Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the many universities and their teams of professionals whose combined efforts made their information, and thus ours, accessible and easy to use. Material in this guide has been gratefully adapted from the following institutions of higher education:

· University of South Florida
· University of Pennsylvania
· Cornell University’s Gannett Health Services

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Dear Faculty and Staff:

Students typically encounter a great deal of stress during their college years. This guide was developed to provide a resource for recognizing students who may be experiencing emotional, physical, or developmental challenges and to provide basic guidelines for addressing a wide range of student behaviors. It also serves as a reference to assist you in making referrals to campus resources.

Although many students cope successfully with the demands of college life, for some the pressures can become overwhelming and unmanageable. The emotional and behavioral consequences are often played out on campus in classrooms, residence halls, or offices. As a faculty or staff member interacting with students, you are in a unique position to identify and help students in distress. You are likely to be the first person a student reaches out to for help. Your ability to recognize the signs of emotional distress and potential health issues and to make an initial intervention can have a significant impact on a student’s future well-being.

The purpose of this guide is to help you to recognize some of the signs of students in distress, be supportive of their needs, facilitate appropriate referrals to campus resources, and increase your awareness of the Student Intervention Services Team. These resources are available to assist you with potential problems or situations that you may encounter.

We are not expecting you to act as a professional counselor, but we hope this information is helpful as you work with students in your role as a faculty or staff member.

Best Regards,

The Student Intervention Services Team
sisteam@emory.edu; www.emory.edu/campus_life/sis
404-430-1120
The Student Intervention Services Team (SIS) works with students who may be distressed or whose behavior is of concern to others. SIS was created to provide support and assistance to a student before more significant problems arise. Our focus is to offer supportive intervention and guidance to any Emory student who is struggling. Our goal is to help the student focus on academic success, avert more serious difficulties, and ensure the safety of both the student and the Emory community.

SIS seeks to work in tandem with the university community in assisting students in emotional distress. This guide is provided as a first step intervention for the community. However, SIS also invites the community to consult with the team at any point in their intervention journey. Further information and resources can be located on our website emory.edu/campus_life/sis or email sisteam@emory.edu.
To further assist students, Student Intervention Services also partners with these academic divisions and units external to Campus Life:

**Candler School of Theology**
Mary Lou Boice, Associate Dean, Admissions and Financial Aid  
(404) 727-6300, mboice@emory.edu

**Emory College of Arts and Sciences**
Joanne Brzinski, Ph.D., Senior Associate Dean  
(404) 727-6069, poljb@emory.edu

**Emory University School of Law**
Katherine Brokaw, JD, Assistant Dean, Student Affairs  
(404) 727-6809, kbrokaw@emory.edu

**Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing**
David Smith, Associate Dean, Enrollment and Student Affairs  
(404) 727-4061, david.w.smith@emory.edu

**Emory University School of Medicine**
William Eley, MPH/MD, Executive Associate Dean  
(404) 712-9979, jeley@emory.edu

**Laney Graduate School**
Cora MacBeth, Ph.D., Assistant Dean, Student Affairs  
(404) 727-2611, cmacb@emory.edu

**Rollins School of Public Health**
Kara Brown Robinson, Associate Dean for Student Affairs/Admissions  
(404) 727-3956, klobrow2@emory.edu

**Goizueta Business School**
Andrea Hershatter, Senior Associate Dean, BBA Program Director  
(404) 727-0327, ahersha@emory.edu

**Oxford College**
Michele Hempfling, Assistant Dean for Campus Life  
(770) 784-8387, michele.hempfling@emory.edu.
Signs and Sources of Distress

Academic Problems
- career and course indecision
- excessive procrastination
- uncharacteristically poor preparation or performance
- repeated requests for extensions or special considerations
- disruptive classroom behavior
- excessive absence/tardiness
- avoiding or dominating discussions
- references to suicide or harm to others either verbally or in writing

Interpersonal Problems
- constantly asking for help with personal problems
- dependency
- hanging around the office
- withdrawing
- disruptive behavior
- inability to get along with others
- complaints from other students

Behavioral Problems
- intense emotion
- inappropriate responses
- difficulty concentrating
- physically harming self
- destruction of property
- anxiety and panic
- inability to communicate clearly
- change in personal hygiene
- dramatic weight change
- frequently falling asleep
- irritability
- unruly behavior
- impaired speech
- disjointed thoughts, loss of reality
- tearfulness

