

Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress: A Guide for Faculty, Staff, and Administration to Assist Students in Need at Trinity

Trinity College Counseling and Wellness Center

135 Allen Place, Hartford, CT 06106 860-297-2415

<https://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/HealthWellness/counseling/>

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Letter to Colleagues

Dear Colleagues:

In the College's Bicentennial year, The Counseling and Wellness Center turned sixty the 2023-2024 academic year. We want you to utilize this document as support for guiding solutions, referrals, and information throughout the year. This handbook provides the multiple ways you can offer support to students and more importantly how to discern the best course of action for yourself, learning who your supports are, etc. As some of you may know, the Counseling and Wellness Center provides individual and group therapy to all Trinity students at no charge. We utilize an empowerment-based approach within our referral process and most students seek our services at the Counseling and Wellness Center on their own. However, Faculty and staff members hold unique positions in which you have more insight into the daily lives of our Trinity students, and you can also refer students to us for assistance. You can identify struggling students more easily and assist them in connecting with the appropriate help they need. Whether a student confides directly to you, or a student shares their concerns about a classmate, there are various channels through which you are informed that a student may be in distress. The Counseling and Wellness Center and Faculty and Staff are partners in addressing this.

As seen across various campuses, our college students struggle with anxiety, depression, stress-related disorders, eating disorders, physical illnesses, family and relational problems, financial crises, learning disabilities, and other significant challenges. These do not exclude how recent events; social media images and racial and political climates exacerbate said conditions and vice versa. These realities have the potential to deeply affect students and their academic performance, their sense of belonging and psychological safety. We recognize the challenge you face in maintaining a healthy learning environment in today's world.

This is why a revision was made to this tenth edition guidebook and we are open to feedback as the intent is to edit and update as needed. We believe this should remain an accessible document and feel free to share it and discuss it with your colleagues. While we in the Counseling and Wellness Center have frequently consulted with faculty and administrators on these matters, we recognize your approach, genuine care, and compassion conveyed during students' emotional difficulties often build the launchpad to their openness to try therapeutic services. Thank you for being a significant part of their healing trajectories.

This document is available online on the Counseling and Wellness Center's website. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about topics that should be included in the next revision, we encourage you to email cwc@trincoll.edu or call the Director, Haben Abraham, LCSW at 860.297.4127.

Counseling and Wellness Center General Information

About the Counseling and Wellness Center

- The Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) provides a full range of counseling and psychological services at no cost to all students who desire assistance in coping with personal and emotional difficulties and social relationships. In addition to counseling and psychotherapy, we offer medication consultation and evaluation for students who are in counseling or psychotherapy with our professional staff, referral to off-campus providers where indicated or requested, as well as other services.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center staff members are also available to consult with staff, faculty members, and administrators, including but not limited to those who interact with students after hours (AOCs (Administrator on Call) (Administrators on Call)) on how to deal with emotionally distressed and/or distressing students.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center can provide help with problems such as depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, sexual assault, stress management, social adjustment issues, homesickness, alcohol, and drug issues, eating disorders and concerns, identity issues, relationship problems, grief, and anger management, to name just a few examples.
- Center staff members can talk on various issues for classes, residence halls, fraternities and sororities, athletic teams, and other faculty, student, or administrative groups. Some topics presented in the past include mindfulness and meditation, culture and identity, interpersonal relationships, depression, and anxiety, eating disorders, coping with stress, test anxiety, alcohol and drug use, suicide, date rape, assertiveness training, adults with ADHD, learning disorders, and coping with grief.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center is staffed by five licensed clinical social workers: Haben Abraham, LCSW (Director), Nelis Bido-Jimenez, LCSW, Diandra Barnes, LCSW, Jessica Wilde, LCSW and Lauren Cooper, LCSW. One psychologist, Elliott Lacki, Psy. D, and Eliza Alve-Hedegaard, APRN, available for medication consultations for students actively in therapy with one CWC therapist. We typically have one to two MSW and or Psy D interns on staff per academic year (interns can vary depending on number of applicants, interview process, etc.).

Making a Referral

- The Counseling and Wellness Center is at 135 Allen Place, accessible from the rear of the Campus Safety parking lot. Students can contact us at 860-297-2415 to schedule an appointment. Our office manager, Elif Abedin, will assist you in setting up an appointment. Students may also reach us via email, but we recommend calling directly to arrange an immediate appointment. When students request an appointment via email, our available times may get booked before they have a chance to reply. To encourage student commitment, we do not allow others (faculty, friends, parents, deans, etc.) to schedule appointments for students. However, in some cases, faculty and staff who refer students to the Counseling and Wellness Center can remain with the student while they make the phone call to set the appointment or even accompany the student to the Center if they want to ensure the student physically contacts us. We sometimes get calls from students or faculty and staff on students' behalf requesting a specific member of our staff. While we realize that this is always done with the best

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intentions, there are often reasons why this may not be in the student's best interest, and the faculty member has no way of knowing that. For example, scheduling issues, or conflict of interests with friends of a student who may be seeing one of the staff members, may make your specific request inappropriate, and we are not always able to tell you that for reasons of confidentiality. While we try to be as responsive as possible to such requests, we ask for your understanding in letting us decide who will see a student. Of course, we value your input about this issue, but there may be other reasons that we cannot discuss with you for a different choice.

