Recognizing and Helping Graduate and Undergraduate Students Needing Support or Experiencing Crisis or Distress



other and our community

Where do I start?

If you are concerned about a student, don't let uncertainty stop you from taking action to help. UMass Amherst is committed to supporting students. The UMatter team has developed this guide to help you Recognize, Respond to, Refer and Report concerns about your students. For additional information, talk to your supervisor or department chair and contact the Dean of Students Office at (413) 545-2684.

Responding to Students Needing Support or Experiencing Distress and Crisis

Listen sensitively and carefully

Vulnerable students need to be heard and helped. They may find it difficult to articulate their distress or hardship. Ask directly if they need support, if they feel their functioning is impaired, or if they have thoughts of harming themselves or others. Threats to harm self or others should be immediately reported to University Police at 413-545-3111 or call 911.

Trust your instinct to take action – Ask "Is everything okay?"

If you are concerned about a student, consult your department chair, supervisor and the Dean of Students Office. Promptly report safety concerns and Student Conduct Code violations.

Stay safe

If a student displays threatening or potentially violent behavior, your and the student's safety and the welfare of the campus community are the top priorities. Coordinated professional help and follow-up care are effective ways to prevent suicide and violence.

De-escalate and support

Distressed students can be sensitive. Avoid threatening, potentially embarrassing, or intimidating statements. Help students connect with the resources they need.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows faculty and staff to discuss student health and safety concerns with relevant campus offices trained to handle situations with sensitivity and care. Taking appropriate action does not violate a student's privacy.

Clarify your expectations

Your syllabus can send a positive signal of support for students' learning and well-being and set early limits on disruptive or self-destructive behaviors. Consider including a section with support resources and encourage students to seek help when they need it. Remind students of support resources and standards/ expectations for conduct. Familiarize yourself with the guiding language for student behavior in the Code of Student Conduct.

Share what you know

Students in hardship are sometimes reluctant to share their status. Sharing what you know allows the appropriate university staff to proactively reach out with support and resources. State and federal laws and university policies require reporting in many crisis situations. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows faculty and staff to discuss student health and safety concerns with relevant campus offices trained to handle situations with sensitivity and care. Taking appropriate action does not violate a student's privacy. Learn about FERPA at umass.edu/it/support/spire/about-ferpa-certification.

Always report serious or persistent behavior

Your firsthand knowledge and personal connection to a student is valuable in understanding and appropriately responding to their situation. To coordinate a timely response, report serious or persistent behavior to the Dean of Students Office as soon as possible. Violations of the Code of Student Conduct should be referred to the Student Conduct and Community Standards Office.

Practice self care

Helping a troubled student can take a toll on your personal well-being. Make sure to acknowledge what you've been through and take care of yourself. Support resources can be found through the Faculty Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) at (413) 545-0350. 24/7 confidential counseling and other support resources are available through CompPsych.

