’ve known have found it useful.”

• “It’s free!” – no insurance needed

• Know and express your own limitations (time, training, objectivity): “I am not a professional counselor.”

• Assure confidentiality: “What you share with a counselor is confidential, it is not on your record. Information cannot be released to anyone (parents, friends, instructors) without your written permission.”
Managing your own Reactions

• Emotions may come up for you—worried, scared, offended, upset, etc.

• Be prepared for a range of responses, including the potential of a defensive response.

• Maintain your cool, take some deep breaths perhaps.

• Present options/recommendations.

• Allow student to make the decision.

• If you take that burden off of you, then you will feel better.
How to Refer Students

Call (718) 982-2391 or visit the Counseling Center in 1A-109 during office hours M-F 9-5
Email counseling@csi.cuny.edu

If urgent situation, ask to speak to the Counselor on Duty

Depending on level of concern/ involvement, may escort student to the Counseling Center

Describe your concern about a student’s mental health

If student is present, have them speak with counselor to schedule an appointment

NOTE: After a referral, Counseling staff can neither confirm nor deny whether a student has visited or is being seen due to confidentiality laws.
Mandated Counseling/Assessment

If the student is violent, actively suicidal, intoxicated, has severe loss of emotional control or gross impairment in thinking ability:

Call Public Safety at (718) 982-2111 or 911 off-campus

Faculty *Cannot* Mandate Counseling or Assessment.

The Counseling Center does not reach out to students and require them to come.

Campus Assessment Referral and Evaluation System (CARES Team)

Any member of the college community can reach out to the CARES Team to report a concern about a student by completing an On-line Reporting Form

The CARES team can and may mandate a risk assessment by the Counseling Center.
Counseling Center Process

Walk-in/Urgent Concerns
- No appointment needed within office hours
- Walk-in paperwork (5-10 minutes)
- Meet with a counselor (20-30 minutes)
- Referral to intake, other offices, hospital or close case

Intake sessions
- Appointment scheduled in advance
- Intake paperwork (10-15 minutes)
- Meet with a counselor (50 minutes)
- Will be matched with a counselor for weekly appointments
- May be referred for Medication Evaluation

Sessions are offered both in-person or virtual

All services are free and confidential to currently enrolled CSI students, PT or FT
Additional Counseling Resources

718-982-2391 (ProtoCall counselors available afterhours)

CRISIS TEXT LINE: Text CUNY to 741741

TOGETHERALL for CUNY: 
https://account.v2.togetherall.com/register/student

www.instagram.com/csicounseling

www.twitter.com/csicounseling

Free Apps: 
https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us