- Usually, an appointment can be set up for no later than the next few days, although in busy periods, or if a student wishes to make an appointment with a specific person or at a specific time of day, there may be a longer wait before a time can be scheduled. If a student is in crisis, we will ALWAYS arrange to see the student very quickly, immediately if necessary. Staff should know that we do have walk-in hours implemented at the Center, for these, we still ask students to call or email to not overbook our walk-ins and ensure students can be seen as soon as possible. If their concern is not immediate and the student agrees, they may be booked for a walk-in hour in a few days if this is appropriate or during high-demand times throughout the semester.

Availability

- The Counseling and Wellness Center has a longstanding policy of being available to students and staff without difficulty. We have an on-call schedule so students can reach a therapist in the after-hours. This schedule is shared with Campus Safety and Administrators on Call as well. If a student is in an emergency, they can call Campus Safety at 860.297.2222, and through their assistance the student will be connected to the on-call clinician for that particular shift. In almost all cases, the first person on the published schedule will be available either immediately or within a brief time, and if necessary, the second person on the list can be called a backup. In the rare case that neither clinician is available to assist, the Director, Haben Abraham, LCSW should be contacted. Also, if a student indicates they are in treatment with a particular staff member and wishes that person to be contacted, that person may be called if appropriate (i.e., the clinician is not on vacation, etc.).
- Important notes:
- If a student is at obvious and immediate risk of harm to self or others, transportation to the hospital should be made immediately without waiting for contact with our staff or the on-call clinician. Please also refer to the **Referral and Response Flowchart included on pages 24** for a quick reference regarding our Faculty/Staff guide for various incidents and how to respond to students in general stress, high risk, and imminent harm. You can also place this flowchart by your desk, in a visible and accessible space, on your phone, etc.
- Confidentiality and privileged communication laws prevent us from confirming or denying to a caller whether a particular student is a current patient.
- When a student is admitted to the hospital, the hospital understands (and should be reminded) that it should be in touch with the Counseling and Wellness Center before discharge to facilitate discharge planning and follow-up.

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- Of course, in any immediate and life-threatening emergency, emergency responders (Campus Safety, fire, police, ambulance) should always be contacted **first**.

Confidentiality

- According to professional ethics, as well as Connecticut and federal law, except in circumstances of imminent life-threatening danger, all contact with the Counseling and Wellness Center is privileged and confidential. Information about whether a student is in counseling, and information communicated to the Counseling and Wellness Center staff by a student cannot be disclosed to anyone outside the Counseling and Wellness Center without written consent from the student.
- We understand that at times, this may seem strange: If you have expressed concern for the well-being of a student whom you have referred to the Counseling and Wellness Center, we understand that you may want to know how the student is doing. In this case, most often simply following up with the student and asking if the student contacted the Center will provide you with the confirmation that the student is seeking services.
- Students may also sign a release of information so that relevant information may be shared with you that could help the student academically.

Consultation

- If you suggest that a student, come to the Center, and they decline, we are still happy to talk with you about your concerns, offer general advice, and suggest ways that you may be able to encourage the student to come in, at least for one session. Often, the student whom you want to refer to may already be coming. While we cannot let you know this without the student's permission, we can still talk with you in general about your concerns and about the kinds of issues that you may be seeing in your student.

What to Look For

Many faculty and staff have asked what the most frequent signs of emotional distress are. When should you be concerned? What should you look for. While, of course, there are no absolutes, and while some students exhibit few obvious signs of distress and can be quite distressed while others can appear to act in some unusual ways who may not be in distress at all, we offer some general observations.

The following signs may help identify those in need of professional counseling:

- The student remains distressed despite repeated attempts by you and others to be helpful.
- The student becomes more isolated, unkempt, irritable, or disconnected.
- The student's academic or social performance deteriorates, despite your efforts to be supportive.
- The student's behavior reflects an increased sense of hopelessness or helplessness.
- You find yourself doing ongoing counseling rather than academic consultation or advising.

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- The student shows significant and marked changes in behavior and mood, in either direction.

What to avoid:

- Do not ignore or trivialize warning signs of potential mental health problems.
- Do not intentionally or unintentionally become the student's therapist or rescuer.
- Do not give in to inappropriate requests that may allow the student to avoid the problem.

