

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO CRITICAL INCIDENTS

—| safety.uni.edu |—

University of
Northern Iowa

The logo of the University of Northern Iowa, featuring a stylized building and a tree within a semi-circular arch.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA IS COMMITTED TO THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF ALL STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF.

A threat assessment team and additional administrators/professionals are in place to prevent, address and respond to safety concerns or crisis situations that may occur. A description of this team and membership list can be found at safety.uni.edu.

Individuals who are concerned about the behavior of someone who is potentially dangerous to themselves or to others or is disruptive, should contact the appropriate department listed below. The department head or dean of the college may also be contacted. Initially, the threat assessment team member who receives this information will consult with other members of the team to determine an immediate course of action or may respond with an individual consultation.

The team member will then provide follow-up and will report to the team during the next regular meeting. Alternatively, the team member may request a special meeting to discuss the concern.

REPORTING AN IMMEDIATE DANGER OR EMERGENCY: **CALL 9-1-1**

Urgent or crisis situations may include, but are not limited to:

- A risk of suicide
- A threat of harm to others
- Severely disorganized, psychotic or out-of-control behavior
- Trauma, such as sexual assault or the death or injury of someone close
- Health emergency

REPORTING A CONCERN DURING BUSINESS HOURS

STUDENT CONCERN: Dean of Students, 319-273-2332

FACULTY CONCERN: Associate Provost for Faculty, 319-273-2519

STAFF CONCERN: Director of Human Resource Services, 319-273-2422

VISITORS: UNI Police, 319-273-2712

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: Title IX Officer, 319-273-2846

REPORTING A CONCERN AFTER BUSINESS HOURS:

Call UNI Police, 319-273-2712.

RESPONDING TO MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Emergency treatment for injuries or medical illnesses may be obtained by calling 911 or Public Safety 319-273-2712, if there are life threatening conditions such as not breathing, heart attack, seizure, or profuse bleeding. An ambulance will respond and arrange for transportation if required. Do not move the patient unless safety dictates. During University business hours, illnesses or injuries of students may be referred to the Student Health Clinic.

RECOGNIZING PEOPLE IN DISTRESS

Some common indicators that students (or others) are experiencing distress include:

DEPRESSION

Symptoms include sleep disturbances, poor concentration, change in appetite, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, withdrawal, poor hygiene, loss of self-esteem, suicidal thoughts and preoccupation with death.

AGITATION

Symptoms include being disruptive, restless or hyperactive, being antagonistic, and may include an increase in alcohol and/or drug abuse.

DISORIENTATION

Symptoms may include odd or unusual thinking and behavior, lack of awareness of what is going on around them, misperception of facts or reality, rambling or disconnected speech, and behavior that seems out of context or bizarre.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Signs of abuse may include intoxication at inappropriate times, excessive absences or impaired performance.

SUICIDAL THOUGHTS

Most people who attempt suicide communicate their distress through statements like "I don't want to be here," "No one would miss me if I were gone," or "I'm going to kill myself." Non-verbal messages could include giving away valued items, and putting legal, financial and other affairs in order. Indications of suicide should be taken seriously.

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

This includes physically violent behavior, verbal threats, threatening messages, harassing or stalking behavior, and papers or exams that contain violent or threatening material.

REFERRING FACULTY AND STAFF FOR ASSISTANCE

UNI offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for initial assessment/referral and short-term counseling. The program is available to UNI benefit-eligible faculty and staff and their eligible immediate family members to address problems affecting personal relationships, health and work performance or general well-being. For more information, visit hrs.uni.edu/mybenefits/eap, Employee and Family Resources at 800-327-4692, or contact Human Resource Services at 319-273-2422.

REFERRING A STUDENT FOR COUNSELING

As with many of life's problems, earlier intervention is often better. A person who receives appropriate help sooner, rather than later, may be less likely to experience more severe symptoms or problems.

WHEN TO REFER A STUDENT TO COUNSELING

The following signs may indicate a need to refer a student to the Counseling Center:

- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts or feelings
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Abrupt changes in behavior
- Inappropriate crying
- Outbursts of anger
- Low self-esteem
- Debilitating anxiety

Students also could benefit from counseling if they are having difficulty coping with a loss (e.g., death or relationship breakup), if they have experienced a traumatic incident (e.g., assault or accident), if they have experienced other significant stressors, or whenever emotional difficulties interfere with daily functioning.

HOW TO REFER A STUDENT TO COUNSELING

Consider the following when talking with a student:

- Talk to the student in a private setting.
- Listen carefully and express your concern.
- Repeat back the essence of what the student tells you.
- Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental.
- Suggest the Counseling Center as a resource to help the student.
- Inform the student that counseling is confidential and free of charge.
- Suggest the student call or visit the Counseling Center to arrange an initial appointment.

- Offer to initiate contact with the Counseling Center or walk the student to the Counseling Center (same day appointments can be made for emergencies).
- Encourage the student to learn more about the Counseling Center by visiting counseling.uni.edu.