	RECOGNIZE	RESPOND	REFER	REPORT
"Not sure what, but something's wrong" If a student threatens suicide or harm to self or others, don't delay – report it right away!	Disturbing content in paper/emails Decline in academic performance Excessive absenteeism Irrational or bizarre behavior Sudden change in demeanor (from extroverted to withdrawn, organized to forgetful, etc.) Significant changes in appearance, behavior, or personal hygiene	Express concern and care Give an example of a time that the student's behavior has worried you Listen to and believe student's responses Be supportive and encouraging if student agrees to get help Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: CCPH (413) 545-2337 After Hours: (877) 831-7421	DOSO (413) 545-2684 Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool
Self harm, suicide ideation, suicidal risk	Decline in academic performance Written or verbal statements preoccupied with theme of death or that convey intent to harm self or others Fresh cuts, scratches or other wounds Withdrawal from classes, activities, and friends Statements of hopelessness such as, "I hate this life" or "Everyone is better off without me"	Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Always take suicidal statements, thoughts or behaviors very seriously If you suspect a student may be suicidal, seek immediate consultation	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: CCPH (413) 545-2337 Offer to walk the student to CCPH in Middlesex House.	DOSO (413) 545-2684
Alcohol, marijuana, or other drug abuse	Intoxicated/high in class or at meetings/events Excessive sleepiness or hyper energy Decline in academic performance References to alcohol or drug use in conversations, papers, projects, etc. Deterioration in physical appearance (bloodshot eyes, dilated pupils, trembling hands, etc.)	Express concern and care Give an example of a time that the student's behavior has worried you Be supportive and encouraging if the student agrees to get help Offer to help the student make an appointment with BASICS program for alcohol screening and intervention	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: BASICS (413) 577-5071 CHP (413) 577-5181 CCPH (413) 545-2337 UHS (413) 577-5000	DOSO (413) 545-2684
Anxiety, stress, panic	Excessive worry, guilt or nervousness Decline in academic performance; inability to stay focused in class Physical symptoms such as difficulty breathing; pounding or racing heart; numbness, tingling, sweating or chills; weakness or dizziness; jaw pain and teeth grinding; chest or stomach pain	Express concern and care Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Recommend (or, if necessary, insist upon) intervention	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 CCPH (413) 545-2337 Advice and consultation: DOSO (413) 545-2684 SLSO (413) 545-1995 UHS (413) 577-5000	DOSO (413) 545-2684
Bias incident	Act(s) directed against a person or property on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information or any other class protected from discrimination under state or federal law **Act(s) may be anonymous with no clear perpetrator*	Express concern and care Listen to and believe student's responses Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Encourage student to save photos, communications, or other evidence Do not remove any evidence prior to reporting (e.g. clean graffiti, erase whiteboard, etc.)	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: DOSO (413) 545-2684 EO (413) 545-3464 Report graffiti for removal: F&CS (413) 545-6401	UMPD (413) 545-3111 EO (413) 545-3464
Cyber misbehavior (identity or password theft, cyberbullying, online harassment)	Internet flaming, trolling, name-calling, or harassment Threats to release private information/photos Demands for money in exchange for private/intimate information (sextortion) Identity theft, account hacking	Express concern and care Encourage student to update all account passwords and privacy settings Encourage student to keep a log of bullying/harassing behavior; take and save screenshots of online harassment	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: SCCS (413) 545-6281 UMass Information Technology	SCCS (413) 545-6281
CCPH: Center for Counseling & F CHP: Center for Health Promoti CWC: Center for Women & Com DOSO: Dean of Students Main Of EO: Equal Opportunity Office	nmunity SLSO: Student Legal Services Office	(Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, etc.); save copies of all communications including texts, voicemails, and pictures	(413) 545-9400 SLSO (413) 545-1995	

	RECOGNIZE	RESPOND	REFER	REPORT
Disability related challenge	Student mentions struggling due to disability Student expresses concerns such as difficulty reading, concentrating, or memorizing; challenges with organizing tasks, homework, or deadlines; or other issues potentially related to a potential undiagnosed disability	Express concern and care Listen to and believe student's responses Avoid stigmatizing behaviors such as criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, overly emphasizing or minimizing the situation Provide student with a referral to Disability Services Be supportive and encouraging	Advice and consultation: Disability Services (413) 545-0892	Disability Services (413) 545-0892 Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool
Disruptive classroom behaviors	Unwarranted interruptions Slurs or other forms of intimidation Rude or abusive behavior Failure to adhere to instructor's directions When to call UMPD for immediate assistance: Throwing items, refusing to leave, threat of harm to self or others, preventing others from leaving, physically abusive behavior, showing or stating the presence of a weapon	Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Explain the impact of student's behavior on the group or class Outline your expectations verbally and in your syllabus and help student explore options and alternatives such as Ombuds Office, academic dean	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: SCCS (413) 545-6281 CCPH (413) 545-2337 Ombuds (413) 545-0867	Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool SCCS (413) 545-6281
Economic hardship (job loss, loss of housing, food insecurity, financial emergency)	Frequent or extended absences Decline in academic performance Mentions relationship, financial, or other challenges Difficulty concentrating and making decisions Exhaustion/fatigue Excessive worry, sleeping/eating problems	Express concern and care Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Listen to and believe student's responses Provide student with resources: • Single Stop Resources • Dean of Students Office Be supportive and encouraging if the student agrees to get help	Advice and consultation: DOSO (413) 545-2684 Single-Stop Resources umass.edu/studentlife/ single-stop Emergency Loan Program (413) 545-2684	DOSO (413) 545-2684 Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool
Harassment, sexual harassment, stalking	Display of sexually suggestive pictures or cartoons in workspace, residence halls, or online Verbal abuse, unwanted sexual flirtations Demand for sexual favors by peer or supervisor accompanied by implied or overt threat concerning an individual's academic status or employment Say things like, "I'm sorry that happened, but I'm glad you're safe now." and, "Thank you for trusting me enough to tell me." Withdrawal from activities and friends Exhaustion/fatigue Significant change in appearance or personal hygiene (e.g. wearing embarrassing or humiliating attire) Visible injuries or bruises Cuts. brands, or scars with a distinct pattern	Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Identify resources like CWC, DOSO, and UMPD for safety planning Encourage student to save copies of all communications including texts, voicemails, and pictures Make the student aware that, as a Title IX responsible employee, you must report what they tell you	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: SCCS (413) 545-6281 CWC (413) 545-0883 SLSO (413) 545-1995	SCCS (413) 545-6281 Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Office (413) 545-3464
Hazing Hazing can happen in any group: graduate or undergraduate student organizations, athletic and club sports teams, fraternities, sororities, etc.		Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Remain calm. Showing outrage may cause a student to shut down Do not interpret student's emotion (or lack of emotion) as evidence of a crime Listen to and believe student's responses Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 Advice and consultation: SCCS (413) 545-6281 CCPH (413) 545-2337 UHS (413) 577-5000	SCCS (413) 545-6281