Sources
- relationship problems/break-ups
- family problems
- grief and loss
- divorce of parents
- loneliness
- academic pressure or failure
- serious illness or injury
- difficulty adjusting to university life
- anxiety
- eating disorders
- trouble adjusting to American culture
- sexual or physical abuse/assault
- identity confusion
- depression
- drug/alcohol abuse
- career indecision
- loss of goal or dream
- unplanned pregnancy
- language barriers
- financial problems
Faculty and staff are not expected to provide personal counseling to students. Rather, faculty and staff play an important role in encouraging students to use campus resources, including facilitating a referral to the appropriate campus resource.

A faculty or staff member is often the first person a) to recognize when a student is in distress and, b) to reach out to that student.

We encourage you to speak directly to students when you sense that they are in academic or personal distress. Openly acknowledge that you are aware of their distress, that you are sincerely concerned about their welfare, and that you are willing to help them explore their options. Not all students will be receptive to your help. In some cases, and in order to ensure students of concern do not fall in the gaps between observers and interveners, a referral to SIS may be warranted.
Responding to Mental Health Emergencies

Immediate and decisive intervention is needed when student behavior poses a threat to self or others. Examples include:

- Suicidal gestures, intentions, or attempts
- Behavior posing a threat to the student (hallucinations, drug abuse)
- Threats or aggression directed towards others
- Demonstrated inability to care for oneself

What to Do

1. Move the student to a quiet and secure place.
2. Listen attentively and respond in a straightforward, considerate way.
3. Enlist the help of a colleague so you are not alone with the student.
4. Make arrangements for appropriate university intervention.
5. When contacting a campus resource, try to have the following information available:
   - student name
   - physical description of student
   - your location
   - description of circumstances
   - type of assistance needed

For consultation with a counselor:

404-727-7450
1462 Clifton Rd., 2nd Floor
Monday – Friday
8:30 am – 5:00 pm

For after-hours consultation:

HELPLINE: 404-727-4357
Monday – Friday
8:30 pm – 1:00 am

DeKalb County Mental Health Support Line
800-715-4225

Call Emory Police when:

- Immediate medical attention is required.
- The student is unmanageable, aggressive, or hostile.
- You are directly threatened or feel at risk.

404-727-6111
Referring a Student to the SIS Team

When to Refer

- If your efforts to manage a significant classroom behavioral issue have not resolved the problem.
- If you are concerned about the welfare of a student, yourself, and/or others.
- If a student asks for help in dealing with personal issues that are outside your role as a faculty or staff member.
- If you have referred the student for assistance in the past and there seems to be no improvement or things seem to be worsening.

What to Do

SIS Referrals can be made by completing a referral form at emory.edu/campus_life/sis; emailing sisteam@emory.edu; or calling 404-430-1120.

Information for an effective referral:

- Student name
- Student Emory ID number
- Student phone number
- Dates, times, locations of events
- Your observations;
- What was said and by whom
- What has been done so far (if anything) to address the concern and the student response to those efforts

Should you refer?

Remember that in any given situation, there are probably several "right ways" to address your concern for a student’s distress. Please contact the SIS Team to discuss your concerns and options.

What about confidentiality?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not prohibit the sharing of personal observations and knowledge about a student among campus officials when there is a legitimate concern related to campus safety.

Does the referral need the student's participation?

Simply put, no it does not. There may be times when a student is not receptive to help or support, or when the student has long left your class or office and the link between your concern and making a referral occurs.
There are different levels of distress that can be represented through a continuum. This list is not comprehensive nor does each behavior need to be present. Additionally, the list of interventions provides the options available. When referring a student in distress, it is advised to make a parallel referral to the SIS Team so follow-up and feedback loops are complete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Distressed</th>
<th>Crisis</th>
<th>Severe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disruptive</td>
<td>Failing in school</td>
<td>Alcohol/drug use</td>
<td>Irrational fears</td>
<td>Highly disruptive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing grades</td>
<td>Defiance to Rules</td>
<td>Self-destructive behavior</td>
<td>Excessive risk taking</td>
<td>Disjointed thoughts and/or speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor performance</td>
<td>Lethargic</td>
<td>Depression/anxiety signs</td>
<td>Heightened emotional reactivity</td>
<td>Loss of contact with reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absences</td>
<td>Feelings of Depression</td>
<td>Unusual behavior</td>
<td>Hostility</td>
<td>Hallucinations and/or paranoia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty managing stress</td>
<td>Falling asleep</td>
<td>Pushing limits of social decorum</td>
<td>Agression and/or violence</td>
<td>Stalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(at odd times and situations)</td>
<td>Changing hygiene</td>
<td>Suspiciousness</td>
<td>Self-harm/harm to others (thoughts, not action)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Interventions**

