

Responding & Referring Someone in Distress

ROSE STATE COLLEGE

Professors teaching in the classroom have the first opportunity to observe a student who may be in distress or crisis. These suggestions are intended to guide you in extending a helping hand. Keep in mind, you are not required to reach out to a troubled student; this is your choice. If you have questions whether the situation warrants a discussion with a student, you may first choose to contact the counseling center. If the troubled student's behavior is impacting the ability of other students to learn, please contact and consult with your Academic Dean, who can advise you on subsequent steps. As always, in an emergency, please call 911 and campus security.

Assisting Guidelines:

Consider these guidelines when you choose to approach a student, or if a student reaches out to you. These suggestions can make the experience more comfortable for you and more helpful for the student.

1. Ensure privacy when you talk and choose a time when you are not rushed. If you are concerned about your safety or about anyone's behavior being misinterpreted, ask your Dean or a trusted colleague to join you.

WHAT TO DO

1. Be prepared before you intervene. Have the counseling pamphlet or referral information ready.
2. Ensure privacy when you talk and choose a time when you are not rushed. If you are concerned about your safety or about anyone's behavior being misinterpreted, ask your Dean or a trusted colleague to join you.
3. Express concern in specific, nonjudgmental terms ("I noticed you haven't been to class in three weeks" as opposed to "Where have you been?")
4. Listen to the student in a sensitive, non-threatening way.
5. Clarify your understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing the student's responses.
6. Communicate hope by reminding the student that though you may not have the solutions, there are always options, and people willing to help.
7. Recommend resources appropriate to the problem. These are listed on the back of this document.
8. Maintain clarity about what you can and cannot do.
9. Remember that showing the student respect does not mean you agree with their choices or behavior.
10. Follow up as appropriate.

Keep in mind:

The student may not immediately welcome or act on your recommendation, but you may have planted a seed that will blossom later.

WHAT TO AVOID

1. Don't judge, evaluate or criticize.
2. Don't be a hero; recognize the limits of your role.
3. Don't give special consideration to a student unless you would do this for any other student.
4. Don't make promises you cannot keep.
5. Don't promise confidentiality in all circumstances. If the student or others are in danger you must act on the information.
6. Don't be afraid to intervene for fear you may say the wrong thing. Saying nothing to a suffering person is almost always worse.

CONSULTATION

If at any point in the process you need to consult with one of the Special Services counseling staff, please do not hesitate to call 733-7373.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Rose State College Counseling Services, a function of the Special Services office adheres to professional codes of ethics. All personal information discussed in counseling sessions is treated as confidential within the center, with certain legally mandated exceptions. Strict confidentiality provides an environment where the counselee can trust the therapist and feel safe to deal with their own personal problems and concerns.

Important Emergency and Hotline Numbers:

**Serious or Life Threatening Emergency
Call 911 Immediately**

Campus Security Office (24 Hour Service) 733-7313

Metro Emergency Numbers:

Heartline Hotline:	211 OR 1-405-848-2273
Domestic Violence Hotline:	1-405-917-9922
YWCA Rape Hotline:	1-405-943-RAPE
Oklahoma Crisis Hotline:	1-800-522-9054
Suicide Hotline:	1-800-SUICIDE
Emergency (Police, Fire, Medical):	911

Rose State College Non-Emergency Numbers:

Office of Student Conduct:	736-0355
Campus Security Office (24 Hr Service):	733-7313
Counseling Services:	733-7373