	RECOGNIZE	RESPOND	REFER	REPORT
International crisis (for student abroad) or Immigration status issue (legal or visa issue, missing or stolen identity documents, etc.)	Student in crisis while abroad Mentions crisis or concern Decline in academic performance Difficulty concentrating and making decisions Excessive worry, sleeping/eating problems Uncommunicative and/or disengaged Student with status issue while studying in U.S. Mentions concern about visa or immigration status Decline in academic performance Difficulty concentrating and making decisions Excessive worry, sleeping/eating problems Uncommunicative and/or disengaged	Express concern and care Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Listen to and believe student's responses Be supportive and encouraging if the student agrees to get help	Urgent: IPO 413-545-2710 (Dial 001 if abroad) After Hours: contact UMPD 413-545-2121. UMPD will connect you to the IPO staff person on-call. Advice and consultation: IPO (413) 545-2710 SLSO (413) 545-1995	IPO (413) 545-2710
Isolation, Ioneliness, difficulty transitioning into or out of the university community	Decline in academic performance Lack of peer engagement Excessive worry, sleeping/eating problems Exhaustion/fatigue Mentions lack of social relationships, homesickness, or other challenges including difficulties with social engagement, but may laugh it off References to loneliness or isolation in conversations, papers, projects, etc. Statements of isolation such as, "I don't have any friends here," "no one understands me," or "I don't go to events because I don't want to go alone."	Express concern and care Avoid minimizing the situation Provide student with resources: • CCPH support groups • Dean of Students Office • Resident Assistant or Residence Director • University events calendar and Campus Pulse Suggest a campus event or Registered Student Organization (RSO) Be supportive and encourage student to connect to resources	Advice and Consultation: CCPH (413) 545-2337 DOSO (413) 545-2684 Additional Resources umass.edu/counseling/ groups-and-workshops umass.edu/events umass.edu/offcampuslife umass.edu/studentlife/rso	
Known or suspected health or medical issues (chronic illness, depression, eating disorders, post-traumatic brain injury, etc.)	Frequent or extended absences Decline in academic performance Noticeable weight loss or gain Hair loss; pale or gray skin tone Difficulty with following directions, time management, or organization Struggles with academic performance Unusual or secretive eating habits; obsession with fat/caloric content of food	Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Listen to and believe student's responses Recommend medical intervention	Urgent: 911 Advice and consultation: UHS (413) 577-5000 CCPH (413) 545-2337 DOSO (413) 545-2684	DOSO (413) 545-2684 Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool Disability Services (413) 545-0892
Personal or family tragedy, loss, or crisis (illness or death of family member, natural disaster, legal issues, divorce or break-up)	Frequent or extended absences Decline in academic performance Mentions relationship, financial, or other challenges Difficulty concentrating and making decisions Exhaustion/fatigue Excessive worry, sleeping/eating problems	Express concern and care Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Listen to and believe student's responses Be supportive and encouraging if the student agrees to get help	CCPH (413) 545-2337 DOSO (413) 545-2684 SLSO (413) 545-1995 IPO (413) 545-2710 Single-Stop Resources umass.edu/studentlife/ single-stop	DOSO (413) 545-2684 Undergraduate Dean umass.edu/registrar/students/ list-academic-deans Graduate Dean umass.edu/gradschool
Relationship/ interpersonal violence, sexual assault, stalking	References to sexual assault or relationship violence in conversations, papers, projects, etc. Visible injuries or bruises Mishaps or injuries with illogical/no explanation Crying or leaving when sexual violence, domestic violence, stalking, or child abuse is the topic Fearful or anxious about pleasing partner or others Mentions partner/other's possessiveness, jealousy or violent behavior, but may apologize/excuse/laugh it off Say things like, "You've been through something very frightening. I'm so sorry."	Call 911 if there is a potential threat to student's safety or the safety of others Express concern and care Listen to and believe student's responses Remain calm. Showing outrage may shut student down Do not interpret student's emotions as evidence of assault or violence Avoid criticizing, blaming, sounding judgmental, or minimizing the situation Identify resources for safety planning Recommend medical intervention Make the student aware that, as a Title IX responsible employee, you must report what they tell you	Urgent: 911 UMPD (413) 545-3111 CWC Rape Crisis Hotline (413) 545-0800 Advice and consultation: CWC (413) 545-0883 CCPH (413) 545-2337 DOSO (413) 545-2684 UHS (413) 577-5000	Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Office (413) 545-3464