- SIS
- Faculty/staff consultation with appropriate office and/or department
- SIS Faculty/staff consultation or referral with appropriate office and/or department
- SIS Emory Police Counseling Center
- SIS Emory Police Counseling Center
- SIS
- Baker Act
- Arrest
- Involuntary Withdrawal
- No Tresspass Order
Tips for Supporting and Encouraging Students

- Request to see the student in private.
- Briefly acknowledge your observations and perceptions of the student’s situation and express your concerns directly and honestly.
- Listen carefully to what the student is troubled about and try to see the issue from his or her point of view without agreeing or disagreeing.
- Follow up with the student to see how he or she is doing.
- Strange and inappropriate behavior should not be ignored.
- The student can be informed that such behavior is distracting and inappropriate.
- Your ability to connect with an alienated student will allow him or her to respond more effectively to your concerns.
- Help the student identify options for action and explore possible consequences. If possible, offer to phone or accompany the student to the appropriate resources.
- Avoid labeling the student’s behavior or the issues presented.
- Inform the student about what can be gained by meeting with a counselor or other professional to talk about his or her problems.
- Be open about the limits on your ability to help the student.
- If the student appears to be in imminent danger of hurting self or others, consult the Counseling Center or Emory Police immediately.
- Do not promise to keep threats to self or others a secret.
Troubling behavior from a student usually causes us to feel alarmed, upset, or worried.

When faculty or staff members encounter troubling behavior, they should feel concerned about the student’s well-being. Students exhibiting troubling behavior may have difficulties in and out of the classroom. Some examples include:

- A student who jokes about killing himself or herself.
- A student who perspires profusely when giving a presentation in front of a group.
- A student who discloses that his or her loved one was diagnosed with a terminal or serious illness.
- A student who seems to work harder than most students but can’t pass an exam.
- A student who appears to be losing significant weight yet speaks with pride about how little he or she eats.
- A student whose writing appears disjointed and fragmented, as though he or she cannot maintain a logical sequence of thought, or contains themes of violence which are out of context with the assignment.
- A student who reports that FBI agents (or similar) are following him or her around campus.

**Interventions for Troubling Behavior**

Faculty and staff have options for responding to student behavior that they find troubling. If a university professional is unsure how to respond to a troubled student, here are some suggestions:

- Seek advice and counsel from the department chair or supervisor, the Counseling Center, or the SIS Team.
- Initiate a discussion with the student about the behavior that is of concern.
- Refer the student to campus departments or offices that have the necessary expertise and personnel to help him or her.
- If you believe the situation deserves university attention or follow-up, complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120.
Identifying Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior is conduct that interferes with or interrupts the educational process of other students or the normal operations of the university.

A disruptive student typically resists interventions or corrective action. Some examples include:

- A student who verbally abuses or intimidates another.
- A student who is overly demanding of faculty or staff.
- A student who interrupts the educational process in the class by:
  - Making hostile remarks out of turn
  - Aggressively taking over the lecture
- A student who notably disrupts the environment outside the classroom.

Interventions for Disruptive Behavior

The university professional may find the following procedures helpful when dealing with disruptive behavior:

- Verbally request that the student stop the disruptive behavior.
- If the problem persists, ask the student to leave the class or the area.
- Initiate a discussion with the student about the behavior that is of concern.
- Inform the student of the behavior that needs to change, define a timeline for when the change needs to be made, and explain the consequences if the change does not occur.
- After meeting with the student, document the content of the meeting in writing. It is sometimes helpful and/or necessary to provide the student with a written copy of the requirements and the consequences discussed.
- Contact the department chair or supervisor for advice and support.
- Follow-up with a referral the SIS Team even if you believe the situation has been resolved.
- Consult with the Counseling Center to assist you and all concerned.

