REFERRAL GUIDE

UCSI UNIVERSITY
Student Development & Counselling Department
Student Affairs & Alumni Division
3rd Floor, South Wing, Block A,
No.1 Jalan Menara Gading, UCSI Heights,
Cheras, 56000 Kuala Lumpur.

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A. STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT SERVICES

The Student Development & Counselling Department (SDCD), a student service Department within the Student Affairs & Alumni Division, provides psychological counselling and consultation services to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate UCSI students. The Department offers counselling to support students’ growth and development emotionally, interpersonally, and intellectually. The following counselling services are offered in order to meet each student’s unique needs:

- Crisis intervention
- Short-term individual counselling
- Couples counselling
- Group counselling
- Alcohol & drug counselling
- Workshops and psycho-educational groups
- Referrals
- Outreach presentations
- Consultation
- Peer education training

Common Concerns
A student may be referred to the Student Development & Counselling Department for help with a variety of concerns. Some of the most common include:

- Time management
- Eating disorders
- Relationships
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Self-esteem
- Family issues
- Adjustment to university
- Anger management
- Study skills
- Stress management
- Sexuality
- Substance abuse
- Life transitions and loss
- Sexual assault

Assessment of the Student
In the initial interview, a counsellor will assess the student's needs and what services may be appropriate. Students whose needs cannot be met at the Student Development & Counselling Department may be referred to other departments or services on campus and/or in the community, as appropriate.

B. ELIGIBILITY

Counselling is available to currently enrolled, fee-paying UCSI students.
C. RECOGNIZING DISTRESSED STUDENTS

University students often encounter a great deal of stress during the course of their academic experience. While most students cope successfully with the challenges that these years bring, an increasing number of students find that the various pressures of life are unmanageable or unbearable.

As individuals who work closely with students, you may encounter these distressed students in your offices or your classrooms. Many of these students have not sought counselling and may be unaware of the services available to them. Thus, your role could be a crucial and positive one in identifying and referring students who are in distress.

What to Look for
The following signs may indicate a need to refer a student to the Student Development & Counselling Department:

- Marked changes in academic performance (e.g., excessively anxious when called upon, dominating discussions)
- Infrequent class attendance with little or no work completed
- Dependency (e.g., the student hangs around you or makes excessive appointments to see you during office hours)
- Chronic fatigue, lack of energy, or frequently falling asleep in class
- Abrupt/marked changes in behavior and/or appearance (e.g., hygiene, dress)
- Bizarre/inappropriate behavior and/or garbled, disjointed thoughts
- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Behavior which regularly interferes with the decorum or effective management of your class
- Overtly suicidal thoughts (e.g., referring to suicide as a current option or indirect reference to suicide or death)
- Overt references to harming someone else
- High levels of irritability, including unruly, aggressive, violent, abrasive, or otherwise disruptive behavior
- Normal emotions that are displayed to an extreme degree or for a prolonged period of time (e.g., fearfulness, tearfulness, nervousness)
- Expressed uncertainty and anxiety about emotional stability, family situation, and/or relationship problems

In your role with the student, you may also observe content that is disturbing in his/her work. Examples of disturbing content might include:

- Written or verbal content that seems disjointed and fragmented, indicating disorganized or incoherent thinking
- Preponderance of expressed negative themes such as violence or death
- Dramatic departure from the student’s typical social demeanor or affect

D. MANAGING DISTRESSED STUDENTS

It is important to recognize that you may not be able to detect every distressed student; nor will every student you approach be willing to accept your assistance. You may want to call the Student Development & Counselling Unit for a consultation to discuss your concerns about a student. One of our counsellor will help you clarify what may be the most helpful approach for that individual.