Maintaining Compliance with State and Federal Laws and University Policies

Academic Honesty Policy

University of Massachusetts Amherst's Academic Honesty Policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate students, instructors, and other instructional staff participating in academic classes, programs, and research projects offered by the university, including online and distance learning: umass.edu/honesty.

Ombuds Office: (413) 545-0867 (advice and assistance) Academic Honesty Office: (413) 577-6767 (charges, resolutions, and appeals)

Code of Student Conduct

All University of Massachusetts Amherst students are responsible for complying with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures contained in the Code of Student Conduct, as well as those in other official university communications. The Code of Student Conduct, Residence Hall Policies, and other administrative policies regarding student accountability are available at umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct.

More information: Student Conduct and Community Standards Office at (413) 545-6281

Nondiscrimination Policy

The University of Massachusetts Amherst prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, pregnancy and pregnancy related condition(s), veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, genetic information and any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in any aspect of the access to, admission, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Furthermore, university policy prohibits harassment of students and employees, i.e., racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination. View the full policy at umass.edu/equalopportunity.

More information, training, and support: Equal Opportunity Office (EO) at (413) 545-3464

Alcohol, Marijuana, and Other Drug Policies

Students are responsible for obtaining and adhering to the university's alcohol and other drug policies, which conform to state and federal laws and enhance the health, safety and educational interests of our community. The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act and the Drug Free Workplace Act, require the university to prohibit the use, possession and/or cultivation of marijuana, regardless of MA state law. Accordingly, use, possession, or cultivation of marijuana is not permitted on university property (including all university grounds and housing). See umass.edu/dean_students/alcoholdrug-policies.

More information: Student Conduct and Community Standards Office at (413) 545-6281

Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect Policy

University of Massachusetts Amherst faculty members are responsible for maintaining classrooms that promote the safe and open exchange of ideas. Students are responsible for personal behavior that supports these goals. Disruption of the learning process may lead to disenrollment or disciplinary action. See umass.edu/dean students/codeofconduct/classroomcivility.

More information: Student Conduct and Community Standards Office at (413) 545-6281

Title IX – Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence

Subject to exceptions that can apply to law enforcement personnel, counselors, clinicians or clergy, any employee or contractor who becomes aware of a potential incident of sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence or other assault or harassment involving a student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst – either as victim or perpetrator – on or off campus must promptly report the matter either to the Title IX Coordinator/Equal

Opportunity Office or to a supervisor, who must promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Office. The person making the report should not attempt to investigate the matter. The Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Office will undertake all such investigations, as appropriate under the circumstances and take every precaution to ensure privacy. For details see umass.edu/titleix.

