



DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE CARE TEAM

*Tanja Philhower, M.S.W.
Assistant Dean of Students & Director of the Care Team
Dean of Students Office*



COLLEGE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

- Rates of clinically significant depression and anxiety have steadily risen over the past twenty years.
- College students report that their experiences with depression and anxiety interfere with their academic pursuits.
- College students encounter many issues that can interfere with academic pursuits either on a short or long-term basis:
 - Food insecurity
 - Housing insecurity
 - Immigration issues
 - Criminal victimization

- Crisis occurs when a person experiences an event or series of events that disrupts their equilibrium to such an extent that the person feels overwhelmed to the point that effective coping is difficult.
- Crisis is based on perception and is very individual. What one person perceives as a crisis may seem manageable to another.

- Physical
 - Increased heart rate, heart palpitations
 - Rapid breathing
 - Shaking
 - Sweating
 - Nausea
 - Disturbed sleep (difficulty sleeping, nightmares, etc.)
 - Altered perceptions

- Cognitive
 - Difficulty processing information
 - Difficulty remembering information
 - Hyper-focus on something seemingly insignificant
 - Scattered, disorganized thinking
 - Difficulty making decisions

- Emotional
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Anger
 - Rapid mood swings
 - Helplessness
 - Hopelessness
 - Suicidal ideation

- Behavioral
 - Inappropriate, displaced expressions of anger or rage
 - Withdrawing from friends, loved ones
 - Excessive sleep
 - Overeating, under-eating
 - Hyperactivity
 - Self-medicating with drugs or alcohol
 - Risk-taking behavior
 - Self-mutilation
 - Suicide attempts

- Safety and Security
- Vent and Validate
- Predict and Prepare

- Listen fully to what person is saying
- Acknowledge feelings
- Reflect what person is saying/paraphrase
- Convey warmth and empathy with tone of voice and body language

- Defensiveness
- Planning your response before person has finished speaking
- Interrupting
- Matching heightened feelings
- Minimizing feelings

- Immediate jump to problem solving
- Over-professionalism/distancing
- Asking too many questions
- Asking questions in a way that creates defensiveness
- Blind referring

HELPING SOMEONE IN DISTRESS

- Reach out
- Actively listen
- Brainstorm options
- Refer to resources

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Maintain personal boundaries while still communicating warmth and empathy
- Even though you might have heard situations that seem more serious, crisis is personal
- Ask for help any time you feel that you need it. We are here for you too!

ROLE OF THE CARE TEAM

The Care Team uses a holistic, social work approach when working directly with students in distress, and their families, friends, and faculty/staff.

- Monitor and respond to the UF referral email seven days a week
- Directly reach out to students in distress
- Work with students who have been referred to the office by faculty, staff, family, students, or others
- Connect students with campus and community resources to help manage the issues causing distress – family issues, finances, living situations, physical health, mental health, and engagement at UF
- Provide support to those who are connected to the student including faculty, staff, family, and peers

OVERVIEW OF CARE TEAM SERVICES

- Provide support students in distress
- Case management
- Problem-solving and follow-up
- Campus and community referrals
- Instructor notifications
- Medical petitions
- Hitchcock Field and Fork Pantry
- Collegiate Veterans Success Center

COMMON ISSUES FACED BY STUDENTS SERVED BY CARE TEAM

- Onset or exacerbation of mental health issues
- Onset or exacerbation of physical health issues
- Eating disorders
- Substance abuse
- Serious illness/death of loved one
- Housing/food insecurity
- Immigration issues
- Intradepartmental challenges (grad students)
- Conflict with peers (roommates, classmates, student org peers, etc.)
- Students often experience a combination of these issues

INSTRUCTOR NOTIFICATIONS

- Students can request Instructor Notifications online:
 - <https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/>
- Available for students who have documented life events that interrupt their academics:
 - Physical or mental health issues
 - Injury
 - Death of a loved one
 - Victimization
 - Other situations as appropriate

- Available for students who have life events that prevent them from successfully completing some or all of their classes in a semester:
 - Current Semester Full-term
 - Current Semester Drop(s)
 - Past Semester Full-Term
 - Past Semester Drop(s)
- You may be asked to complete Instructor Feedback Forms for students completing retroactive/drop petitions
- Soon will be launching an online petition submission portal...stay tuned!

- Student with excessive absences, not responding to outreach
- Student with a marked change in behavior or performance
- Student exhibiting signs of crisis or distress
- Student who mentions thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- Student exhibiting disruptive behavior in the classroom
- Trust your instincts!

REFERRALS TO CARE TEAM

- Email umatter@ufl.edu
- Call 294-2273
- Walk student to office to schedule an appointment

HITCHCOCK FIELD AND FORK PANTRY

- Available to anyone with a valid UF ID (not just for students)
- Open each day, hours change by semester so check <https://pantry.fieldandfork.ufl.edu/> for current hours
- No limits on number of visits
- Limits on quantities for certain high need items such as proteins

COLLEGIATE VETERANS SUCCESS CENTER

- Serves student veterans, active duty service members, and dependents of veterans and active duty service members
- Provides space for studying, receiving tutoring, receiving mentoring, and connecting with resources in a safe, supportive environment
- VetSuccess On Campus Counselor available to assist student veterans and active duty service members access the resources and services available to them



TANJA PHILHOWER, M.S.W.

care.dso.ufl.edu

tphilhower@ufsa.ufl.edu

UF | UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA