



# UCSB Distressed Students Response Protocol

Student distress may manifest in behavior or in the reaction the behavior elicits in others. If you notice any of the following behaviors, the Distressed Student Protocol will assist you in responding to the student and providing appropriate referrals.

## STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- Behavioral or emotional change
- Social withdrawal
- Change in hygiene or appearance
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Decline in academic performance
- Excessive or inappropriate anger
- Bizarre thoughts or behavior

## STAFF/FACULTY REACTIONS

### TO STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR

- Feeling alarmed or frightened
- Feeling uncomfortable about student's comments or behavior
- Concern about student's ability to function

## Is there danger to self or others?

Yes, or student needs immediate attention

No, but I am concerned

No, but student is having academic or personal issues

**Call 911**  
or (805) 893-3446

UCPD is the campus community's emergency response service for medical, psychiatric, and safety concerns.

Submit an online referral to Student Mental Health Coordination Services:  
[www.sa.ucsb.edu/REFERaGAUCHO](http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/REFERaGAUCHO)

### Refer to Appropriate Campus Support Services:

#### Counseling, Wellness and Health Resources

893-4411 Counseling & Psychological Services-  
*24/7 confidential phone line*  
893-3371 Social Work Services/Student Health  
893-2036 Health & Wellness  
893-3030 Student Mental Health Coordination Services  
Full listing available at: [wellbeing.ucsb.edu](http://wellbeing.ucsb.edu)

#### Sexual/Interpersonal Violence Resources

893-4613 Campus Advocacy Resources and Education-  
*24/7 confidential phone line*  
893-5410 Title IX Compliance and Discrimination & Harassment Prevention Office  
893-5012 Respondent Services Coordination

#### Academic Resources

893-3269 Campus Learning Assistance Services  
893-2668 Disabled Students Program

#### Other Resources

893-4758 Educational Opportunity Program  
893-5609 Undocumented Student Services  
893-2929 Office of International Students & Scholars  
893-5016 Office of Student Conduct  
893-5847 Resource Center for Sexual & Gender Diversity  
Basic Needs Resources: [basicneeds.ucsb.edu](http://basicneeds.ucsb.edu)  
Financial Crisis Team: [financialcrisis@sa.ucsb.edu](mailto:financialcrisis@sa.ucsb.edu)

UCSB is committed to providing a quality learning environment. Faculty, TAs, and staff will often be the first to encounter a student who is in distress. Encouragement and helping the student to seek assistance with the appropriate campus and community resources are key. UCSB has a dedicated team of professionals poised to respond to students in distress, including social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and case managers. Student Mental Health Coordination Services (SMHCS) is a readily accessible single point of contact for staff, faculty, and students who are concerned about a distressed student and want to understand how to respond. The SMHCS case managers will consult about a student, provide referrals to campus departments, develop action plans, and follow up with students, staff, and faculty as appropriate.

Support for faculty and staff after working with a distressed student: Academic & Staff Assistance Program, Human Resources, 893-3318.

For a comprehensive list of resources, visit:  
<https://studentsindistress.sa.ucsb.edu/directory-resources>



# Responding to Distressed Students

## REFERRAL TIPS

- Be clear with the student about the limits of your time, ability, expertise, and/or objectivity.
- Let the student know that you think they should get assistance from another source.
- Assure them that many students seek help over the course of their college career.
- Assist the student in choosing the best resource.
- Try to help the student know what to expect if they follow through on the referral.

### DO

- Speak with the student privately
- Remain calm
- Describe the behaviors that concern you
- Show concern and interest
- In some situations, encourage the student to call for an appointment from your office
- Seek consultation

### DON'T

- Tolerate rudeness
- Assume the role of therapist/counselor
- Remain in a situation that feels unsafe
- Critique the student
- Ignore a feeling that something is not right
- Assume someone else has intervened with the student

## TALKING WITH THE STUDENT ABOUT YOUR CONCERN

- “I’m concerned about your stress level. Do you know about CAPS – Counseling & Psychological Services? They are a great resource and have a lot of different ways to assist students. They even have a 24/7 number I’m going to give you.”
- “Based on what you’re sharing, I’m very concerned. I’d like you to see a campus psychologist/social worker. Let’s call CAPS/SHS and see if we can walk over now to meet with someone.”
- “I’m concerned for you, but I’m not the best person to help you. The SMHCS Case Managers are experts in connecting students to resources and I will ask them to contact you.”
- “If you can’t discuss this without yelling then I’ll have to ask you to leave my office.”
- “I’m very concerned about you. I’m going to call someone who can come out and talk with you right now ... ” (call 911)