

HELPING STUDENTS IN DIFFICULTY

This guide may be used as a resource when working with students who may be experiencing a mental health challenge, identifying students in difficulty, helping students, and knowing where to refer students for help when they need it. The Office of the Associate Dean of Students is available for consultation if assistance is needed when referring or assisting a student.

HELPFUL CONTACTS

University Police Department | 361-825-4444 or 911 | police.tamucc.edu

Our University Police are State certified officers who can respond to emergency situations and take reports regarding criminal activity.

I-CARE Team | 361-825-6219 | icare.tamucc.edu

This University committee receives referrals from the community regarding concerning student behavior that may not fall under the Student Code of Conduct. This team will use the information to intervene and assist the student when possible.

Office of Associate Dean of Students | 361-825-6219 |

Absence notifications requested by student or student's family due to emergencies (personal or medical), including hospitalization or death in family.

Online Referral Form (non-emergency only) | incidentreportform.tamucc.edu

A method of reporting concerning incidents to the Office of the Associate Dean of Students for the purpose of intervention regarding a student of concern (I-CARE), responding to inappropriate behavior (Judicial Affairs) or simply documenting an incident (informational report).

Title IX Coordinator | 361-825-5826 | tder.tamucc.edu

Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex including, but not limited to, sexual assault and sexual harassment. The Coordinator is a resource on campus regarding issues of discrimination and serves to receive reports, investigate and resolve matters of discrimination.

University Counseling Center | 361-825-2703 | counseling.tamucc.edu

We encourage you to refer a student experiencing depression, anxiety, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts or a psychological crisis to the Counseling Center. In an emergency situation requiring immediate intervention, call the University Police Department.

Office of International Education | 361-825-2258 | oi.e.tamucc.edu

This office provides resources and assistance to international students as they transition to and reside in the United States.

IMMINENT SITUATIONS OR THREATENING BEHAVIOR

- If you feel an individual is an immediate danger to themselves or others call UPD at once.
- Once the situation has been resolved, write or type up a detailed account, of the incident so that no details are forgotten later.
- Finally, follow up with the Office of the Associate Dean of Students using the University's Online Reporting System. Fill out an online report at incidentreportform.tamucc.edu

Disability Services | 361-825-5816 | disabilityservices.tamucc.edu

If you are working with a student who has disclosed his or her disability to you, please refer him or her to our office. If you suspect a student may have a disability, contact our office for guidelines on how to assist the student. To avoid the risk of violating federal law, we can provide guidance on how to inquire about a disability without prior disclosure.

Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA)

361-825-5933 | casa.tamucc.edu/tutoring.php

CASA provides academic support services for students. Their College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certified support services include the Writing Center, Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Peer Mentoring, and Developmental Education and Retention.

University Health Center | 361-825-2601 | healthcenter.tamucc.edu

We encourage you to refer a student experiencing medical issues to the Health Center. In an emergency situation requiring immediate intervention, call the University Police Department.

Crime Victim's Liaison | 361-825-3791 | police.tamucc.edu/CrimeVictims/

The Liaison assists victims of crime, educates on the rights of victims, provides necessary information to assist in preventing further victimization.

Starfish Early Alert | 361-825-2977 | hc.tamucc.edu/retention.php

Starfish is TAMUCC's new Early Alert and Connect system, which is designed to provide easy academic alert and communication capabilities for faculty and staff. Starfish allows undergraduate faculty to easily identify the academic needs of their students. Once identified, Starfish alerts the student and the student's "Success Network" of Advisors, Mentors, and supporting staff of academic concerns.

