Recognize the signs of a student in distress

Respond appropriately to the student in distress

Refer the student to campus support resources

If safety is an immediate concern, call 911 or University Police at 360-650-3911 without hesitation.

### Referral Tips

- **Use Active Listening**
  Make eye contact and give your full attention. Restate what the student says to make sure you understand what is causing their distress.

- **Ask Direct Questions**
  Don’t be afraid to directly ask the student if they are having thoughts of harming themselves or others. By asking, you are NOT instilling the thought.

- **Give Concrete Help**
  If comfortable doing so, offer to help them call a campus resource such as the Counseling Center or to walk with them to the resource office.

- **Inform Your Supervisor**
  Make sure to alert your supervisor/chair about your interaction. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety emergency.

- **Be Aware of Mandatory Reporting Requirements**
  If a student discloses an incident of sexual or gender-based harassment or assault, it must promptly be reported to Western’s Title IX Coordinator at 360-650-3307.

### Resources

**University Police**
- Emergencies: 911 or 360-650-3911
- Non-emergencies: 360-650-3555

**Counseling Center**
- 360-650-3164 (select option 1 for help after hours)

**Office of Student Life**
- 360-650-3706, M–F: 8AM–5PM

**Student Health Center**
- 360-650-3400, MTWF: 8:30AM–4PM; THUR: 9:30AM–4PM

**CASAS – Advocacy Services for Survivors of Sexual Violence**
- 360-650-3700, M–F: 8:30AM–4:30PM

**ADCAS – Alcohol & Other Drug Support Services**
- 360-650-6865, M–F: 8:30AM–4:30PM

**LGBTQ+ Western**
- 360-650-7500, M–F: 8AM–5PM

**Disability Access Center**
- 360-650-3083, M–F: 8AM–5PM

**Residence Life**
- 360-650-2960, M–F: 8:30AM–4:30PM

Information courtesy of Prevention and Wellness Services. Learn more at pws.wwu.edu/redfolder. To receive this information in an alternate format, contact pws@wwu.edu. AA/EO. Rev. 1/2020.
**RECOGNIZE**

**Signs of Distress**

- Sudden decline in academic performance
- Frequently missing classes or assignments
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations
- Monopolizing class discussion
- Disrupting class (e.g., yelling or cursing)
- Confrontations with peers or instructor
- Repeated requests for special consideration (e.g., deadline extensions, changes in requirements, grade changes)

- Increased illness
- Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g., poor hygiene, sudden weight gain/loss)
- Uncharacteristic behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
- Visibly intoxicated or smelling of alcohol or cannabis
- Rapid speech or excessively anxious or erratic behavior
- Excessive fatigue or sleeping in class
- Observable signs of injury (e.g., facial bruising or cuts)

- Self-disclosure of family problems, financial difficulties, or other personal distress
- Unusual or disproportionate emotional response to situations
- Excessive tearfulness
- Panic reactions
- Uncharacteristically troubled, confused, anxious, irritable, sad, hopeless
- Peers expressing concern for student

**Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not just isolated symptoms.**

**RESPOND**

**Appropriately**

*Is the student an imminent danger to self or others?*

*Does the student need immediate assistance?*

**NO**

**SAFETY IS NOT AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN.** However, the student is disrupting the living-learning environment, exhibiting several indicators of distress. I need more guidance.

**CALL THE OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE AT 360-650-3706.**

For additional mental health consultation, call the Counseling Center at 360-650-3164.

**NOT SURE**

**SAFETY IS NOT AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN.** However, the student is having serious academic and/or personal issues. I believe they could benefit from additional support and resources.

**REFER THE STUDENT TO THE RESOURCES ON THE BACK OF THIS FOLDER.**

**YES**

**SAFETY IS AN IMMEDIATE CONCERN.** The student is imminently dangerous and actively threatening harm to self or others.

**CALL 911 OR UNIVERSITY POLICE AT 360-650-3911 WITHOUT HESITATION.**