

Distressed and Disruptive Behavior

Behaviors to look for:

Be aware of the following indicators of distress. Look for groupings, frequency, duration and severity—not just isolated symptoms.

If you or someone is in immediate danger, call Campus Public Safety at 503-838-9000 and/or 911.



Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion
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Academic Indicators	Physical Indicators	Psychological	Safety Risk Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sudden decline in quality of work and grades ✓ Repeated absences ✓ Disorganized performance ✓ Multiple requests for extensions ✓ Overly demanding of faculty and staff time and attention ✓ Bizarre content in writings or presentations ✓ You find yourself doing more personal rather than academic counseling during office hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Marked changes in physical appearance including deterioration in grooming, hygiene, or weight loss/gain ✓ Excessive fatigue/sleep disturbance ✓ Intoxication, hangovers, or smelling of alcohol ✓ Disoriented or “out of it” ✓ Garbled, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech ✓ Behavior is out of context or bizarre ✓ Delusions and paranoia ✓ Injuries consistent with self-harm or abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-disclosure of personal distress such as family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief ✓ Unusual/disproportional emotional response to events ✓ Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions ✓ Irritability or unusual apathy ✓ Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation) ✓ Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unprovoked anger or hostility ✓ Physical violence (shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon) ✓ “Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others in-person or via email, phone, text, or social media ✓ Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations/violent behaviors — a “cry for help” ✓ Stalking or harassing ✓ Communicating threats via email, correspondence, texting or phone calls

Tips and Crisis Resources

Use the tips below to help you refer the student to one of the resources listed on the

- ✓ **Safety First:** The welfare of the campus community is the top priority when a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior. Do not hesitate to call Campus Public Safety and/or 911.
- ✓ **Listen Sensitively and Carefully:** Use a non-confrontational approach and a calm voice. Avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.
- ✓ **Be Proactive:** Address disruptive behavior immediately.
- ✓ **Be Direct:** Ask students if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or if they have thoughts of harming themselves or others.
- ✓ **Follow Through:** Guide the student to the identified resource. Afterward, complete a student of concern report, which can be found at wou.edu/reporting-forms or WOU Portal.

Resources for Students

Campus Public Safety	503-838-9000
For concerns about students who may pose an immediate danger to self or others. Available 24/7.	
Student Health and Counseling Center	503-838-8313
For consultation about students of concern and for help connecting students to counseling or other resources. After hours, call Campus Public Safety.	
CARE Team	wou.edu/careteam
For campus support with distressed or disruptive students and for cross-departmental sharing of information.	