If the situation is serious and requires immediate assistance call Emory Police at 404-727-6111.
Identifying Threatening Behavior

Threatening behavior from a student typically leaves us feeling frightened and in fear for our personal safety. These behaviors should be taken very seriously.

Examples of threatening behavior include:

- A student who implies or makes a direct threat to harm him or herself or others.
- A student who displays a firearm or weapon.
- A student who physically confronts or attacks another person.
- A student who stalks or harasses another person.
- A student who sends threatening correspondence to another person.
- A student whose writing contains themes and threats of violence.

Interventions for Threatening Behavior

The safety and well being of the campus community is the top priority when a student exhibits threatening or potentially violent behavior. Specific interventions include:

- Immediately contact Emory Police at 404-727-6111
- Contact the department chair/supervisor for advice and support.
- Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120.
- Consult with the Counseling Center to assist you and all concerned.
Suicide is the second-leading cause of death among college students.

Suicidal persons are intensely ambivalent about killing themselves and typically respond to help. Suicidal states are time-limited and most who commit suicide are neither crazy nor psychotic. High-risk indicators include: feelings of hopelessness and futility, a severe loss or threat of loss, a detailed suicide plan, history of a previous attempt, history of alcohol or drug abuse, and feelings of alienation and isolation. Suicidal students usually want to communicate their feelings; any opportunity to do so should be encouraged.

**DO**

- Be available to listen, to talk, and to show concern.
- Acknowledge that a threat or attempt at suicide is a plea for help.
- Take the student seriously. 80% of those attempting suicide give warning of their intent.
- Walk the student to the Counseling Center. Do not leave the student alone. If it is after 5pm or on the weekend, contact Emory Police at 404.727.6111.
- Inform the SIS Team 404-430-1120.
- Care for yourself. Helping someone who is suicidal can be difficult, demanding, and draining.

**DO NOT**

- Don’t minimize the situation or depth of feeling, e.g., “Oh, it will be better tomorrow.”
- Don’t be afraid to ask the person if he or she is so depressed or sad that he or she wants to hurt him or herself (“You seem so upset and discouraged that I’m wondering if you are considering suicide.”).
- Don’t overcommit yourself, therefore not being able to deliver on what you promise.
- Don’t ignore your limitations.
Depressed students may show a multitude of symptoms including low self-esteem and feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy.

Physical symptoms include decreased or increased appetite, difficulty sleeping, and low interest in daily activities. Depressed students often show low levels of activity and have little energy. Sometimes depression includes irritation, anxiety, and anger. In its most serious form depression can be accompanied by self-destructive thoughts as a way to escape from the emotional pain.

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**DO**

- Speak with the student in private.
- Listen carefully and validate the student’s feelings and experiences.
- Be supportive and express your concern about the situation.
- Discuss a clear action plan such as making an appointment with Counseling Center (404-727-7450).
- If appropriate, be willing to consider or offer flexible arrangements (an extension on an assignment or exam) as a way to alleviate stress and instill hope.
- Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu or call 404-430-1120.

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**DO NOT**

- Do not be afraid to ask whether the student is suicidal if you think he or she may be.
- Don’t downplay the situation.
- Don’t argue with the student or dispute that the student is feeling depressed.
- Don’t provide too much information or help for the student to process.
- Don’t expect the student to stop feeling depressed without intervention.
- Don’t assume the family knows about the student’s depression.
During the course of their university careers, many students are likely to experience the loss of someone close to them. Sometimes students are dealing with their own life-threatening illnesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Listen carefully and compassionately.</td>
<td>• Do not be afraid of tears, a natural and healthy way of releasing emotions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider the option of allowing the student to postpone submitting assigned work.</td>
<td>• Don’t avoid discussing the deceased person with the student. In this circumstance, many are grateful to find someone who will listen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When appropriate and if you are comfortable, you can share similar experiences you have had so the student doesn't feel alone or irrational.</td>
<td>• Don’t say well-intentioned things to the student that might imply the grief is not valid e.g., “It can’t be that bad.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be on the alert for signs that the student feels a need to harm himself or herself as a way to cope with the pain.</td>
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Dealing with unexpected events and conflicts are primary causes of anxiety. Other factors that increase anxiety include unfamiliar situations and unreasonable self-expectations. These students often have trouble making decisions.