URGENT OR CRISIS SITUATIONS

If danger is immediate, call 9-1-1 or UNI Police at 319-273-2712. If you believe there is an urgent situation with a student, call the Counseling Center at 319-273-2676 and a staff member will consult with you about what to do. In many cases, the staff member will recommend that you send or bring the student to the Counseling Center to meet with an on-duty crisis counselor.

Crisis counseling is available by calling the Counseling Center at 319-273-2676 and pressing #2 after the prompt and you will be connected with a licensed crisis mental health counselor. Students may utilize the Crisis Text Line by texting **Hello** to **741741**.

MANAGING CLASSROOM DISRUPTIONS

The Student Conduct Code describes disruption as “Disruption of university operations including, but not limited to, obstruction of teaching, research, administrative functions, or other university activities, and/or other authorized non-university activities which occur on campus.”

STEPS FOR PREVENTING AND MANAGING DISRUPTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

STEP 1 Set clear expectations for behavior in course syllabus and discuss with students the first day of class.

STEP 2 When disruptive behavior causes you or other students concern, ask the student to remain after class for a private conversation or schedule a meeting. Do not meet with the student alone if you have concerns for your safety. If a meeting cannot be arranged in person, communicate by phone, email or letter to reach the student before the next class session. If the behavior causes you serious concern, you may inform the student they cannot return to class until he/she has met with you to discuss the concerns. It is important to report these concerns to your department head, college dean, Dean of Students or Public Safety.

STEP 3 During your meeting, discuss the disruptive behavior, clarify your expectations, ask for cooperation in adhering to class standards, and outline possible consequences if the disruptive behavior continues.

STEP 4 Make a record of any meetings or conversations and send written communication to the student summarizing the discussion.

You are encouraged to involve your department head, supervisor or the Dean of Students when meeting with a student to discuss seriously disruptive behavior.

The involvement of others will serve to reinforce the importance of your standards, add other perspectives and help keep the conversation focused on behaviors rather than personalities.

If you need immediate assistance in responding to a threat to your safety, or the safety of others, **call 9-1-1**.

RESPONDING TO THREATS/DE-ESCALATING A SITUATION

Myth: Violent perpetrators just snap.

Fact: Almost all violent perpetrators will give some indication of violent intentions long before they act.

UNDERSTANDING THREATENING BEHAVIOR

- All threats must be taken seriously.
- Threats which are ignored provide the perpetrator with the feeling they are not being taken seriously.

HINTS TO DE-ESCALATE CONFLICT WITH INDIVIDUALS

- Take a deep breath and relax.
- Look the other person in the eye.
- Both either sit or stand when communicating.
- Speak slowly and softly.
- Keep your arms and legs uncrossed.
- Remember to look for win-win results.
- Paraphrase what the other person has said.
- Give “I” messages.
- Watch your language; try not to use words that tend to escalate conflict, such as never, always, unless, can't, won't or don't.

- Use words that tend to de-escalate, such as maybe, perhaps, what if or seems like.
- Ask questions to encourage them to look at solutions.
- Ask open-ended questions.

YOUR SAFETY

- Never place yourself in a situation where you are dealing with a potentially dangerous person alone.
- Always make plans to have additional persons in the meeting or in the area to assist if necessary.
- Anytime you feel personally threatened, stop the interaction and leave.

MISSING STUDENT AND EMERGENCY CONTACT INFO

The university requests missing person contact information from students residing in the university residence system. This information is kept confidential and used only by authorized university personnel in the event a student is believed to be missing.

If you believe a student may be missing, immediately report this information to UNI Police. All reports of missing students will be investigated. If the investigation determines the student is missing more than 24 hours, the university will, within the next 24 hours, notify the student's missing person contact. If the student is under the age of 18, the university will also notify the student's parent or guardian. UNI Police will also make notifications to the appropriate law enforcement agencies and others as necessary.

SUICIDE CONCERNS: WHAT YOU CAN DO

Suicide is often cited as the second leading cause of death among college students, with more than 1,000 students dying each year in the U.S. Most people who kill themselves believe that suicide is the **only** solution to unbearable feelings or problems; they have a sense of hopelessness. Their intense emotional distress may blind them to the alternative solutions available to them. Factors that increase the risk of suicide include a history of mental illness such as depression or bipolar disorder, alcohol or drug abuse, development of a suicide plan and possession of means to carry out the plan, and a personal or family history of suicide attempts.

- **Stay calm.** Take the time to listen carefully to the person.
- **Express your concern and support.** “I’m worried about....” “You’re not alone. There’s help available.”
- **Talk about it directly.**
 - Have you thought about hurting yourself?
 - If yes, have you thought about how you would hurt yourself?
 - Have you tried to hurt yourself before? How? When?
 - Do you have the means to harm yourself?
 - Be clear about your moral or legal obligation to report your concerns to university officials who can provide help.
 - Don’t debate, lecture or argue with the person. That may add to the person’s guilt or bad feelings.
- **Keep the person safe.** Don’t leave them alone until you believe they will be safe.
- **Get professional assistance.** If danger is imminent, call 9-1-1 for help.