How to Handle the Interaction
Raising the issue of counselling can be an uncomfortable and challenging task. Whenever possible, it is best to present your suggestion for counselling in a way that is honest, non-threatening, and expresses support and concern. Attempting to trick or deceive the student into counselling is not advised. At times, it may be helpful or necessary for you to walk the student to the Student Development & Counselling Department. The following include some additional suggestions for encouraging a distressed student to seek counselling:

- Talk to the student in private if you feel safe doing so
- Show concern and interest
- Be specific regarding the behaviors that have contributed to your concerns
- Listen carefully
- Repeat back the essence of what the student has told you
- Be honest and direct
- Avoid criticizing, sounding judgmental, or offering advice outside your area of expertise
- Emphasize that seeking help is a sign of health and maturity, not weakness
- Encourage and discuss with the student the intention to refer him/her to the Student Development & Counselling Department and he/she need not go through this problem alone. Please remember to complete the Student Referral Form and submit the form to the counsellor.
- Give the Student Development & Counselling Department phone number (+603-9101 8880 Ext. 3161/3167/3180) and location (3rd Floor, South Wing, Student Development & Counselling Department, Student Affairs & Alumni Division) and encourage him/her to make contact
- If necessary, assist the student with scheduling by calling from your office with the student present
- If the student resists help and you are worried, contact the Student Development & Counselling Department to discuss your concerns

Upon calling, the student will be given the first available appointment. Remember that, with the exception of emergencies, pursuing counselling is optional and the choice should be left open for the student to either accept or refuse counselling.

E. EMERGENCIES

If the situation is urgent enough to require immediate attention, call the Student Development & Counselling Department and let us know the situation is urgent. Students in crisis can be seen by an on-call counselor the same day to manage the crisis or to be referred, as appropriate. We consider a situation to be an emergency when there is:

- Imminent danger of physical harm to self and/or others,
- Disabling emotional distress (e.g., insomnia, uncontrollable crying, agitation), and/or
- Gross impairment in thinking, behavior, etc.

In case of emergencies occurring after 6 p.m. and/or on weekends, please contact the UCSI Guard House through Security Department at +603-9101 8880 Ext. 3189. If you feel there is immediate danger to the students, yourself, or someone else, call IPD Cheras at +603-9284 2222 or Hospital UKM at +603-9145 5555 at once.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

We understand that you may be interested in the progress of the student you have referred. However, we are bound by the principles of confidentiality as defined by the Counsellors Act 1998 (ACT 580).

ACT 580 Guideline:
Counsellors have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality of information obtained from persons in the course of their work as counsellors. They reveal such information to others only with the consent of the person or persons’ legal representative, except in those unusual circumstances in which not to do so would result in clear danger to the person or to others. Where appropriate, counsellors inform their clients of the legal limits of confidentiality.

The following examples may clarify this principle:

**What we can do**
- Answer your questions concerning steps to help students obtain Student Development & Counselling Department services
- Offer you general information about psychological concerns.
- Ask the student to follow up with you or the referring party.

**What we can not do without written authorization**
- Say whether a student is being seen here or has kept an appointment
- Discuss the content of sessions
- Discuss treatment plans or progress

In some cases the student may find it in his/her best interest for information to be shared with a faculty, staff, family member, or significant other. This is done by the student’s own written authorization with clear explanation of the purpose and content of any disclosure. The only exception would be a counselor’s determination of imminent danger to the student or to others.

**G. REFERRAL SOURCES**

**CAMPUS RESOURCES**

Student Development & Counselling Department (SDCD)
+603-9101 8880 Ext. 3181/3167/3180
sacounselling@uctsiuniversity.edu.my
Monday-Friday 9:00am – 6:00pm
No charge for enrolled UCSI University students

UCSI Guard House (Security Department)
+603-9101 8880 Ext. 3189/3170
24 hours telephone hotline

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Hospital UKM
+603-9146 5855
24 hours telephone hotline

IPD Cheras
+603-9101 9284 2222
24 hours telephone hotline

The Befrienders (Kuala Lumpur)
03-7956 8144 or 03-7956 8145
24 hours telephone hotline
www.befrienders.org.my