**DO**

- Do allow the student to discuss his or her feelings. Often this alone relieves pressure.
- Remain calm and reassure students when appropriate.
- Be clear and explicit.
- Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120.

**DO NOT**

- Don’t take responsibility for the student’s emotional state.
- Don’t make things more complicated.
- Don’t overwhelm him or her with information or ideas.
A variety of substances are available that provide escape from pressing demands. The most abused substance is alcohol. Alcohol and other drug-related injuries remain the single greatest cause of preventable death among college students.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DO NOT</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Share your honest concern and encourage the student to seek help.</td>
<td>• Do not ignore the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be alert for signs of alcohol and drug abuse (e.g., preoccupation with drugs, periods of memory loss, deteriorating performance in class).</td>
<td>• Do not chastise or lecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Call Emory Police at 404-727-6111 in instances of intoxication.</td>
<td>• Do not, in any manner, encourage the behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage the student to make an appointment with a Substance Abuse Counselor in the Office of Health Promotion (404-727-0395).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email <a href="mailto:sisteam@emory.edu">sisteam@emory.edu</a>, or call 404-430-1120.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Transitions are times of change that usually involve both loss and opportunity. Entering college is one of life’s most demanding transitions and is, arguably, the most significant time of adjustment for students since they started kindergarten. The changes inherent in a transition produce stress and challenge a student’s coping resources. Students commonly experience a decline in functioning (academic, social, emotional) during transitions. Adjustments can be worsened by counterproductive coping mechanisms such as avoidance of stress-producing situations and people as well as excessive partying and alcohol abuse. Transitions can pose greater problems to students with existing psychological problems or difficult life circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DO NOT</strong></th>
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</table>
| • Convey to the student that adjustment or transition stress is normal and often brings a temporary decline in performance.  
• Encourage the student to use positive coping methods to manage transition stress including regular exercise, social support, a reasonable eating and sleeping regimen, and pleasurable activities.  
• Encourage the student to speak with a counselor at the Counseling Center (404-727-7450)  
• Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120. | • Don’t assume that the student understands the impact of life transitions and/or is aware of the source of stress.  
• Don’t minimize or trivialize the student’s feeling or reactions.  
• Don’t discount or overlook factors that put the student at risk for more problems. |
Eating disorders are widely considered to be one of the most dangerous mental health issues due to its high mortality rate. Further, eating disorders, which include anorexia and bulimia, are believed to impact 20 percent of college students. Anorexia involves restricting one’s eating, which often leads to malnourishment. Bulimia usually entails binge eating followed by excessive exercise, vomiting, or the use of the medication such as diet pills.

The presence of an eating disorder in a student’s life not only impacts his or her body image and food intake but can also affect a student’s social and academic functioning. Students may struggle with attention and concentration, depression, physical pain, low energy, social isolation, and low self-esteem.

**DO**

- Recognize the danger associated with eating disorder behaviors rather than viewing them as a choice, lifestyle, or attempt to obtain attention.
- Encourage the student to seek out formal help including counseling and a thorough medical assessment.
- Support the student even if he or she is not currently motivated to obtain help.
- Refer the student for counseling, nutrition, and dieting help through Student Health Services (404-727-1735) and Counseling Center (404-727-7450)
- Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120.

**DO NOT**

- Don’t assume that all thin students have an eating disorder by remembering that these issues impact people of all shapes and sizes.
- Don’t confront a student by stating “I think you have an eating disorder.” Instead, share your concerns with the student by naming the behaviors you have witnessed.
- Don’t encourage the student to “just eat” or “stop throwing up.” Recovery from an eating disorder often requires mental health treatment to alter behaviors.
About 1 in 4 women and 1 in 33 men will be sexually assaulted by the end of his or her college career. Transgender and gender non-conforming students are assaulted at even higher rates. In up to 95% of the cases, the perpetrator is someone the survivor knows. Sexual assault is traumatic which can make it difficult for students to discuss. Students who have been sexually assaulted may exhibit myriad reactions including difficulty with concentration or motivation, feelings of shame, sleep disturbances, difficulty trusting others, or fear and anxiety.