Local Services and Hotlines

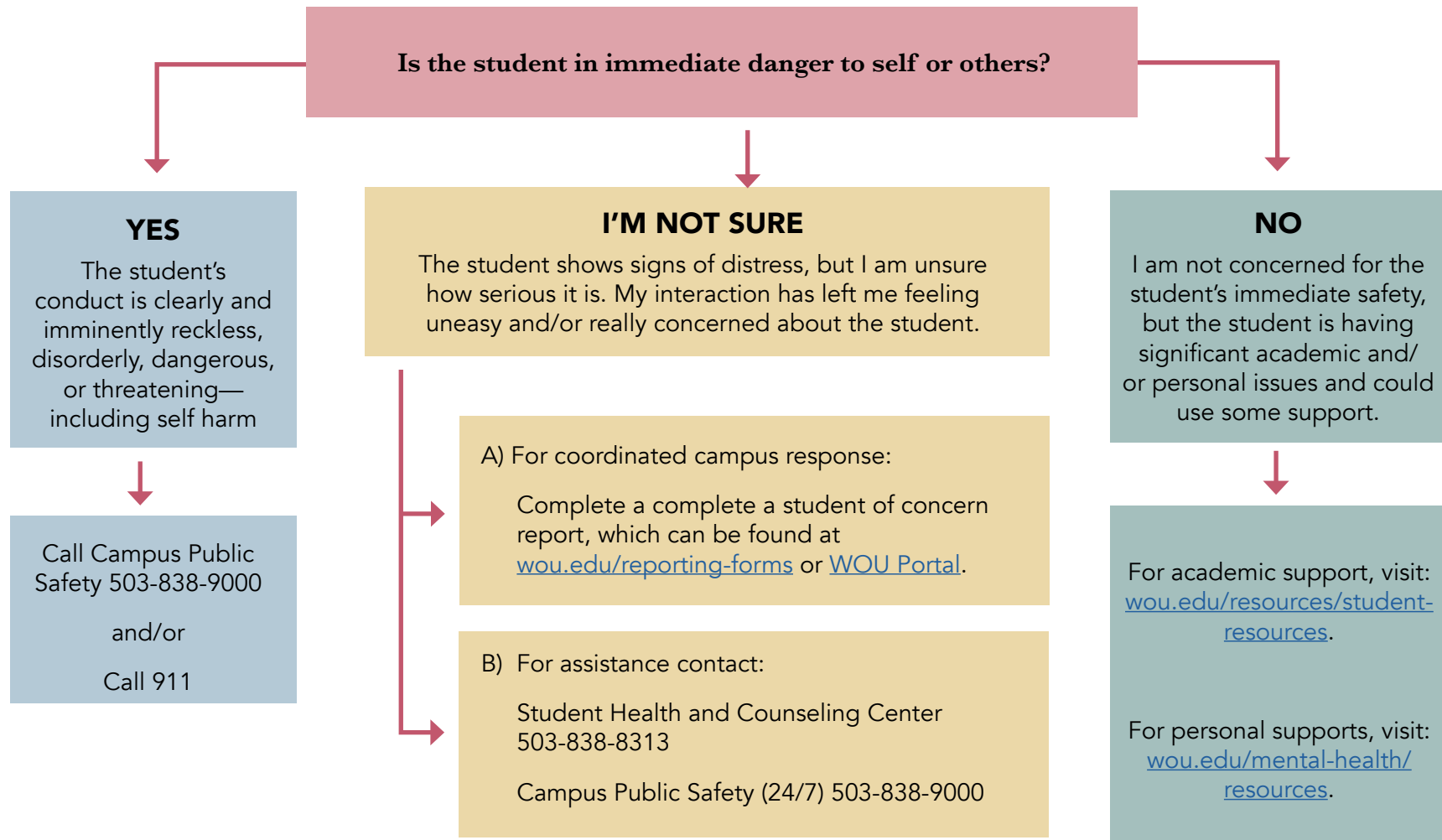
Corvallis (Benton County Mental Health)	541-766-6835
Crisis Number: 1-888-232-7192	
Dallas/Monmouth/Independence (Polk Co. Mental Health)	503-623-9289
After hours: 800-560-5833	
Salem/Keizer (Marion County Health Department)	503-588-5351
Crisis Number: 503-585-4949	
LGBT Youth – The Trevor Project	1-866-488-7386
Lifeline for Transgender people	877-565-8860
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255 (Press 1 for Veterans)
Ayuda En Español:	1-888-628-9454
Crisis Text Line	Text "HOME" to 741-741

Resources for Employees

Office of Human Resources	503-838-8490
Employee Assistance Plan (EAP)	800-433-2320
Available 24/7.	

Who To Contact:

Follow the chart to determine who to contact when faced with a disruptive or distressed student.



Compassion.

WOU faculty, staff, and student employees are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for Western Oregon University students in distress.

Both undergraduate and graduate students may feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless when faced with academic and life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to dysfunctional coping and other serious consequences.

You may be the first person to notice a student in distress because you have frequent and prolonged contact with them. The university, in collaboration with the CARE Team, requests that you act with compassion in your dealings with such students.

Action.

Students exhibiting troubling behaviors are likely having difficulties in various settings including the classroom, with roommates, with family, and even in social settings.

Trust your instincts and contact the listed resources if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened.

Change.

Sometimes students cannot, or will not turn to family or friends. Your expression of concern may be a critical factor in saving a student's academic career or even their life.

The purpose of this folder is to help you recognize symptoms of student distress and identify appropriate referrals to campus resources. If you want to learn more, attend a "Distressed and Disruptive Behavior" presentation and/or QPR Gatekeeper training.



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What about privacy?

Outside of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), protocols for responding to a student in distress dictate that an individual can not promise anonymity if they are a harm to themselves or others. SHCC counseling staff follow the same protocol. Information shared with an SHCC staff member is confidential in all other circumstances except the risk of harm to self or others.