OSU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is available to consult with faculty, staff, and administrators who are concerned about another person’s urgent mental health concerns. Please call 541-737-2131 if you have an immediate need to meet or speak with a mental health professional. Counselors will not make “house calls” but will assist you in getting appropriate care for the person of concern.

When you call CAPS, tell the receptionist you’re a faculty or staff member and what you need. Someone will either take your call immediately or get back to you within a couple of hours. If no one is available to consult immediately and your concern cannot wait, please contact the Department of Public Safety or Oregon State Police at 541-737-7000.

What are the Warning Signs that a Student is in Distress?

**When a student exhibits**

- Excessive class absences
- Poor class performance, missing deadlines
- Poor emotional control
- Excessive moodiness or anxiety
- Significant changes in sleeping and/or eating habits
- Changes in personal hygiene
- Persistent depression
- Speaking openly about or alluding to suicide

**When you or other staff or faculty are**...

- Skipping meetings or missing obligations to be with this person
- Thinking and worrying a lot about this person
- Not sure what you should do

**Ask yourself**...

- Is this student’s behavior or level of distress out of the ordinary?
- Is this beyond my skill level?
- Is the behavior getting worse?
- Does the behavior place anyone at risk?
- Am I feeling like I want to talk with someone about my observations and concerns?

**How to make a referral?**

If you answer “yes” to any of these questions, we encourage you to consult with a CAPS staff member to help you:

- Assess the situation and its seriousness
- Identify various responses you could make to the student, and their pros and cons;
- Identify resources both on and off campus, so you can suggest the appropriate help available to the student;
- Discuss the best ways to talk to the student about your concern, and how to make the referral to CAPS and/or the Student Care Team, if appropriate;
- Clarify your own feelings about the student and consider the ways you can be most effective.

Some students accept a referral for professional help more easily than others do. Here are some tips for making a successful referral.

- Let the student know that you are so concerned you sought CAPS help yourself.
- Let the student know that it is not necessary to know exactly what is wrong in order to seek assistance.
- Assure the student that seeking help does not necessarily mean that their problems are unusual or extremely serious. About 9% of the student body uses CAPS services every year, and most only come in 3-5 times.
- Be frank with the student about your own limits of time, energy, training, objectivity, and ability to help.
- If appropriate, suggest that the student consider talking with family members, friends, clergy, community agencies, and campus offices.
- If the student makes an appointment with CAPS, ask them how it went. If it went well and they feel like they got the help they needed, you will rest easier. If not, encourage them to discuss this with their counselor or request a transfer to another therapist at CAPS who might be a better fit for them.