**DO**
- Listen to what the student tells you and believe him/her.
- Encourage the student to seek support via the Respect Program* (404-727-1514) or the Day League (404-377-1428)
- Refer the student to the Title IX Coordinator for Students (404-727-4079).
- Complete a SIS Student of Concern Referral online at emory.edu/campus_life/sis, email sisteam@emory.edu, or call 404-430-1120.

*The Respect Program engages the Emory community to prevent and respond to sexual assault and relationship violence. Advocacy-based counseling and referral services are available.

**DO NOT**
- Do not ask a lot of prying questions as you may inadvertently send the message that you don’t believe the student or you are questioning how he or she handled the situation.
- Don’t blame the student for what happened regardless of the circumstances under which the assault occurred.
- Don’t be skeptical or show that you don’t believe the student. The vast majority of students do not make up stories about being sexually assaulted.
- Don’t try to be the student’s only support. Recovery takes a long time and often involves the need for professional services.
- Don’t pressure the student to report the crime.
- Don’t report the crime against the student’s wishes.
Abusive relationships often involve a repeating pattern of verbal, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse that increases over time. The offender could be a romantic partner, a parent or guardian, or a care attendant. Indicators of abuse may include:

- verbal abuse
- isolation from friends and family
- fear of abuser’s temper
- feeling trapped
- acceptance of highly controlling behavior
- assuming responsibility for other’s abusive behavior
- physical indicators such as bruises in different stages of healing, bruising, or marks around the throat.

**DO**

- Meet with the student in private.
- Recognize that the student may be fearful and vulnerable.
- Remember that abusive relationships involve complex dynamics including high levels of denial and, thus, are difficult to change.
- Be aware that interventions from a variety of sources increase the chances for change.
- Encourage the student to seek support via the Respect Program* (404-727-1514).
- Refer the student to the Title IX Coordinator for Students (404-727-4079).
- Consult with the SIS Team on the best ways to assist the student.

*The Respect Program engages the Emory community to prevent and respond to sexual assault and relationship violence. Advocacy-based counseling and referral services are available.

**DO NOT**

- Do not pressure the student to leave the abusive relationship without careful safety planning with a professional. Without this the student could be placed in greater danger.
- Don’t blame the student for not leaving the relationship.
Stalking is repeated following or harassment of an individual that is designed to instill a sense of fear or danger. Stalkers often have an irrational obsession with the victim and try to gain power and omnipotence through control and intimidation. Stalking behavior includes physically following the victim as well as harassment via phone, email, letters, unwanted gifts, and unwanted attention. Also, stalkers can be male or female, and targets can be of the same or opposite sex.

**DO**

- Encourage the victimized student to trust his or her instincts.
- Advise the student to contact the Emory Police Department at 404-727-6111.
- Advise the student to document unwanted contacts and maintain evidence of harassment.
- Advise the student to take precautions to ensure safety, including a change in routine travel routes and schedules.
- Encourage the student to seek support via the Respect Program* (404-727-1514) or the Day League (404-377-1428)
- Refer the student to the Title IX Coordinator for Students (404-727-4079)
- Consult with the SIS Team on the best ways to assist the student.

*The Respect Program engages the Emory community to prevent and respond to sexual assault and relationship violence. Advocacy-based counseling and referral services are available.

**DO NOT**

- Do not ignore or minimize the situation.
- Don’t suggest that the victim is responsible for the unwanted attention.
- Don’t take responsibility for protecting the student.
Students with documentation of a physical, learning, or psychiatric disability are eligible to access accommodations through the Office of Access, Disability Services, and Resources (ADSR) 404-727-9877. Some students may not realize that accommodations are available for the following diagnoses:
- physical disabilities – special access needs associated with limitations in mobility, speaking, hearing, or vision.
- medical disabilities – difficulties participating due to a condition or the ongoing treatment protocol.
- learning disabilities – impairments that interfere with information processing, memory, retrieval, and output.
- psychiatric disabilities – ongoing condition that may interfere with ability to participate in routine programs.
- attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder – dysfunction of the central nervous system may compromise an individual’s social, vocational, and academic performance.

**DO**
- Do speak to the student in private about your concerns using sensitivity and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality about his or her disability.
- Acknowledge the difficulties the student is having.
- Be open to follow-up consultation with ADSR regarding accommodations for the student.
- Remember that any student requesting accommodations must present a letter from ADSR which will include recommended actions.
- Set rules and parameters; accommodation is not absence of academic and other expectations.

