

# ASSISTING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Recognize Respond Refer

## Response Protocol: Follow the chart to determine what to do when faced with a student in distress.

Is the student a danger to self or others, or does the student need immediate assistance for any reason?

**NO**

**NOT SURE**

**YES**

I am not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but they are having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support or additional resources.

The student shows signs of distress, but I am not sure how serious it is. My interaction has left me feeling uneasy and/or very concerned about the student.

The student's conduct is clearly and eminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening and is suggestive of harm to self or others.

Refer students to an appropriate resource. See front and back of folder for options.

Call the Student Counseling Center at (410) 328-8404  
After-Hours:  
Consult with your immediate supervisor or dean or contact Campus Police at 711 for non-emergency consultation.

Call 911 or UMB Campus Police (711). After calling, inform your immediate supervisor or dean.

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety emergency. Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not FERPA protected. Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.

### CAMPUS RESOURCES

Student Counseling Center.....(410) 328-8404  
601 W. Lombard St., Suite 440, Baltimore, MD 21201  
Drop-in M-F at 1:30 p.m.  
*umaryland.edu/counseling*

Student Health Center.....(667) 214-1899

Campus Police.....711 or (410) 706-3333  
Non-Emergency Consultation.....(410) 706-6882

Educational Support & Disability Services.....(410) 706-5889

Title IX Coordinator.....(410) 706-2281

### AFTER-HOURS CRISIS SUPPORT

Off-Campus Police.....911  
UMB Student Health Center.....(667) 214-1800  
Maryland Crisis Hotline.....1-800-422-0009  
National Suicide Prevention Hotline.....1-800-273-8255  
Sheppard Pratt Crisis Walk-in Clinic.....(410) 938-5302  
Baltimore City Crisis Response.....(410) 433-5175  
Baltimore County Crisis Response.....(410) 931-2214  
UMMS Psychiatric ER.....(410) 328- 1219

### SEXUAL ASSAULT/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

TurnAround (24 hr Hotline).....(443) 279-0379  
House of Ruth.....(410) 889-7884  
MD Coalition Against Sexual Assault.....1-800-983-7273  
RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline.....1-800-656-4673

Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE) hospitals:  
Baltimore City - Mercy Hospital.....(410) 333-9499  
Baltimore County - GBMC.....(410) 849-3323

## RECOGNIZE

Indicators of distress. Look for clusters, frequency, duration, and severity - not just symptoms.

Faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for UMB students in distress. 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 see something distressing in a student since you have frequent and prolonged contact with them.

Below, you will find helpful information about how to recognize, respond to, and refer a student in distress.

### ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Sudden decline in academic performance
- Repeated absences or multiple requests for extensions
- Concerning content in writing and other assignments
- Conduct that interferes with classroom activity
- Overly demanding of faculty/staff time and attention
- Requests or requires more personal, rather than academic, counseling during office hours
- Bizarre content in writings or presentations

### SAFETY RISK INDICATORS

- Unprovoked anger or hostility
- Making direct or indirect threats of harm to self or others
- Stalking or harassing
- Threatening emails, phone calls, or other forms of correspondence
- Makes references to suicide or death
- Physical violence, fighting, shoving, grabbing, assault, use of a weapon
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of rage, hopelessness, worthlessness, isolation, revenge, despair, violence, suicidal ideation

### PSYCHOSOCIAL INDICATORS

- Unusual or disproportional emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or apathy, hostility, and/or impulsiveness
- Self-disclosure of personal issues like financial difficulties, family or relationship problems, contemplating suicide, losses
- Expressions of concern shared by student's peers
- Verbal Aggression (e.g., taunts, badgers, or intimidates others)
- Delusions and paranoia
- Appears to be intoxicated in an academic setting

### VICTIMIZATION INDICATORS

- Asks not to work with a particular classmate during group assignments
- Expresses fear of a classmate
- Visible bruises on face or body
- Sudden change in demeanor (e.g., formerly outgoing student becomes withdrawn, or formerly easy-going student becomes easily angered)
- Overt reaction to topics of physical or sexual abuse in class
- Student communication implies or indicates that student has been a victim of sexual assault, stalking, hazing, bullying, a hate crime, or any other form of physical violence

## RESPOND

Your expression of concern may be critical when it comes to a student getting the support they need.

### ACADEMIC RESPONSE

*Don't* criticize or judge the student  
*Do* talk to the student in private  
*Don't* assume a student is making excuses  
*Do* work with the student to identify resources and make appropriate referrals  
*Do* reassure the student that many students have reached out for and utilized help  
*Do* know your limits by not involving yourself beyond your experience and training  
*Do* give hope that things can get better and that there are people/resources there to help  
*Do* help the student explore options and alternatives and outline your expectations, for example, "I've noticed \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm concerned. Are you aware that there are resources that can help you?"

### SAFETY RISK RESPONSE

*Don't* ignore disruptive behavior or argue with the student  
*Do* clearly express your concerns about the student's behavior in a supportive way.  
*Do* document all incidents and attempts to resolve the situation - be factual and objective  
*Don't* assume that the student's conflict will resolve itself on its own  
*Do* take threatening behaviors seriously and take immediate action  
*Don't* be afraid to ask difficult questions, if references are made to suicide or dying, ask the student about it. Asking will not increase the risk of suicide, it will actually help them feel more understood  
*Do* consult with your immediate supervisor or dean

### PSYCHOSOCIAL RESPONSE

*Don't* dismiss what the student is telling you - it could be a big deal to the student  
*Do* explore the student's support system  
*Do* work with the student to identify resources and make appropriate referrals  
*Do* know your boundaries and limits to avoid getting into a situation beyond your role  
*Don't* be afraid to ask difficult questions, if references are made to suicide or dying, ask the student about it. Asking will not increase the risk of suicide, it will actually help them feel more understood  
*Do* be proactive by engaging the student when signs of distress are noticed  
*Do* document your interactions with the student and consult with your immediate supervisor or dean

### VICTIMIZATION RESPONSE

*Don't* say things like, "Are you sure?"  
*Do* listen to and believe the student  
*Do* say things like, "I'm glad you trusted me enough to talk to me"  
*Don't* blame the student by asking questions like, "Why were you drinking so much?"  
*Don't* pressure the student to report to police or report to police for the student  
*Do* respect the student's privacy  
*Don't* make a referral and then end your involvement, set an appointment to follow up with the student  
*Don't* promise you won't tell anyone  
*Do* contact your Title IX coordinator to be informed of your rights and responsibilities as a member of the UMB community

## REFER

### ACADEMIC REFERRAL

**Emergency: Call 911 or UMB Police 711**  
**Non-emergency:** Student Counseling Center (410) 328-8404  
Educational Support & Disability Services (410) 706- 5889  
Academic Coaching (410) 706-6164  
After-hours: Contact your immediate supervisor or dean for after-hours referral guidance.

### SAFETY RISK REFERRAL

**Emergency: Call 911 or UMB Police 711**  
**Non-emergency:** Student Counseling Center (410) 328-8404  
After-hours: Contact UMB campus Police at (410)-706-6882 for a non-emergency consultation and/or contact, Maryland Crisis Hotline at 1-800-422-0009 and Baltimore City Crisis Response (410) 433-5175.

### PSYCHOSOCIAL REFERRAL

**Emergency: Call 911 or UMB Police 711**  
**Non-emergency:** Student Counseling Center (410) 328-8404  
After-hours: Contact UMB campus Police at (410)-706-6882 for a non-emergency consultation and/or contact, Maryland Crisis Hotline at 1-800-422-0009 and Baltimore City Crisis Response (410) 433-5175.

### VICTIMIZATION REFERRAL

**Emergency: Call 911 or UMB Police 711**  
**Non-emergency:** Student Counseling Center (410) 328-8404, Drop-in M-F at 1:30 p.m.  
Office of Accountability and Compliance (410) 706-2281  
After-hours: For Sexual assault or domestic violence, call TurnAround at (443) 279-0379, House of Ruth at (410) 889-7884, or see front of folder for additional resources.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

## Title IX Sexual Harassment, Violence and Nondiscrimination

### Mandated Reporting:

If a UMB administrator, faculty, or staff member receives an oral or written complaint of sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment/violence involving UMB faculty, staff, students or a UMB affiliate, that person has an affirmative responsibility to promptly inform UMB's Title IX Coordinator who will respond in accordance to the UMB policy and procedures.

You may reach the Title IX Compliance Team or the Title IX Coordinator, at (410) 706-2281. To submit an online report form go to [umaryland.edu/oac/report-a-concern/report-sexual-misconduct/](http://umaryland.edu/oac/report-a-concern/report-sexual-misconduct/).

Members of the UMB community may also file an anonymous report through the UMB Ethics Point Hotline: Dial toll-free: (866) 594-5220, or report online at [www.ethicspoint.com](http://www.ethicspoint.com) and choose File a Report.

Need More Information? Please visit the websites below.

[umaryland.edu/equalaccess](http://umaryland.edu/equalaccess)  
[www.umaryland.edu/titleix](http://www.umaryland.edu/titleix)

## Behavioral Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) Team

The (BETA) Team coordinates activities in response to reports of threatening, aggressive, or violent behavior. The BETA Team consists of representatives from various UMB offices and is chaired by a representative of the UMB Police Force.

### Responsibilities of the BETA Team include:

- Assess reports of threatening, aggressive, and violent behavior and develop a strategy and plan
- Act as a resource and liaison for UMB community members who make a report
- Make recommendations to deans and other school/department administrators
- Coordinate BETA Team efforts with action under relevant UMB policies
- Regularly review strategies and plans for ongoing incidents
- Keep records to assess risk and to evaluate UMB responses to reports

Website: [umaryland.edu/publicsafety/about-us/beta/the-beta-team](http://umaryland.edu/publicsafety/about-us/beta/the-beta-team)

## Additional Resources

### On Campus

Van Escort Service.....	(410) 706-6882
Wellness Hub/Academic Coaching.....	(410) 706-6164
International Services.....	(410) 706-7488
Writing Center.....	(410) 706-7725
Office of Accountability and Compliance.....	(410) 706-2281
Student Financial Assistance and Education.....	(410) 706-7347

### Off Campus

MSBA Lawyer Assistance Program.....	(410) 685-7878
Free mental health counseling for UMB Law Students	
Center for Eating Disorders.....	(410) 938-5252
Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ).....	1 (866) 488-7386
Maryland Gambling Helpline.....	1-800-426-2537
Substance Use Treatment.....	(410) 433-5175
Veterans Crisis Line.....	1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)
Veterans Affairs Maryland Health Care System.....	1-800-463-6295, ext. 7324

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What about student privacy laws?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other student privacy regulations generally allow a university to disclose information to parents, police, or others whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

### Who is able to complete a student Fitness for Duty Evaluation?

A Fitness for Duty Evaluation, related to a student's mental health, can only be completed by an off-campus treatment provider.

### Where can a student get an assessment for Academic Accommodations?

To apply for Academic Accommodations you should refer the student to Educational Support and Disability Services at (410) 706-5889.

### Can you let me know if a student has seen you for counseling?

Counselors can neither confirm nor deny if a student has utilized our services or provide any information without a student signing a release of information form. For any further questions about confidentiality, please call the student counseling center or visit our website at [umaryland.edu/counseling](http://umaryland.edu/counseling).