Distressed vs. Distressing Students

- It may be helpful to clarify the difference between students who are in emotional distress from those whose behavior is distressing to others. Students in distress are experiencing emotional pain, which may be generated by internal or external factors. A distressed student may appear highly distracted, publicly tearful, withdrawn, anxious, irritable, and hypersensitive, may be missing classes, or may openly state they are having problems. Distressed students can certainly be referred to the Center and find counseling helpful in addressing their concerns.
- Distressing students, on the other hand, are those who cause distress to other people (e.g., instructors, classmates, administrators, roommates), due to their inappropriate behavior. Examples of such behaviors include disruptive outbursts in class, inappropriate expressions of anger, threats of harm to self or others, etc. It is appropriate for faculty and/or staff to alert their department heads and/or the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156) regarding these students if approaching them directly and expressing concern does not seem possible.
- The most complicated situations involve students who are both distressed and distressing. Sometimes they may not be fully aware of how others perceive them or how their behavior impacts others. These students should also receive appropriate intervention from their academic department and/or the Dean of Students Office. The Counseling and Wellness Center is available for consultations regarding the possible need for psychological intervention. These students should also be encouraged to seek counseling. When working with these challenging students it is important to seek consultation and to know your limits. The Counseling and Wellness Center can provide you with some helpful consultation.

When and How to Intervene

- Students may reveal to you directly that they are emotionally distressed, or you may simply notice that there have been changes in their behavior that indicate some distress. Depending on how you become aware of the problems, you may or may not choose to approach the student. This decision depends on such factors as what behaviors are concerning you, how troubled the student seems to be, your relationship with the student, how approachable the student seems to be, as well as your personality style and feelings about intervening.
- If you believe the student might be open to discussing their concerns with you, the best approach involves letting the student know that you have noticed they seem upset lately, and you are interested in helping the student if they wish to talk to you about it. Asking a student if

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they have been struggling will not make them worse. Keep your comments "open-ended" rather than asking questions that can be answered with a simple "yes or no" response.

- Be aware that some students may reject your efforts, may deny any troubles, and/or may feel intruded upon. Most students will feel appreciative of your interest and concern, and your contact with them might be important in dealing with their problems. If you have questions or concerns about approaching a particular student, feel free to call the Counseling and Wellness Center for help.

Responding to Students Who Confide in You

- The most appropriate response to students who disclose their concerns to you is to:
- Empathize with the feelings being expressed. Try to understand what the student is saying from their perspective (which does not mean you have to agree with that perspective). Be as genuinely supportive as feels appropriate to you.
- Keep your limits in mind; for example, do not get more involved in the student's life than is comfortable.
- Except in cases where you may suspect that there is a potential for self-harm or danger to others, a student has the right to refuse treatment.
- When you sense reluctance, encourage the use of the Counseling and Wellness Center by suggesting that others have found it helpful, it is free to get an appointment, and they may want to at least try going for one session.
- Check back with the student to see if they are doing better, especially when they have declined the initial suggestion of treatment.
- Remember, whenever you are in doubt, the therapists at the Counseling and Wellness Center are available for consultation, which can be done over the telephone or in person. Feel free to call us with your concerns. You as faculty are a valuable referral resource, and we want to work with you in any way we can.

Counseling and Wellness Center Staff, 2024-2025

- Haben Abraham, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Director (860-297-4127)
- Elliott Lacki, Psy.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist, (860-297-2442)
- Diandra Barnes, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, (860-297-2419)
- Nelis Bido-Jimenez, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, (860-297-2412)
- Lauren Cooper, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, (860-297-5197)
- Jessica Wilde, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, (860-297-2566)
- Elif Abedin, BA, Office Manager and CWC Main Phone (860- 297-2415)
- Eliza Hedegaard, APRN, Psychiatric Consultant (860-297-2415).
- Web Site: <https://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/HealthWellness/counseling/>

Responding to Students in Emotional Distress

Responding to Anxiety

- One of the most common problems facing college students is anxiety. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, anxiety disorders affect forty million adults (18% of the U.S. population), but only about one-third of those receive treatment. Certainly, the added pressures of being in an unfamiliar environment, being away from home and the stress of wanting to do well in college can overwhelm students. Anxiety disorders are among the most common or frequently occurring mental disorders. Typically, anxiety disorders involve disturbances in mood, thinking, behavior, and physiological activity. In college students, they may take many forms. Often, they present as adjustment disorders with anxious features, test/performance anxiety, social phobia, and substance-induced anxiety disorders. Depression, anxiety disorders, and panic disorders often run in families. Therefore, genetics, biochemical, and environmental factors may all be involved. It is important to remember that with help the symptoms are treatable and one can learn alternative ways of coping with anxiety. It may help to tell students not to try to pretend that it will simply go away on its own.
- Of course, some mild anxiety is appropriate regarding certain events like an exam, an important or new event like an interview, or speaking in front of an audience. It usually causes one to become more alert and to be prepared. However, when worry and anxiety become overwhelming and interfere with one's daily living and ability to cope effectively, then it is unhealthy and may require the intervention of a mental health professional. Panic attacks may be one way these overwhelming feelings of anxiety are expressed. Panic attacks are usually brief episodes of intense fear that present with physiological symptoms, such as heart palpitations, dizziness, stomach discomfort, etc., that occur unexpectedly in the absence of any external threat. They can occur in conjunction with social phobia, generalized anxiety, and major depression. Often an individual will recognize that the fear they are experiencing is excessive or unreasonable. However, they are unable to cope with the anxiety that is generated. At least two unexpected panic attacks with persistent concern or worry about further attacks, and changes in one's behavior to avoid or minimize the attacks that create difficulty in daily functioning is often a sign that there can be significant anxiety underlying the attacks. It is best to seek treatment early to help prevent it from progressing to later stages.
- There are many types of treatment approaches for dealing with anxiety, including various stress reduction and relaxation approaches, psychotherapy, and medication. If you suspect that a student is struggling with anxiety, referring them to the Counseling and Wellness Center for support may help motivate them to seek out treatment.

Responding to Depression

- Depression is often misunderstood but is more than just feeling blue or the usual difficulties of everyday living. It is a major problem in our society, on college campuses and elsewhere. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that over sixteen million people (7% of the U.S. population) had at least one major depressive episode in the United States last year, and about 20% of those develop psychotic symptoms. It is a very treatable condition. However, if left

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untreated, the symptoms may worsen and be more resistant to treatment. Most depressions are not something that you can simply “snap out of.” It is often this very notion of feeling “down or blue” and unable to get yourself out of the slump that alerts people to the possibility that there is more going on that requires intervention.

- Some of the most common symptoms include a prolonged sense of sadness or moodiness, irritability or anger, anxiety, difficulty sleeping which may include sleeping too much, having difficulty falling asleep, early morning awakening, etc.; loss of appetite or an increase in appetite; difficulty concentrating, forgetfulness, lack of desire or motivation to engage in usually pleasurable activities, social withdrawal, chronic worry, feelings of despair, hopelessness and possibly thoughts of suicide. If someone is experiencing feelings of hopelessness and thoughts of suicide, they need immediate attention. If any of the other symptoms have persisted for over two weeks consistently, then counseling is strongly recommended.
- All the causes of depression are not known, however, there are biological and emotional factors that can increase the likelihood that someone might develop depression. Research has shown that there is a genetic component to depression and that it does run in families. Certain life events may trigger a depressive episode such as losses and separations like deaths, moving away, divorce, romantic break-ups, sexual, physical, or emotional abuse, chronic illnesses, and abuse of alcohol and drugs. Some certain medical conditions and medications can also cause depression such as thyroid disorders, diabetes, and some others. An unrecognized depression can lead to poor academic and work performance. Students may at times find that they do not have the energy or motivation to attend classes, or they may find it difficult to concentrate or focus on their work.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center can help students sort out what may be going on and provide appropriate help. If you sense the student is hesitant about seeking out treatment, telling them that other students with similar struggles have experienced success with treatment may help motivate them to get help.

Responding to Eating Disorders

- While many college students know something about the major eating disorders, anorexia nervosa (restricting food) and bulimia nervosa (purging, often with bingeing), there is also much misinformation available. Also, other important eating issues cause problems for many students.
- Eating disorders can be confusing and misunderstood by parents, faculty, peers, and even the student. (While more women than men struggle with eating disorders, 15% identify as male.)
- Here are some general facts about eating disorders:
- The causes of the eating disorder usually are present years before there are symptoms
- Individuals with significant eating disorders are not being stubborn or controlling – they really cannot easily stop the behaviors even though they often want desperately to do so.
- Talking with a student about what you notice will not make them worse.
- Even if a student denies that there is a problem, expressing concern in a supportive, non-judgmental way can often lead later to them getting some help.
- Students struggling with eating disorders often have a secondary problem with depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or other emotional disorder.

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- Students who you believe have lost a significant amount of weight or who may be purging (with vomiting, laxative abuse, etc.) excessively (often multiple times each day) should be brought to the attention of the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415), the Health Center (860-297-2018), or the Dean of Students (860-297-2156), since these conditions can be very serious physically and can ultimately lead to serious medical complications (e.g., sterility, heart disease, kidney or liver disease, or death).
 - At the same time, students may often experience these disorders and remain in acceptable health, so it is often a complicated issue to get them into treatment since they have a right to refuse treatment of any kind unless they are in imminent danger.
- The Counseling and Wellness Center is happy to consult with faculty about questions they have. Again, please understand that we cannot discuss specific students, nor indicate that a particular student is or is not in treatment in the Center without a specific release signed by the student.

Responding to Psychotic Disorders

- In rare cases, students at Trinity or elsewhere may experience a psychotic episode and become quite detached from reality. This detachment may be responding to hallucinations, delusions, or other strange behaviors. Here, as in all cases, if there is imminent danger to the student or someone else, call 911 or Campus Safety first, erring always on the side of caution. In the absence of apparent imminent danger, the Counseling and Wellness Center will provide whatever help is required and will help mobilize the resources appropriate to the situation. When you call the Counseling and Wellness Center, be sure to tell the person who answers the nature of the situation and your sense of its urgency.

Responding to Suicide Possibility

- Sometimes emotional distress may become seriously debilitating and can lead to self-destructive thoughts and behaviors as a way of escaping emotional pain. Although suicide is a rare event, it is the second leading cause of death among college students. Suicidal states are often associated with major depression, acute anxiety with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and bipolar disorder. Those who abuse alcohol or drugs have an increased risk of causing serious harm to themselves, including death even if their intentions were just to make a gesture. A student who confides in someone that they are feeling suicidal is often ambivalent about suicide and open to discussion and help. Those at high risk usually have a specific plan (and may refuse to tell you their plan), have the lethal means (e.g., medication, weapons, etc.), and tend to be or feel isolated.

What to look for:

- Any expression of suicidal thoughts which may be verbal or in written material:
- Pessimistic view of the future
- Intense feelings of hopelessness, especially with anxiety, alienation, and isolation.

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- Frequent talk of death as a means of escape from distress
- Previous suicide attempts
- Personal or family history of depression and/or suicide attempts
- Substance abuse
- History of self-mutilation

What you can do:

- All threats of suicide should be taken seriously (do not assume this is just attention-seeking behavior)
- Talk to the student in private or in a secure area
- Listen attentively and empathically (this does not have to mean you agree with their perspective)
- Keep your limits in mind; do not get more involved in the student's life than is comfortable or appropriate
- Those who engage in self-harming behaviors like cutting, burning, etc. are not actively suicidal but still need treatment.
- Remain calm and take the lead, ask the student directly about feelings and plans
- Asking them about suicide will not put the idea in their head if it is not there already
- Express care and concern and assure the student that you will help them reach a professional.
- Call Campus Safety (860-297-2222) and/or 911 if the student is in immediate danger, the
- The student will be taken to the emergency room for evaluation
- Escort the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center, if possible, for immediate attention
- If you feel overwhelmed or unprepared to help a student that you think may be suicidal, call the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156) or the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415).

What to avoid:

- Minimizing the situation. All threats must be taken seriously.
- Arguing with a suicidal student about the merits of living
- Allowing friends to assume responsibility for the student without getting input from a professional.
- Assuming the family knows that the student has suicidal thoughts or is in this much distress.

Responding to Aggressive, Threatening, or Potentially Violent Students

- Aggression may involve vague or specific threats of harm, verbal abuse, intimidation, physical abuse, and property violence. Statements or behaviors that cause you to feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or troubled are potential warning signs. It is difficult to predict aggression and violence. However, the following may be indicators of potential violence:
 - Paranoia and/or mistrust
 - Prior history of violence or abuse
 - History of substance abuse
 - Impulse control problems

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- Talk of violence or revenge comments
- Fascination with weapons
- Writings that over-focus on violence or seem inappropriately out of context

What you can do:

- Assess your level of safety. Call 911 or Campus Safety (860-297-2222) if you feel any immediate danger.
- If you feel comfortable and that it is appropriate to stay with the student, remain in an open area with a visible means of escape
- Enlist the help of a co-worker or other available person.
- In a calm but firm manner explain to the student the behaviors that are unacceptable and offer them the opportunity to talk it through with a third party.
- Stay calm and set limits, it will convey that you are in control.
- Use a time-out strategy if the student remains agitated or uncooperative (ask them to reschedule a meeting later when both of you have had a chance to calm down and think things over)
- Make sure a rescheduled meeting is done with the assistance of someone or in a neutral setting.
- Consult with the Dean of Student's Office (860-297-2156) or the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415)

What to avoid:

- Remaining in a situation in which you feel unsafe.
- Meeting alone or in a crowded space with a student who is threatening or aggressive.
- Having a dismissive demeanor
- Do not engage in a discussion or behaviors that may escalate anxiety or aggression.
- Ignoring signs that a student's anger is escalating.
- Ignoring a gut feeling that you are in danger.

Responding to Survivors of Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse is any sexual contact that is initiated with a person without consent. Informed consent cannot be given by an individual who is intoxicated or otherwise incapacitated. Prior sexual contact or consent does not imply ongoing future consent. Initial expressions of interest or flirtation do not constitute consent. Although most sexual assaults are committed by men against women, men can be assaulted by women and same-sex assaults also occur. Sexual assault may include any of the following:
 - Completed or attempted rape
 - Threats of rape
 - Sexual coercion
 - Unwanted sexual contact with force or threat of force

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- Unwanted sexual contact without consent including inappropriate touching, talk, or behavior such as exposing oneself, etc.

What you can do:

- Listen empathically and without judgment, be aware that victims can feel much shame and anger
- Ask if they feel they are still in danger from the perpetrator(s), and if so, you or the student should contact campus safety (860-297-2222) and/or the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156).
- If the assault was recent, ask the student if they need immediate medical attention and refer them to the Health Center (860-297-2018) or emergency room.
- Refer to or escort the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center or the Women and Gender Resource Action Center (860-297-2408) for assistance.
- Ask that a SART member (Sexual Assault Response Team) accompany the person to needed services. Students may also call the New Britain YWCA/SACS (860)-505-0469 (English) or 1-888-568-8332 (Spanish) who will send a volunteer to the hospital as an advocate for the student.
- Students can also utilize the 24-hour hotline for the State of Connecticut at (888-999-5545).
- Let the student know that they have options about reporting, getting help, etc., that can be discussed, and be open to the possibility that the student may not want to report
- If the student needs help in dealing with academic issues because of the assault, or if they want to know more about their options, call the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156).

What to avoid:

- Expressing judgment even when high-risk behaviors on the part of the victim were involved (e.g., intoxication)
- Pressuring the student to call the police or take a specific action

Responding to Students Who are Victims of Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment is defined as non-consensual sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other sexually related verbal or physical conduct on or off campus, when submission is made a condition of an individual's education or employment, or adversely interferes or with a person's education or employment. Trinity College affirms and upholds a policy that rejects the abuse of power through sexual harassment of students by faculty and discourages amorous relationships between faculty and students especially when the faculty member has responsibility for the student through teaching, advising, departmental, committee, or other professional obligations (*Trinity College Handbook*).

What you can do:

- Listen without judgment.

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- Ask the student to speak candidly with the Dean of Faculty or the Dean of Students.
- Refer them to the Counseling and Wellness Center.
- Refer them to the Title IX Coordinator (860.297.2688)
- Refer them to the Women and Gender Resource Action Center.
- Let them know that all informal communication will be verbal and one-on-one without confrontation of the faculty member, until a formal complaint is made using the guidelines found in Appendix A.4 of the Faculty Manual.

What to avoid:

- Making judgments about the student or the faculty/staff member
- Minimizing the situation
- Choosing sides
- Talking with others about discussions held in confidence

Responding to Victims of an Abusive Dating Relationship

- **Abusive relationships:**
 - Are more prevalent in a student population than many think
 - Can include emotional, physical, and sexual abuse
 - Are often characterized by extreme jealousy, intense anger, sexual coercion, verbal abuse,
 - Threats of abuse, physical violence, power, and control games
 - Typically worsens over time
 - Typically escalates if the abuser perceives a threat to the relations
 -

Cycle of Abuse

Warning signs

- Evidence of jealous, controlling, or possessive behavior
- Evidence of isolation from family and/or friend
- Evidence of alcohol or drug use or abuse in one or both parties
- History of other abusive relationships
- Family and friends have verbalized concern about the relationship
- Evidence of worry about partner's reactions to things and assuming responsibility for their behaviors
- Evidence of angry outbursts or rage by partner
- Evidence of fear of abandonment by partner
- Evidence of a pattern of many breakups with the partner or fear of leaving the relationship

What you can do

- Arrange to meet with the student one-on-one
- Verbalize concern about the student's well-being and safety
- Understand that the student may not recognize the relationship as abusive

Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress

- Understand that there is often a significant level of denial that is difficult to change
- Refer the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415) or a SART member.
- Encourage the student to gain support from friends and family

What to avoid

- Minimizing the situation
- Expecting the student to terminate the relationship
- Pressuring the student to take action

Responding to Substance Abuse

- **Signs that a student may have an alcohol problem may include:**
 - Failure to fulfill major work, home, or school obligations
 - Poor work performance as indicated by class absences, low grades, or school-related disciplinary problems
 - Recurrent use of alcohol despite concerns by friends or family
 - Use of alcohol in potentially dangerous situations, such as driving
 - Legal troubles related to the use of alcohol, such as being arrested for driving while intoxicated or arrested for fighting while intoxicated
 - Continued use despite academic or social problems
 - Changes in mood, such as depression or irritability
 - Physical or mental difficulties, such as poor memory, inability to concentrate, bloodshot eyes, slurring of speech or uncoordinated movement
- **Signs that a student may have a drug problem may include:**
 - Evidence of withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, tremors, headaches, anxiety, sleep difficulties, or agitation
 - Neglecting school and/or work obligations
 - Using the drug rather than engaging in other activities
 - Engaging in high-risk behaviors while under the influence of the drug
 - Continued use despite academic or social problems
 - Legal troubles related to the use of the drug, such as arrests for driving under the influence of the drug or breach of peace.

What you can do

- Treat the situation as serious
- Express your concern about what behaviors and/or changes you have observed
- Verbalize your concern for the student's well-being and safety
- Encourage the student to seek help
- Understand that substance users typically are in a state of denial and are unable to recognize or fully comprehend the seriousness of their use or potential life-threatening consequences
- Refer the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415)

Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress

Responding to Hate Crimes/Incidents

Defined as “a crime which in whole or part is motivated by the offender's bias toward the victim's status” (Community Relations Service, 2000). A hate incident is “an action in which a person is made aware that their status is offensive to another, but does not rise to the level of a crime” (Community Relations Service, 2000). Motivation is to hurt or intimidate an individual(s). Use of verbal threats, physical violence, vandalism, or even weapons to incite fear in individuals because of their race, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.....