Professional Resources:

UNI Counseling Center 319-273-2676
 (For crisis counseling, call counseling center and press #2 after the prompt)
 UNI Police 319-273-2712
 Foundation2 Statewide Crisis Line 800-332-4224
 National Suicide Hotline 800-SUICIDE (784-2433)

- **Don’t try to deal with a dangerous or potentially dangerous person alone.** Contact UNI Police for assistance.
- **Don’t ignore warning signs.** At least 70 percent of people who try to kill themselves give some sort of signal about their intentions. Examples of such actions or statements include, but are not limited to:
 - Giving away possessions or “tying up loose ends.”
 - Lack of interest in activities, appearance or friends.
 - “Life isn’t worth living.”
 - “Nobody cares.”

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW MAY BE A VICTIM OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT:

SEEK ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY AT [SAFETY.UNI.EDU](https://safety.uni.edu)

The Office of Compliance and Equity Management is an additional resource with information available at equity.uni.edu or by calling 319-273-2846.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY (for full policy visit policies.uni.edu/1302)

The university prohibits sexual misconduct in any form. Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing any unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that is committed without consent or by force, intimidation, coercion or manipulation. Sexual misconduct can occur between persons of the same or different sex. For the purposes of the Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy, consent is defined as knowing, voluntary, and clear permission by word or action to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. The university will not pursue disciplinary action for improper use of alcohol or other drugs against an alleged victim of sexual misconduct or against another student who shares information as either a witness to or as a reporter of sexual misconduct as long as the report is made in good faith.

REPORTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

UNI encourages those who have experienced any form of sexual harassment or assault to report the incident to the University Title IX Officer or any Title IX Deputy Coordinator. Refer to equity.uni.edu/title-ix-reporting for this list of individuals. You may also file separate criminal charges by contacting UNI Police at 319-273-2712. See safety.uni.edu for additional resources and reporting options.

TITLE IX OFFICER

Office of Compliance and Equity Management
Gilchrist 117
319-273-2846
equity@uni.edu

TO FILE AN ANONYMOUS REPORT: safety.uni.edu

Please note that failure to identify all relevant parties may limit the University's ability to adequately respond to the report.

CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES

The University of Northern Iowa will make every effort to safeguard the identities of individuals who seek help and/or report sexual misconduct. While steps are taken to protect the privacy of victims, the university may need to investigate an incident and take action once an allegation is known, whether or not the individual chooses to pursue a complaint.

The following individuals are designated as confidential resources who will seek to maintain all information received as private and will not share confidential information with university officials or others, unless required to do so by law:

- A sexual assault advocate:
 - Riverview Center, 24-Hour Sexual Assault Crisis and Support Line, 888-557-0310, www.riverviewcenter.org;
 - Waypoint Services, 24-Hour Relationship Violence Crisis and Support Line, 800-208-0388, www.waypointservices.org;
- A licensed psychologist or certified mental health counselor, including counselors at the UNI Counseling Center and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider;
- A health care provider, including physicians and other medical professionals at the Student Health Clinic;
- A religious adviser or clergy member; and
- A licensed attorney.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The University of Northern Iowa does not discriminate in employment or education. Visit policies.uni.edu/1303 for additional information.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION ABOUT STUDENTS

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), it is permissible for faculty and staff to report concerns about students to department heads, college deans, administrators, the student health clinic, the counseling center, public safety, the dean of students, Title IX Officer, etc.

Because of federal and state laws some departments that provide special services on campus may be restricted from revealing treatment records or other protected health information without the student's permission.

SAFETY FROM NATURAL DISASTERS AND OTHER HAZARDS

In-depth information on emergency shelters, campus building evacuation routes, fire safety and other safety topics is available at **risk.uni.edu** or by calling 319-273-5800.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

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| UNI Police | 319-273-2712 |
| Academic Affairs/Assoc. Provost for Faculty | 319-273-2519 |
| Compliance and Equity Management/Title IX Officer | 319-273-2846 |
| Counseling Center..... | 319-273-2676 |
| Dean of Students..... | 319-273-2332 |
| Department of Residence..... | 319-273-2333 |
| Office of Sr. VP Finance & Operations | 319-273-3420 |
| Human Resource Services | 319-273-2422 |
| University Counsel | 319-273-3241 |
| University Relations | 319-273-2761 |
| University Risk Manager | 319-273-3189 |

UNI ALERT

UNI Alert notifies the campus community of emergencies or threats to physical safety in situations such as tornados/severe weather, violence, hazardous materials incident, etc. Notification is through phone (landline and cell), email and text messages. Faculty, staff and students should update their personal contact information through MyUniverse to ensure that timely and accurate notification can be made. External speakers with sirens and voice messaging are used for outdoor communication.

More information can be found at **safety.uni.edu**.

PUBLIC SAFETY PHONE LOCATIONS

