Follow the decision tree to determine who to contact when you are concerned about a student who is distressed and/or disruptive. Emergency and campus resources are listed.

**Is the student a danger to themselves/others OR does the student need some other assistance?**

- **Yes**
  - The student’s conduct is clearly dangerous or threatening, including self-harm or harm to others.
  - Call 911 or Penn State Police 717-531-8888.

- **No**
  - I am not concerned for anyone’s immediate safety, but the student is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.
  - Refer student to campus resources, as appropriate.

- **I’m Not Sure**
  - The student is with me currently and shows signs of distress, but it is not clear how serious it is. I feel uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.
  - Call the Office of Student Mental Health and Counseling or Penn State Crisis Line 1-877-250-6400. Then, refer students to the appropriate campus resources.

- **The student is not with me currently, but I am concerned about what they said (in an email/text) OR what they did (acted bizarrely, were aggressive/disruptive) OR how they looked (unshaven, unkempt, unshowered, or if drug/smoke/drunk).**
  - Report to Campus Safety and Security 717-531-8771, or Behavioral Threat Management Team.

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**Emergency Resources**

- **Campus Safety and Security** 717-531-8888 or 911
- **Penn State Crisis Line** 24/7 confidential service
- **Licensed mental health counselors** 1-877-250-6400
- **YMCA/Rape Crisis and Domestic Violence Services** Off-campus services for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking • 800-554-1211 • 1101 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17103

**Urgent Resources**

- **Behavioral Threat Management Team (BTMT)**
  - Report concerns about any person, including threatening or disruptive behavior
  - Referrals to support services
  - 814-863-2868 • btmt.psu.edu

- **Office of Student Mental Health and Counseling**
  - Crisis, consultation, and counseling services
  - 717-531-8658
  - CMHC@penstatehealth.psu.edu

- **Student Conduct**
  - Report possible violations of the Code of Conduct (excludes sexual misconduct – see OSMPR Office)
  - 717-531-5665 • Student Affairs, C1802

**Financial Advising**

- 717-531-7052
- 500 University Drive, Hershey, PA 17033, C1805

**Additional Resources**

- **Academic Advising**
  - 215-881-3728
- **Medical Students - C1802,** 717-531-4398
- **Physician Assistants - CG638B,** 717-531-0003 x83595
- **Graduate Students - C1602,** 717-531-8892

- **International Student Advising**
  - Support for international students
  - 717-531-4101 • 300 University Dr., Hershey, PA 17033, C1802

- **Student Health**
  - 717-531-5999 • 845 Fishburn Road, Hershey, PA 17033, C1802

- **Diversity/Multicultural Resources**
  - Provides support, advocacy, and education for underrepresented populations
  - 717-531-1012
  - diversity@penstatehealth.psu.edu

- **Office of Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response (OSMPR)**
  - Report sexual or gender-based harassment or misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, exploitation, stalking, dating/domestic violence)
  - Investigates concerns, provides resources, support, and accommodations
  - 814-867-0999
  - Dr. Andrea Klein, Title IX Coordinator - 717-531-0003 x283353

- **Student Disability Resources**
  - Provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities
  - 717-531-3033

- **Office of Respectful Learning Environment**
  - Provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities
  - 717-531-6148
  - Students-moe.psu.edu/report/mistreatment

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**HOW TO USE:**

1. Recognize indicators of distress.
2. Respond appropriately.
3. Refer the student.

A quick reference guide for recognizing, responding to, and referring distressed students.

**RED FOLDER**

Penn State College of Medicine

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Student Affairs/Community and Psychological Services (CAPS)
## RECOGNIZE
**Indicators of Distressed Students**
Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not just isolated symptoms.

### Academic
- Sudden decline in quality of work and grades
- Frequently missed classes and assignments
- Disturbing content in writing or presentations
- Classroom disruptions
- Consistently seeking personal rather than professional advice
- Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations (a change from prior functioning)
- Doesn’t respond to repeated requests for contact/meetings

### Physical
- Marked changes in physical appearance (e.g., poor grooming/hygiene or sudden weight loss/gain)
- Strange or bizarre behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
- Visibly intoxicated or smelling of alcohol or marijuana
- Rapid speech or manic behavior
- Depressed or lethargic mood or functioning
- Observable signs of injury (e.g., facial bruising or cuts)

### Psychological
- Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g., family problems, financial difficulties, assault, discrimination, legal difficulties)
- Unusual/disproportionate emotional response to events
- Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions
- Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)
- Expressions of concern about the student by peers

### Safety Risk
- Verbal, written, or implied references to suicide, homicide, assault or self-injurious behaviors
- Unprovoked anger or hostility/physical violence (e.g., shoving, grabbing, assaulting, use of weapon)
- Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, helplessness, isolation, rage, despair, violence, self-injury
- Stalking or harassing
- Communicating threats/disturbing comments via email, correspondence, texting or phone call

## RESPOND
Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response for a distressed student.

### Stay Safe
Call Penn State Police or 911 if there is an imminent danger to the student, you, or anyone else.

### Stay Calm
Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself. Use a calm voice when talking and asking questions.

### Take Your Time
If this is NOT an imminently dangerous situation, take time to think through what might be the most helpful next step.

### Seek Consultation
You are not alone. Ask those around you for help. Consult with a colleague, call another office on campus (see resources).

### Use Active Listening
Make eye contact, give your full attention. Restate what the student says to make sure you understand what is causing the distress and/or what they are asking for help with.

### Ask Direct Questions
Don’t be afraid to directly ask the student if they are having thoughts of harming themselves or others (by asking, you are not instilling the thought).

### Give Concrete Help
Help get them to the next step (e.g., contact the academic advisor with the student to make an appointment; help them call counseling services to schedule an appointment).