**DO NOT**
- Don’t use patronizing language with the student.
- Don’t underestimate or question the stated disability.
- Don’t assume the student understands the limitations imposed by the disability.
- Don’t assume the student qualifies for accommodations without ADSR verification.
- Don’t adjust the academic standards of the course without prior consultation with ADSR.
While it is easy to conclude that the academically underachieving student is simply unmotivated, the real situation is often more complicated. Students may be preoccupied with situational and family problems or have emotional problems that are distracting and disabling. They may have learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, or substance abuse problems. Further, previous failures for any reason can engender a hopeless outlook and a defensive “I don’t care” attitude.

**DO**

- Inquire compassionately as to what the problems are.
- Provide enough time for the student to open up. His or her initial defensiveness might be off-putting to an instructor who values involvement and dedication in students.
- Help the student assess the source of underachievement, e.g., distractions, preoccupations, emotional problems, depression, difficulties with underlying academic and study skills.
- Sensitively address the difficulty of dealing with a “failure mentality.”

**DO NOT**

- Do not take the student’s problem personally or be insulted that he/she does not find the class or program engaging.
- Don’t assume too quickly the problem is mere laziness.
- Don’t punish the student for lack of involvement.
- Don’t dismiss the student and problem as unworkable in one meeting.
Typically, the utmost time and energy given to these students will not seem like enough from the student’s perspective. These students often seek to control your time and unconsciously believe the amount of time received is a reflection of their worth.

**DO**

- Do let the student know the limits of what is reasonable for you to provide.
- Let the student make his/her own decisions as much as possible.
- When you have given appropriate time to the student, let him/her know. (For example: “Excuse me, I need to attend to other things right now.”)

**DO NOT**

- Do not let the student use you as his/her only source of support.
- Don’t get trapped into advice giving.
- Don’t get angry.
Students usually become verbally abusive when involved in frustrating situations that they see as beyond their control. Anger and frustration become displaced from those situations to you and, typically, the anger is not directed at you personally. These students often feel they will be rejected and, therefore, reject you before you reject them. They often realize the drama and intimidation behind their anger and are aware of their impact.

**DO**

- Acknowledge the student’s anger.
- Rephrase what the student is saying and identify his or her emotions.
- Allow the student to vent and tell you what is upsetting to him or her.
- Tell the student you are not willing to accept his or her verbally abusive behavior.
- Help the person problem solve and deal with the real issues when he or she becomes calmer.
- Defuse and de-escalate the situation by remaining calm, speaking in a calm tone, and modeling appropriate behavior.
- Make a SIS referral.

**DO NOT**

- Do not meet alone with the student.
- Do not get into an argument or shouting match.
- Don’t become hostile or punitive.
- Don’t press for an explanation or reasons for their behavior.
- Don’t ignore the situation.
- Don’t stay in a situation in which you feel unsafe.
- Don’t ignore a gut reaction that you are in danger.
Violence due to emotional distress is rare. It typically occurs only when the student is extremely frustrated and feels unable to do anything about it. The adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” best applies here.

**DO**

- Prevent total frustration and helplessness by quickly and calmly acknowledging the intensity of the situation.
- Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable.
- Stay in an open area.
- When all else fails divert attention.
- Get necessary help from colleagues, bystanders, etc.
- Make a SIS referral.

**DO NOT**

- Do not meet alone with the student.
- Don’t ignore warning signs that a person is about to explode (yelling, screaming, clenched fists, threatening statements).
- Don’t threaten, dare, taunt, or “push” the student into a corner.
- Don’t touch the student.
- Don’t stay in a situation in which you feel unsafe.
- Don’t ignore a gut reaction that you are in danger.

If the situation is serious and requires immediate assistance, call Emory Police at 404-727-6111
These students have difficulty distinguishing fantasy from reality. Their thinking is typically illogical, confused, and disturbed; they may coin new words, see or hear things that no one else can see or hear, have irrational beliefs, and exhibit bizarre or inappropriate behavior. Generally, these students are not dangerous and are very scared, frightened, and overwhelmed.