What you can do

- Arrange to meet with the student one-on-one
- Understand that they will experience a range of feelings including anger, shame, and distress
- Report the incident to the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156)
- Explain to the student the importance of notifying Campus Safety, either directly, or by having the complaint-taker notify Campus Safety.
- Provide emotional support to the student by listening empathically to their experience
- Be aware of Trinity College’s Safe Zone Program, which creates safe spaces for individuals in the community to seek information, resources, and open-minded people. Over 300 faculty, staff, administration, and students have participated in Safe Zone trainings, and display a Safe Zone sticker on their office/dorm door.
- Refer the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415), their academic advisor, the Chaplain’s Office (860-297-2013), or the Multicultural Affairs Office (860-297-4251) as appropriate

What to avoid

- Minimizing the significance of this situation
- Assuming that you understand what they are experiencing based on something you experienced in your own life
- Getting caught up in the legalities of the situation

Responding to Victims of Hazing

Some basic information about hazing

- Hazing is strictly prohibited at Trinity College. Hazing has been defined by the College as: “any action or situation involving a pledge, new or associate member, affiliate, guest, or neophyte of any student organization or athletic team that produces mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule.” Hazing behaviors can lead to physical or emotional injuries. In serious cases, hazing has led to death.
- A student may be unaware that what is going on is considered hazing.
- Alcohol is often involved.

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- Some examples of hazing incidents include sexual coercion, beatings, binge drinking, use of illicit substances, restrictions on sleep, eating, or hygiene, being required to be a personal servant, activities that interfere with academic pursuits, or public humiliation.
 - Hazing is illegal in the state of Connecticut.

What you can do

- Arrange to meet with the student one-on-one
- Understand that the student may not label the behaviors as hazing or may be hesitant to report what is happening
- Encourage the student to report what is happening to the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156) and Campus Safety (860-297-2222)
- Encourage the student to report what is happening to the appropriate organization on campus:
- Athletics Department- Drew Galbraith, Director (860-297-2055), or Student Activities (860-297-2011)
- Refer the student to the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415), if appropriate.

Learning Disabilities Information and Procedures for Faculty and Staff

- Trinity College follows Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Recognized disabilities which merit accommodation in the academic setting can be related to physical limitations, psychological conditions and learning differences. The Counseling and Wellness Center can make referrals to qualified professionals related to psychological conditions and referrals to the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC) regarding learning differences. We also review previous testing and make appropriate recommendations to SARC regarding accommodation requests.
- Trinity College works with students with disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations and to assist them in any way possible. The Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415), the Coordinator of SARC (860-297-4025), the Dean of Students Office (297-2156), the Health Center (860- 297-2018), and other resources are available to assist students. While Trinity encourages its students to develop self-advocacy skills, these offices provide support and assistance throughout the student's years at the College.
- The ADA requires organizations to make "reasonable accommodations" for individuals who have known physical or mental disabilities and who are "otherwise qualified." Accommodation requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and vary from student to student. Some students have received informal accommodations previously without being formally diagnosed through standardized testing (such as neuropsychological testing), which may create some expectations in college that they will automatically be approved. Specifically, a high school IEP or 504 plan is often not adequate documentation for college level accommodations.

Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress

What you can expect as a faculty member

- At Trinity, our set of criteria for accommodation approval is the same as those at most other colleges and universities and is based on Federal Laws and the ADA guidelines. Students submit their request for accommodation together with current supporting documentation to the Coordinator of SARC before or after the initial intake appointment. Sometimes the information is forwarded to the Counseling and Wellness Center or Health Center for review.
- As a first step, we ask the student to contact SARC for an intake appointment, in-person or on zoom. If the request is approved, we will provide the student with the documentation outlining their accommodation(s). Each student is informed that it is their responsibility to present this information through the Accessible Information Management System (AIMS) to their professors at the beginning of each semester and discuss how these accommodations will be met in each class.
- Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their professors to plan the implementation of accommodations.
- Although student accommodations are individual, typical accommodations may include some of the following (This is not an exhaustive list.)
- Extended time on exams: faculty members arrange for students to be given time and a half or double time (depending on the accommodation) to complete their examinations. Typical reasons for this accommodation: students have learning disabilities that compromise their processing speed; students have a reading disability and need additional time to process the information they are reading; students have an attentional disorder, making the ability to focus on the task at hand challenging.
- Alternative, quiet spaces for exams: faculty members arrange for students to complete exams in a separate, quiet room (this could be the testing center). Typical reason for this accommodation: students have an attentional disorder, making the ability to focus difficult with outside distractions.
- Use of a laptop for notetaking: students may use their laptop during lectures for notetaking. Typical reason for this accommodation: students with a slower processing speed may find it challenging to keep up with handwritten notes.
- Access to audiobooks: students are granted access to the college's Bookshare account to obtain audio copies of their textbooks. Typical reasons for this accommodation: students with reading disorders may find it challenging to comprehend the written word; students with dyslexia may become distracted by their compensation strategies that they miss the main point of the text.
- Please note that the "typical reasons" listed are by no means an exhaustive list of potential difficulties. Rather, the most common reasons have been listed to help identify what learning disabilities a student may be struggling with. It is the responsibility of the student to meet with faculty and arrange for the implementation of any approved accommodation in a timely manner.
- The provision of accommodation is required when the faculty member has been notified about the formal accommodation. In addition, the student should meet with each instructor to discuss the specifics of the accommodation(s).
- If a faculty member has any questions about accommodations, how they might be fulfilled, problems in compliance, or questions about whether a student has a particular accommodation,

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they should contact the SARC Coordinator (860-297-4025), the Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156) or the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415). There is more information about accommodations and how to implement them on the website,

<http://www.trincoll.edu/StudentLife/StudentAccessibilityResources/Pages/default.aspx>

- Students may also talk with their advisor or trusted teacher before applying for accommodation. The following guidance may help sort out how to be most helpful to your students.

