

Managing Difficult Students

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What are *your* concerns?

Campus Mental Health: A New Reality

- 48% so depressed they have trouble functioning
- 15% were diagnosed with depression
- 9% of students seriously considered suicide in the prior 12 months
- 20% of students meet criteria for substance use disorder
- 23% of students coming to college counseling centers are on psychiatric medication
- Up to 25% of college woman may become the victim of sexual assault

Sources: APA, ACHA, AAUCCD

Understanding the Contemporary DU Student

- 21% Meet criteria for Depression or Anxiety
- 7% Seriously considered suicide
- 25% Had prior mental health treatment
- 45% Reported binge drinking in past 2 weeks
- 44 Students transported for detox in Winter Quarter
- 44% Report academic interference from mental health issues or concerns
- 40% Would talk with a professor about personal or mental health concerns



Source: 2012 "Health Minds" Survey; Campus Safety data

Why This Increase ?

- Advent of new psychiatric medications
- Reduced stigma of mental illness
- Greater recognition of mental health needs
- ADA requirements

Student Examples

- International graduate student displaying irrational and self-injurious behavior
- Undergraduate transported to hospital with extraordinary blood alcohol level
- Graduate with history of serious alcohol abuse, odd behavior, absence from class
- Undergraduate who writes troubling email to his professor with vague threats

Worse Case Scenario

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6LfTid4IMY>

Recognizing the “Distressed” Student

- Significant behavioral change
- Intimidating emails
- Argumentative or agitated
- Poor hygiene
- Dramatic academic decline
- Peculiar or bizarre behavior
- Veiled or direct threats
- Troubling essays



Assist With Your HEART

- **H**ear what the student is saying
- **E**mpathize with student's situation
- **A**ssess what the student's needs are
- **R**efers to campus resources
- **T**ell the appropriate campus official or department

Approaching the Student

- Don't ignore the problem
- Arrange a private time to talk
- Be supportive and respectful
- Don't get into arguments
- Don't get caught up in their emotional state
- Acknowledge their distress
- Ask how you can be helpful
- Don't label or diagnose
- Assess for self-harm
- Make referrals- walk with them if needed



Are College Campuses Dangerous?

- Risk of violence presented by mental illness is low
- Mentally ill more likely to be victims than perpetrators
- College victimization lower than surrounding society
- Students report higher rate of victimization before college than during it
- Murder rate on campus far lower than society
(.28 vs. 5.5 per 100,000)

Source: www.garypavela.com

How We View It

“Campus Security Begins with Caring”

Morton Silverman

Commentary in *The Chronicle*

Case Examples

Health and Counseling Center

The mission of the HCC is to provide exceptional, inclusive, integrated health care.

We promote student success and wellness through education, advocacy, consultation and outreach to the University of Denver community.



Health and Counseling Center

- Health Service

Primary Care, Laboratory, Specialty care, Referral

- Counseling Center

Individual, Group, Couples Counseling, Outreach, Consultation, EAP

- Center for Advocacy, Prevention & Empowerment

(formerly Gender Violence Education and Support Services)

Victim Advocacy, Education, Prevention, Outreach

- Health Promotion

Public health, prevention, education, HyPE peer education

Pioneers Care

- Student Outreach and Support (undergraduate)
- Office of Graduate Studies (graduate)

The mission of Student Outreach & Support is to help students succeed from the time they are accepted to the time they graduate.

Our aim is to help them become better informed of the resources on campus so they can focus on their classes, make important decisions about their futures and ultimately achieve their goals of earning college degrees from the University of Denver.

Relevant DU Policies & Resources

- CAT-Consultation & Assessment Team
- CIRT-Critical Incident Response Team
- Undergraduate & Graduate
 - Medical Leave of Absence Policy
 - Honor Code
 - Academic Disruption
- Graduate Only
 - Graduate policy manual



You Are Not Alone!

- Student Life has a range of support services available to help **students** be successful and maximize their learning potential
- Student Life has a range of support services available to help **faculty** in their efforts to maximize their students' learning potential.