

Student Mental Health Program

Training and Technical Assistance for California Community Colleges



Sample Policy:

Identifying and Referring Distressed and Disruptive Students

Campuses should refer to their campus codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures to ensure that policies for working with troubled or disruptive students are consistent with these policies. Ideally, the procedures for identifying and referring troubled or disruptive students result from a collaborative process that includes deans, campus security, faculty, administrators, staff, and students.



Once completed, the policy should be distributed widely to all faculty, staff, administrators, security personnel, and others who have regular contact with students.

Many campuses have developed extensive policies for working with emotionally distressed students. A selection of these can be found at <http://www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org/resources/>. This guide is intended as a companion to a fully developed policy, and may be used as a standalone document that is easily distributed to faculty and staff.

The document below is easily customizable to include your campus resources and outside resources that we include here.

www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Toll-Free: (855) 304-1647

Email: SMHP-info@cars-rp.org

The California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) is an organization of county governments working to improve mental health outcomes for individuals, families and communities. Prevention and Early Intervention programs implemented by CalMHSA are funded through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). Prop 63 provides the funding and framework needed to expand mental health services to previously underserved populations and all of California's diverse communities.

Student Mental Health Program

Insert Campus Name/Banner/Header

Identifying Troubled Students: What Should I Look For?

- Sudden and pronounced changes in attendance or performance (e.g. increased tardiness or absences that are out of character for the student, drastically falling grades, refuses to participate in classroom or other activities, failure to complete assignments)
- Behavioral changes (e.g. student appears withdrawn or upset, becomes confrontational or argumentative, cries in class, falls asleep in class, smells of alcohol or marijuana, social isolation)
- Changes in attitude (e.g. student seems to have lost interest in school, is overly anxious about performance, seeks excessive reassurance, reports excessive stress, hopelessness, or difficulty concentrating)
- Suicide warning signs (threatening to hurt or kill themselves, talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide, violent or self destructive behavior, reckless or risky behavior, intense anxiety, panic attacks, withdrawal from social and academic activities, previous suicide attempts)

Helping Troubled Students: What Should I Do?

- Invite the student to meet one-on-one
- In a non-threatening and non-judgmental way, identify the signs of trouble that you have witnessed
- Express your concern for the student's well being
- Ask the student to discuss their problems or concerns; listen respectfully and without judgment to what the student has to say
- Always take threats of suicide seriously. If the student expresses suicidal thoughts, do not leave them alone, and get help immediately. Call 911 or 1-800-273-TALK.
- If there is no eminent danger, encourage the student to access the campus health center and provide them with the information to do so. If the relationship with the student permits, ask the student if you can contact campus mental health staff on their behalf.
- If no counseling services are available, or it is after hours, provide student with telephone or internet counseling resources
- Explain that counseling/hotline services are available with no charge and are confidential
- Ask the student for permission to contact him/her at a later date to follow-up about the referral
- Document the conversation and share it with the Department Chair or Dean, as appropriate

Get Help Now

- www.ulifeline.org/get help now
- **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Campus Services

- Enter campus crisis resource here
- Enter campus crisis resource here

Student Mental Health Program

Insert Campus Name/Banner/Header

Identifying Disruptive Students: What Should I Look For?

- Causing disruption inside or outside the classroom/office (e.g. shouting, deliberately blocking pathways or doors, openly crying, intimidating behavior)
- Hostility in the classroom/office to staff, faculty, or other students (e.g. angry outbursts, disruptive interruptions)
- Clear indications of substance use (e.g. student is visibly drunk or high, student has open container, student possessing or distributing illegal drugs)
- Lewd, indecent, or obscene behavior (e.g. exposing themselves, viewing pornographic images in public, using sexually explicit language inappropriately)
- Unspecific threats to harm self or others (e.g. “jokes” about violence, violent drawings or stories, sarcastic references to violent acts)

Managing Disruptive Students: What Should I Do?

- If you feel that you, the student, or others are in eminent danger, call campus security or dial 911 immediately.
- If you feel safe, ask the student to meet one-on-one
- Consider asking your Department Chair or Dean to join the meeting
- Briefly identify the problem behaviors
- Take care to avoid arguing with the student
- Set clear guidelines for acceptable behavior moving forward
- Offer to walk the student to student mental health
- Provide student with campus mental health referral information
- Follow your campus’s procedures for documenting and reporting the disruptive behavior, including completing a Student Conduct Code Violation form or Behavior of Concern form.
- Make sure that the Chair, Dean, Campus Security, and Campus Mental Health staff have copies of the form

Campus
Police

- If life threatening emergency, call 911
- (555) 123-4567

Crisis
Center

- (555) 123-4567
- (555) 123-4567

Health
Center

- (555) 123-4567
- (555) 123-4567