First on Agenda: Counseling Center Resources - Stephanie Harkin, Assistant Director for Outreach

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- When to refer a student – abrupt changes in behavior, outbursts of anger, debilitating anxiety, suffering from loss of a relationship or family member, or experienced traumatic experience.
- Crisis vs “normal” – “Crisis” debilitates ones level of functioning. Prevents normal day to day processes, interactions and actions
- How to refer – choose a private space or time where you can explain that the Counseling Center is an option/choice and the resources that it provides.
  - “Normalize” it (i.e. “I’ve seen lots of students go through this”),
  - Actively listen to students and be empathetic
  - Explain that the Counseling Center is free and confidential (there is a common misconception that they need insurance and that their parents will be informed)
- Avoid Criticism and judgements-it is about the student understanding that there are choices or resources in assisting them to process what they are feeling and that there will be times in everyone’s life that we will need help
- Assessment process:
  - Students calls/comes in and schedules appointment for initial assessment --- lots of paperwork and initial consultation with a person to assess what the issues are and who to match the students with.
  - Within a week, the student is contacted and assigned a counselor; however, there may be a wait time before they can come in and meet with them. If that is the case student is placed on a call list so that if there is a cancellation, they will be next in line to get in ($25 cancellation fee).
  - Appointments are every other week (not ideal, but is part of a workload distribution) unless it is a student’s state necessitates weekly meeting.
- Last semester wait times were not ideal, however they were short staffed. This semester have 3 new counselors and operating at better capacity.
- Common concerns among students – stress (#1), anxiety (about as common as stress), depression, self-harm, suicide
- If advisors ever have questions, feel free to call and ask about specific situations
- In the US, a person dies by suicide once every 13.7 minutes and is the second leading cause of death for college students.
- Suicidal mindset blinds the person to the fact that there are other options, so bringing up those options is helpful
- If a student is suicidal here is some tips on how to help:
  - Stay calm, express concern and support
  - Talk about suicide directly: “Have you ever tried to hurt yourself?” Do not “talk around” it.
  - Do not debate, lecture, or argue: “You shouldn’t feel this way; you have so much going for you”. Listen to what they have to say, allow them to verbalize what they are feeling.
Be clear about your moral and legal obligations to report concerns

The best scenario for the person is to talk about it because that will help pull them out of the isolation and see other options available to them

If you find yourself in a situation where you are concerned about a student, it is OK to keep them in your office. Tell them “I am not comfortable with you leaving, let’s continue talking about what is bothering you.” You can call the Counseling Center and they will get in contact with Campus Police to help escort the students over. Advisors as also welcome to walk them over if that would be helpful.

Do not ignore any warning signs.

Who to call: Immediate danger (911), urgent issues, even for advisors, outside office hours (273-2676, press 2 to speak to crisis counselor), state crisis line (1-800-332-4224), suicide hotline (1-800-SUICIDE, or 1-800-784-2433)

Additional resources:

- If students are not ready for a 1 on 1 with a Counselor, the Counseling Center is hosting a “Let’s talk” sessions every other Tues, 11-1pm and every other Fri 2-4pm in the library.”Lets Talk” are informal “drop in” counseling sessions that give students the opportunity to explore the counseling process and allow counselors the ability to assess various situations that students are going through
- Every semester the Counseling Center hold a depression or anxiety screening session
- ULifeline: Mental Health Screening tool – available at bottom of Counseling website
- https://mental.health.uni.edu/

People resources:

- Joan Thompson – victim services advocate (but she also is a health educator and can address food/eating disorder issues) 273-2137
- Shawna Haislet – Health promotions coordinator (273-6119) and works with Joan
- Dean of Students office – 273-7153

Announcements and Debriefing from Advising Council:

- Advising network notes and presentations are all posted on the Advising Council page
- A document of questions and issues on waiting lists will go to the Dean’s Council to discuss and potentially create some action steps to move forward. Hoping to have things in place in time for Spring 2018 registration
- A similar document about second half semester course offerings will go to the Dean’s council after spring break. This is a more complicated issue and will take a bit more vetting before action steps can be taken
- Advisor/student guide – currently in the work is creating a subcommittee to review this issue
  - Since there is no “student handbook” in print handed out to students at orientation, the goal is to have a 1 page guide for students to delineate “advising” vs “HS counselor” at the UNI NOW sessions.
  - Anything that individual colleges might have in addition to that general guide can be added to supplement.
- Future Network Meetings:
  - Thursday April 27th 8:30 am CBB (Curris Business Building)