Members of the Success Network are tasked with reaching out to the student and notifying faculty of alert resolutions. To access Starfish, sign into Blackboard at <https://bb9.tamucc.edu/> and select Starfish from the Tools Side Bar. For more information regarding Starfish, please contact John Fortiscue at 361-825-3653 or email us at Starfish@tamucc.edu.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS

COMMON ISSUES AND APPROPRIATE RESPONSES

- Students with absences, tardiness, late and missed assignments should be requested to attend an individual conference with the instructor.
- Students exhibiting minor classroom disruption should be requested to attend an individual conference and the employee may file online report.
- Students exhibiting significant and/or repeated classroom disruption should be requested to attend an individual conference and the employee should file online report.
- Student discloses of sexual assault, harassment and/or relationship violence employee must call UPD, file online report, and contact Title IX Coordinator—Mr. Samuel Ramirez.
- Student is exhibiting unwanted behavior should go through an individual conference.
- Student is exhibiting threatening behavior employee must call UPD immediately and file online report.
- Student discloses suicidal thoughts and/or attempts employee must call UPD immediately and file online I-CARE referral.
- Student is exhibiting disjointed thoughts, intense emotions and/or inappropriate responses employee must file online I-CARE referral.

TIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

- Talk to the student in a quiet safe place. Allow plenty of time and communicate care for the student's well being.
- Consider having your department chair or a peer with you if you are re-addressing the behavior.
- If you have concern for a student you have already attempted to help, consult with the Office of the Associate Dean of Students.

I-CARE REFERRALS

You should refer any observations and/or incidents that cause you to be concerned about a student's well-being. Some behaviors that may warrant a referral to the I-CARE team include (but are not limited to):

- Unusual changes in behavior and/or appearance
- Significant changes in attendance or academic performance
- Self-injurious behavior
- Unusual emotional responses (persistent sadness, extreme irritability, etc.)
- Unusually high energy, rapid speech and/or racing thoughts
- Extreme difficulty in organizing thoughts or communicating clearly
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness
- Expressing thoughts of doing harm to self or others

If at any time a member of the University community observes any of these, or other behaviors of concern,

they should refer the student by filling out an online referral. You can access the referral form through the I-CARE website at <http://icare.tamucc.edu>

The I-CARE team is not designed to deal with cases of immediate threats to the safety of the student or others. In these cases, the University Police Department should be contacted directly at 361-825-4444. Additionally, after contacting UPD and the situation is resolved you should also file an online incident report. You are encouraged to follow up with the Office of the Associate Dean of Students at 361-825-6219 and/or the University Counseling Center at 361-825-2703.

The I-CARE team is only able to assist and take referrals in regards to student behavior. If you have concerns regarding the behavior of a faculty or staff member please contact UPD if there is an imminent threat and follow up with the Employee Development & Compliance Services Office (EDCS), who can also take reports of non-imminent threat regarding faculty and staff.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Students and faculty each have a responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty has the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. Disruptions, as applied to the educational environment, means behavior that a reasonable University employee would view as interfering with normal academic functions. Examples include, but are not limited to,

persistently speaking without being recognized or interrupting other speakers, behavior which distracts the class from the subject matter or discussion, or in extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior, or refusal to comply with faculty direction. Students are expected to refrain from disruptive behavior at all times. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to disciplinary action. Reports involving classroom conduct are to be submitted to the Office of Judicial Affairs for review and appropriate action.

SEXUAL ASSAULT/HARASSMENT

If a student discloses that he or she has been a victim of sexual assault or sexual harassment, contact:

- University Police Department: 361-825-4444
- File an online incident report:
incidentreportform.tamucc.edu
- Notify the Title IX coordinator: 361-825-5826

The University Police Department has a crime victim's liaison that can assist the student. You may also refer the individual to the University Counseling Center and/or the University Health Center as appropriate. Contact information for all of these offices can be found on the front page of this folder. Please note that if you are considered a Campus Security Authority you do not have an option about reporting this information. You **MUST** report to the entities provided in the bulleted list above.

CAMPUS SECURITY AUTHORITIES (CSA)

The Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 (re-named the Clery Act in 1998), requires TAMU-CC to report statistics for certain criminal offenses that have been reported to the University Police Department or Campus Security Authorities. "Campus Security Authorities" are defined as any university official who has "significant responsibility for student and campus activities", including but not limited to student discipline, student housing, athletics and faculty and staff members who are advisors to student groups or organizations. A faculty member who does not have any responsibility for student activities outside the classroom is not considered a CSA. For more information contact University Police Department Officer Lt. Melissa Wright 361-825-3791.