More information, training, and support: Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Office at (413) 545-3464

Hazing

Hazing is conduct by members of any student organization (on or off campus) that willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Examples can include beating; branding; forced calisthenics or physical activity; exposure to the weather; forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance; activities that subject a student or other person to mental stress such as extended deprivation of sleep or extended isolation; or any treatment likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of a student or other person. Hazing is a crime under Massachusetts law. Any employee or contractor must promptly report suspected or actual hazing to law enforcement. In addition, notify Student Conduct and Community Standards Office or a supervisor, who must promptly notify Student Conduct and Community Standards. The person making the report should not attempt to investigate the matter.

More information: Student Conduct and Community Standards Office at (413) 545-6281

Clery Act

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act is the federal law originally known as the Campus Security Act that requires universities to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The law is tied to federal financial aid program funding and is enforced by the United States Department of Education. A copy of UMass Amherst's

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Clery Act (continued)

annual security report is available at umass.edu/umpd/crime-statistics. It includes campus security policies, crime statistics for the previous three years, daily crime logs and timely missing student warnings.

More information, training, and support: UMass Amherst Police Department at (413) 545-3111

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that allows present and former students access to their educational records and provides basic privacy protection. Educational records are defined as those directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution.

FERPA permits disclosure of personal identifiable information from a student's educational record to parents, police or others to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals. Information can be shared with university personnel when there is a specific need to know.

Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not part of a student's educational record and should be appropriately shared.

IT provides FERPA certification for faculty and staff at **oit**. umass.edu/support/spire/about-ferpa-certification.

More information, training, and support: University Registrar at (413) 545-0555

Tobacco Free Campus Policy

The use of any tobacco product including cigarettes, e-cigarettes/vapes, and smokeless tobacco are prohibited indoors and outdoors on the UMass Amherst campus grounds. This policy applies to all individuals on campus including students, staff, faculty, visitors, and contractors. This policy applies to all university property, land, and buildings including: public walkways, bus stops, residential housing, parking lots, athletic fields, loading docks, and in any vehicle on university grounds.

More information: umass.edu/tobaccofree

Resources for faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students

EMERGENCY.....

UMass Amherst Police: (413) 545-3111 Emergency: 911

- immediate emergency services for threatening or dangerous behavior
- active shooter and campus safety trainings
- campus-wide alarm system for crisis notification and response
- Clery crime logs and security reporting

University Health Services: (413) 577-5000

- Triage Advice Nurse (413) 577-5229
- medical care and 24/7 on-call services
- designated site for free and confidential sexual assault evidence collection services for sexual assault victims/survivors
- women's health clinic, transgender healthcare, specialty services
- health insurance questions and explanation of benefits

Center for Counseling and Psychological Health: (413) 545-2337 • After Hours: (877) 831-7421

- crisis intervention, including 24/7 emergency on-call services
- situation assessment consultation.
- online resources: umass.edu/counseling/ online-resources

Center for Women and Community: (413) 545-0883 • Rape Crisis: (413) 545-0800

- 24/7 hotline, crisis intervention and safety planning for domestic and sexual violence; for people of all genders
- free counseling and support groups for survivors, friends and families
- community training on issues of consent, sexual assault and harassment

FOLLOW-UP, SUPPORT & TRAINING

Dean of Students Office: (413) 545-2684

- supporting a student in hardship, crisis, or trauma
- primary contact for parents/family members in times of crisis or emergencies
- managing challenging classroom situations
- helping a student facing food and/or financial insecurity

Ombuds Office: (413) 545-0867

• third-party facilitation and informal mediation services

Faculty and Staff Assistance Program: (413) 545-0350

- strategies for dealing with problematic students
- resources for managing stress and other reactions to challenging situations

Center for Health Promotion: (413) 577-5181

- alcohol and other drugs screening and brief intervention through the BASICS program
- classroom presentations on health topics; faculty and graduate staff training on identifying and assisting high-risk students
- education and information about alcohol, marijuana, tobacco/vaping, and other drugs

Psychological Services Center: (413) 545-0041

 free initial consultation and sliding-scale psychotherapy services for adults, children and families

Disability Services: (413) 545-0892

- registering and accommodating students with disabilities
- faculty and staff consultation on issues related to students with disabilities



Single-Stop Resources

To help students facing personal, financial or life challenges find support, stay in school, and graduate. **umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop**