Students in Distress: Faculty Guide

**Mild Risk** (non-urgent)

A student who:
- is agitated, very sad, highly anxious, lacks motivation or concentration
- Sleeping, drinking, hungover in class
- Showing dramatic weight change
- Has a sudden change in typical behavior
- Has marked changes in academics
- May have experienced a recent notable stressor (loss, assault, etc.)

Mild risk involves mental health concerns **without risk of suicide**

**Steps to Take:**
Refer student to resources available:
- Counseling Services: 715-836-5521
- Academic Skills: 715-836-2200
- Student Health Services: 715-836-5360

Notify Dean of Students through online form: [www.uwec.edu/DOS/](http://www.uwec.edu/DOS/)

If you are still concerned or want assistance:
Consult with UWEC Counseling Services about next steps at: 715-836-5521

**Moderate Risk**

A student who:
- demonstrates bizarre behavior or speech
- is disruptive to the learning environment
- shows erratic moods, behaviors, academic performance

**Safety is not an immediate concern**

For assistance, call UWEC Counseling Services (836-5521).

**Steps to Take:**
- Notify Dean of Students Office:
  - Online Form: [www.uwec.edu/DOS/](http://www.uwec.edu/DOS/)
  - Refer Student to Counseling Services: 715-836-5521
- Provide the student with mental health crisis line and resources.

**After Hours Consultation:**
- Northwest Connections Mental Health Crisis Line: 1-888-552-6642
- UWEC Police after hours: 715-577-9045
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK

**High Risk** (urgent)

A student who:
- makes verbal or physical threats to harm oneself or others
- is exhibiting violent or overtly dangerous behavior

**Safety of Student or Others is an Immediate Concern:** CALL 9-911

**How to Show Support**

**Questions you can ask:**
How can I best support you right now?
When you have experienced difficulties in the past, what has helped?

**Things you can say:**
You are not alone in this. I’m here for you.
While I might not understand exactly how you feel, I care about you and I want to help.
Share information about campus resources including the Dean of Students office, Counseling Services, Academic Skills Center.

**Listen without judgment:**
Remain patient and accepting. Even if the stressor seems trivial to you, it’s not for the student. The conversation might seem negative and uncomfortable, but talking is always a positive step.

It’s not about saying exactly the right words. The important thing is showing that you care.
**Students at High Risk: Guidelines for Faculty**

If any action toward the completion of suicide has been taken by the student, call 9-911 immediately.

**Is student at risk for suicide?**
- ✓ Saying they wish they were dead
- ✓ Talking about wanting to kill themselves
- ✓ Talking about a suicide plan
- ✓ Has access to lethal means

**NOTE:** If you are able, get a colleague for support at this point.

- **NO**
  - Refer student to Dean of Students and/or Counseling Services. Complete DoS online form. (see previous page)
  - If you are still concerned: Consult with UWEC Counseling Services about next steps at: 715-836-5521

- **YES**
  - How was this information shared?
  - **IN-PERSON**
    - **During Business Hours: 8:00 - 4:30**
      - Walk student to UWEC Counseling Services at Old Library 2122
      - Or Dean of Students Office at Schofield Hall 240
      - If you are unable to walk with student to Counseling Services, call campus police at 715-836-2222. Stay with student until help arrives.
    - **After Hours or if student unwilling to walk to Counseling Services:**
      - From Campus Phone Call: 9-911
      - From off-campus phone call: 911
      - Stay with student until help arrives.
      - (see other page for tips to show support during this time)

  - **PHONE**
    - If possible, have a colleague or coworker call 9-911.
    - Keep the student on the phone until help arrives – if you can.
    - Refer to first page for tips on what to say to support a student in distress while you wait.

  - **EMAIL**
    - Respond to email using the guidelines on this page.
    - Consult with Counseling Services or the Dean of Students office for next steps.

  - **Editor’s Note: phone number is incorrect; update to 715-836-5521**

**Guidelines for Responding to At-Risk Students via email:**

- Thank the student for reaching out to you.
- Sincerely express your concern for the student.
- Direct the student toward appropriate campus resources depending on issue: including Counseling Services & Dean of Students office.
- Include the 24-hour mental health crisis line: Northwest Connections 1-888-552-6642
  - Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- Encourage the student to continue to reach out for help and support.

**Always Notify:**
- Dean of Students office at: 836-5626 or with online form [www.uwec.edu/DOS/](http://www.uwec.edu/DOS/)
- Your direct supervisor.
- *If desired, contact EAP services to help yourself debrief the experience.*