MISSING STUDENTS

If a person has reason to believe a student who resides on campus is missing, he/she should immediately notify the University Police Department (UPD) at 361-825-4444. If a student who resides off campus is reported missing to university personnel, UPD will notify the proper law enforcement agency, as soon as reasonably possible, and assist with the investigation.

The reporting party should provide the following information: the relationship of the concerned party to the missing student, how long the student has been out of contact, if there is a reason to believe the student might be in distress or there is a threat of imminent harm and any applicable background and descriptive information available.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is considered “disruptive” behavior?

The *Student Code of Conduct* covers the issue of disruption in the classroom. It defines classroom disruption as “Classroom behavior that interferes with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class and/or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program.” The *Student Code of Conduct* can be found in its entirety online at judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu.

Should all incidents of disruptive behavior be reported, even if it has been handled?

Yes. Reporting disruptive behavior does not in itself mandate an intervention from UPD, Judicial Affairs or the I-CARE team. Reporting all disruptions allows the University to determine if there is a pattern of this kind of behavior and then intervene when appropriate. A student with reported incidents from multiple sources would likely require an intervention, whereas one isolated incident that has already been resolved would not. If you feel comfortable with the resolution that has occurred you can indicate on the online incident reporting form that the report type is “informational”.

What is the difference between a Starfish flag and an I-CARE situation?

Starfish is an Academic Alert Service designed to connect students with academic support programs on campus. Starfish does not support the notification of non-academic concerns to campus personnel responsible for assisting students with Student Safety or Student Conduct. Faculty should use Starfish to notify the University of any students who are not making satisfactory academic progress, are chronically absent or late, or show other signs of being at-risk academically.

Faculty/Staff should use the Online Incident Reporting Form at incidentreportform.tamucc.edu to report incidents of concern regarding student behavior, especially those that cause disruption or raise issues regarding the welfare of the student or interfere with the integrity of the University.

How can I prevent disruptive behavior?

An excellent way to promote civil behavior is to clarify your expectations at the beginning of each semester. There should be a statement of acceptable student behavior in the course syllabus that is read and discussed during the first class period. The Office of Judicial Affairs can assist you in preventing and addressing such behavior. Please see judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu for more information.

Can I remove a student from class or other instructional forum?

When efforts to defuse a disruptive situation fail and it becomes clear that the student behavior will continue to disrupt instruction and learning, you should ask the student to leave. You should never force a student to leave and never touch a student. If the student will not leave voluntarily, call UPD and they will remove the student for that instructional period. You should then report the issue to the Office of Judicial Affairs through the online incident reporting form. You do not have the authority to tell the student they cannot return for the entirety of a semester.

After I report an incident, will I be notified of the action taken?

Each report will be acknowledged that it has been received. The appropriate area will evaluate all information provided and will determine what intervention, if any, is appropriate. Because each incident is unique, there is no standard protocol for notifying the individual making the report about any action taken. Some information, such as treatment programs, will remain confidential and will not be shared. If a student is suspended or expelled they will not be permitted to remain in their current courses. In all cases, the University follows FERPA guidelines in the release of personally identifiable information from student education records.

What if I am meeting with a student who is becoming verbally aggressive, but is not making any threats or doing anything physically?

First, identify to the student that they have their voice raised and ask the student to lower their voice. If they are standing, ask them to please sit down. If they are leaning over a table or desk, acknowledge that they are doing so and ask them to sit back. Most individuals, especially when emotional, don’t realize that they are becoming verbally aggressive and once asked to lower their voice, or sit down, they will do so. Speak calmly and in an even tone. Do not allow yourself to raise your voice or mimic any of the behaviors the student is engaging in. If the student continues to yell or be verbally aggressive provide a specific outline for their behavior and the consequence if they don’t comply. For example: “David, I want to help you, but when you yell and swear at me it makes it difficult for me to do that. If you do not lower your voice and change your language I am going to have to ask you leave and come back another day once you have calmed down.” If the student continues in the behavior and refuses to leave, let them know you are going to have to contact UPD and then once the situation is resolved file an online report.

Is training available on the topics covered in this folder?

Yes. Some information is available online at judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu and icare.tamucc.edu. Additionally, you can contact the office at 361-825-6219 and we would be happy to come present on all or any cross section of these issues to your office, department, etc.