

COUNSELING and STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Wright Building 316; 328-6661

<http://www.ecu.edu/studentlife/counselingcenter/>

The Counseling Center is located on the second floor of the Wright Building, Room 316. Enter the building through a side door that is between the front of Wright Auditorium and the Wright Place/Student Stores. Counseling and Student Development Center services are available to all enrolled ECU students. In addition, they provide consultation services for faculty/staff, parents, and students. They accept appointments and have regularly scheduled walk-in hours available.

When to refer a student to counseling

Not every student needs professional counseling. Sometimes simply listening and offering encouragement and empathy can help a student feel understood. If you want to let a student know that his or her concerns are normal and expected, be sure not to minimize the problems in doing so. What is a simple solution in your view may be harder to imagine for another person.

If distressing circumstances are affecting a student's well-being or ability to make satisfactory academic progress, a referral for counseling may be in order. Referrals are usually indicated in the following situations:

1. A student presents a problem or requests information, which is outside your range of knowledge;
2. You feel that personality differences, which cannot be resolved between you and the student, will interfere with your efforts to help the student;
3. The problem is personal, and you know the student on other than a professional basis (friend, neighbor, relative, etc.);
4. A student is reluctant to discuss a problem with you for some reason;
5. You do not believe your speaking with the student has been effective.

How to refer a student to counseling

When a faculty member determines that a student might benefit from professional counseling, it is usually best that the student be spoken to in a direct, straightforward fashion in which concern for his or her welfare is shown. It is recommended that faculty make it clear that this suggestion represents his/her best judgment based on observations of the student's behavior. Specific feedback about behaviors of concern is recommended. Above all, it is not advisable to attempt to deceive or trick the student into seeking counseling.

Except in emergencies, the option must be left open for the student to accept or refuse counseling. If the student is skeptical or reluctant, simply express your acceptance of those feelings so that your own relationship with the student is not jeopardized. Give the student an opportunity to consider other alternatives by suggesting that he or she might need some time to think it over. If the student emphatically says "no," then respect that decision, and again leave the situation open for possible reconsideration at a later time.

If the student agrees to the referral, you may call the Center for Counseling and Student Development (328-6661) to make an appointment. In some cases, the student will prefer to make the appointment. In either case, the student's first contact with the Center will be a screening interview in which the student and the intake counselor make decisions about the type of help needed. Intake appointments are usually scheduled within a day or two of the student's request to be seen at the Center. Students requiring immediate help are seen on an emergency basis. You should follow up with the student at a later date to show your continued interest even if he or she did not accept your attempted referral.