**DO**
- Respond with warmth and kindness but with a firm reasoning.
- Remove extra stimulation in the environment and, if you are comfortable, see the student in a quiet atmosphere.
- Acknowledge your concerns and state that you can see they need help.
- Reveal your difficulty understanding them (when appropriate).
- Switch topics and divert the focus from the irrational to the rational or the real.
- Speak to their healthy side, which they still have.

**DO NOT**
- Do not argue or try to convince the student of his or her irrational thinking as it only makes the student defend his or her position more.
- Don’t play along.
- Don’t encourage further revelations of craziness.
- Don’t demand, command, or order the student.
- Don’t expect customary or usual emotional responses.

If the situation is serious and requires immediate assistance call Emory Police at 404-727-6111
As a result of certain kinds of behavior from students, it may be necessary to set up a departmental safety plan. For example, if you think a student has been threatening to you in the past and he/she appears in your office, you may need assistance dealing with the student. Often it is the people you work with and who are in the closest physical proximity who can provide the help you need. The following sections will help you to define a security plan for your department.

First and foremost, call Emory Police to help with setting up your plan. The following are the kinds of behavior you should be concerned with:

- Unwillingness to leave the building
- Interrupting the business of the department
- Bizarre statements and/or actions
- Visible anger
- Verbal abuse, yelling
- Suspicious behavior
- Threats
- Violence

There are at least three levels of responses:

1. Individual response
   a) Do what you can to get the person to stop the behavior.
   b) If the person is not violent, try to handle the situation yourself.

2. Assistance from colleagues
   a) Have someone stand near you for support.
   b) Call a designated person for assistance.
   c) Have someone find a designated person for assistance.
   d) Have a code phrase that can be used.

3. Assistance from Emory Police
   a) Ask someone to immediately call EPD at 404-727-6111.
   b) Retreat to a locked office or safe space while waiting for EPD.
Questions to Consider When Developing your Departmental Safety Plan

1. What specific areas do you need to prepare in your department?
   a) reception
   b) individual offices

2. How can the department help each other when faced with difficult situations?
   a) What will the procedures be for getting help from others within your area?
   b) What do you expect of the person who comes to a colleague’s assistance?

3. When you need another level of assistance above what can be provided from within your department:
   a) Who will be your designated “helpers” and are they readily available?
   b) How will you reach them?

4. What should someone do while waiting for assistance?

5. What will the protocol be if someone observes an individual disturbing other people by yelling, odd actions, etc.?

6. How will you coordinate planning and support with nearby departments?

7. What does your department need to carry out these plans? Specifically, what kinds of training do you think would help?

POSSIBLE SCENARIO

You are a staff member working at a window in the Financial Aid Office. Last week, a student waiting in line began speaking very loudly and abusively about how the Financial Aid Office “screwed up” and now he has to pay for it. By the time the student reached your window he was quite agitated. As you tried to explain what the student needed to do, he said, “The next time I’m here I’m gonna blow up the place.” Today he is at your window again.

How could you have prepared for this?
What do you do?

This scenario (or one more appropriate for your specific department) discussed in your group setting can help you prepare and implement a safety plan.
Quick Reference Guide
Helping Troubled Students

WHEN YOU NEED GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

- Communication with a student indicates his/her loss of touch with reality
- Communication reflects suicidal thoughts or actions, depression, anxiety, or difficulty dealing with grief
- Is debilitated or overwhelmed by a family issue

- Communication indicates having been a victim of stalking, harassment, hazing, or other crime
- Communication reflects sexual assault or relationship violence
- Student has not attended class for an extended period of time
- Is overwhelmed by a problem with the university

TO REPORT CONCERNING BEHAVIOR

- Student does something significantly out of character or acts unusually peculiar
- Displays unhealthy or dangerous behavior
- Appears under the influence or coping with the effects of substance use
- Continues to seem distressed despite prior referrals

FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Student behavior that substantially impairs, interferes with, or obstructs orderly processes and functions of the university
- Deliberately interferes with instruction or office procedures
- Breaches the peace

Counseling Center
404-727-7450
1462 Clifton Rd., 2nd Floor

Title IX Coordinator (404) 727-4079
Student Intervention Services
404-430-1120
Respect Program (for Bullets 1 & 2) (404) 727.1514

Student Intervention Services
404-430-1120

Emory Police
404-727-6111

Regardless of the situation, contact any of the above offices for support or information. For more information on Helping Distressed Students: www.emory.edu/campus_life/sis