Academic Accommodation Procedures for Students

- You could inform students who speak with you about learning differences to email SARC at SARC@trincoll.edu to set up an intake appointment. This is the first and most important step to take if a student expresses challenges in the classroom.
- "Documenting Your Disability" to avoid problems by ensuring the documentation meets our requirements.
- Students should notify SARC as soon as possible if they may require special housing or physical access. All requests for special housing or dining arrangements should be submitted with appropriate documentation to the Coordinator of SARC. Requests for special housing consideration should be submitted well before the housing lottery. Special housing accommodations are only approved for a significant, documented disability. Regarding meal plan removal accommodations, most dietary needs can be met within the existing meal plan. All students will be asked to submit an application for this request along with documentation for any housing or meal plan requests. Most importantly, the intake meeting is the first step in the application process.
- After the intake appointment occurs and documentation is submitted to the Coordinator of SARC, your request will be reviewed within 10 days and any appropriate and reasonable accommodation will be determined.
- If a student qualifies for academic accommodations, they will be contacted with instructions on how to notify their professors. This is a key step to ensure that accommodations are implemented.
- It is the student's responsibility to notify faculty of their accommodations no less than 10 days from when they would like their accommodation(s) to take effect. If this step does not occur, then accommodations might not be implemented in a timely manner.
- Students should notify SARC and/or the Dean of the Students' Office if they are having any difficulties obtaining accommodation(s) or if the accommodation(s) received does not meet their needs.
- Students should contact the Dean or SARC at any time if they encounter obstacles or want to share successes! The Dean will act as mediator should any conflicts arise in securing accommodations. Note that it is the student's responsibility to notify SARC and/or the Dean if the accommodation received does not meet their needs.

Recognizing and Helping Students in Distress

What you can do

- If the student has concerns, refer them to the SARC for next steps.
- Encourage students to utilize other resources on campus for academic support, including the
- Dean of Students Office (860-297-2156), the Counseling and Wellness Center (860-297-2415), the Health Center (860-297-2018) the Writing Center (860-297-2468), and the Math Center (860-297-5316).

Campus Resources and Mobile Contacts

- Immediate Emergencies- 911
- Campus Safety 860.297.2222
- Athletic Department 860-297-2057
- Residential Life 860-297-2305
- Career Development 860-297-2080
- Chaplain's Office 860-297-2013
- Computing Center Help Desk 860-297-2100
- Coordinator of Accessibility Resources 860-297-4025
- Counseling and Wellness Center 860-297-2415
- First Year Academic Experience 860-297-5331 or firstyear-program@trincoll.edu
- Dean of Students Office 860-297-2156
- Health Center 860-297-2018
- Quantitative Center 860-297-2522
- Multicultural Affairs 860-297-4251
- Legal Counsel 860-297-2253
- Queer Resource Center 860-297-2582 or qrc@trincoll.edu
- Student Activities 860 297-2171
- Title IX Coordinator 860.297.2688
- Women & Gender Resource Action Center 860-297-2408
- Writing Center 860-297-2468

Additional Mobile Sources to Share:

- *If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, **call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: at 988 or text HOME to 741741** from anywhere in the USA, anytime, about any type of crisis.*
- *If you are a young person of color who is feeling stressed, depressed, and/or anxious; please **text STEVE to 741741** to connect with a trained crisis counselor 24/7.*
- *If you are a young person in the LGBTQ+ community and are feeling stressed, depressed, and/or anxious; please **call 1-866-488-7386 or text START to 678-678.***

Referral and Response Flowchart

Yellow: Student shares multiple stressors but there is no risk regarding safety, etc. It is recommended you breathe, allow yourself to sit in the discomfort with the student, and consider the broader network of care that can wrap around as support. Potentially refer to the Deans Office, Student Life Office, SARC, or a mentor program depending on their need. Follow up with them in a week as a check-in.

Orange: Student is actively in distress, there is some risk involved and you still have concerns for their well-being. Please refer to the CWC, 860.297.2415, or encourage the student to utilize our on-call services by calling Campus Safety to be connected to an on-call clinician at 860.297.2222. If the student prefers an off-campus crisis line, please direct them to call or text **988**, the Crisis Prevention Hotline. You can also submit an online Emotional/Wellbeing Referral on the Campus Safety website and this will be routed to our office for intervention.

Red: If the student is at imminent risk, please call 911 and Campus Safety at 860.297.2222 for assistance. It is recommended you call the Purple Pod (psychiatric unit at 860.972.8015) at the Institute of Living to give notice that a distressed student is being transported there. The Maxient report is generated for the appropriate responders. Student Illness Notifications are sent as a follow-up to appropriate faculty and staff.

