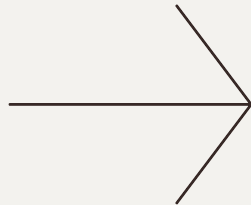


# Supporting Student Mental Health: Guidance for Faculty

Presented by  
Counseling and  
Psychological  
Services



---

# Overview: What are we covering today?

- Basic information about selected mental health issues
- Discuss scenarios that you have encountered (or will encounter) with student struggling with mental health concerns
- Discuss how to intervene in those scenarios

---

# Being a Professor in 2023

- Mental health issues continue to have a negative impact among some of the EMU student population
- In some instances, this can lead to students bringing up these issues as obstacles to their academic achievement or even behavioral incidents in class
- It is important to problem solve around mental health scenarios

---

# EMU CAPS Clients: Clinical Characteristics (2022 -2023)

- 37% have engaged in non-suicidal self-injury
- 34% someone had sexual contact without consent
- 44% have at some point seriously considered suicide
- **16% have made a suicide attempt**
- 13% have been hospitalized before

Note: CAPS has met with about 3-6% of the student population during any given year

---

# Warning Signs of Severe Depression and Suicide

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- Seeking access to means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from family, friends, or society
- Giving away prized possessions
- Major changes in behavior, acting out of character
- Psychosis, paranoia

---

# How to Help a Person who is Suicidal

- Remain calm and appear confident
- Discuss your observations and concerns with the person
- Ask questions directly and without dread
- Do not express a negative judgment
- Take your time so that you can understand
- Take ALL suicidality seriously. When in doubt about level of risk, err on the side of caution

---

# How to Help a Person who is Suicidal cont.

- If you have any reason to suspect the person is in immediate danger (including if they give vague answers to questions about suicide), **do not leave the person alone** . Consider asking if you can have another staff member sit with the student while you consult with someone about the best way to help
- Do not use guilt and threats to try to prevent suicide
  - “You will go to hell” or “You will ruin other people’s lives if you die by suicide”
- Do not agree to keep their plan a secret

---

# Questions to Ask

Ask the person directly whether he or she is suicidal:

- “Are you thinking about killing yourself?”
- “I’m concerned about you and I want to check in – Are you having thoughts of suicide?”

Avoid:

- “You’re not going to do anything stupid, are you?”
- “I just want to make sure you’re not thinking about suicide.”



---

# How to Help a Person who is Suicidal

- Provide a safety contact number that is available at all times
- National Suicide Hotline: 988
- Call CAPS phone number: 734-487-1118
- Text START to 741-741 ([crisistextline.org](https://www.crisistextline.org))
  
- Help the person think about what has kept them from acting on the plan so far
  - Coping skills? Sources of support?
  - Their own reasons for living?

---

# Scenario - Depression

You have a student in class who has been doing well but you notice that they are increasingly absent and that the quality of their work has deteriorated over time. You become increasingly concerned about the student and reach out to them after they failed a recent test. They tell you that they have become increasingly depressed and are having thoughts of suicide. They admit that when they were in high school, they tried to die by suicide.

---

# Scenario - Depression

- What are the pieces of information that are most important to consider in this scenario?
- How do you address the issue of suicidality?
- Do you ask about their previous attempt?
- What would you do in this situation?

---

# Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

## Physical

- **Cardiovascular** : pounding heart, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, blushing
- **Respiratory** : fast breathing, shortness of breath
- **Neurological** : dizziness, headaches, sweating, tingling, numbness
- **Gastrointestinal** : choking, dry mouth, stomach pains, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- **Musculoskeletal** : muscle aches and pains (especially neck, shoulders and back), restlessness, tremors and shaking, inability to relax

---

# Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

## Psychological

- Excessive and uncontrollable worry or obsessive thoughts
- Racing thoughts
- Decreased concentration and memory
- Indecisiveness
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbance
- Flashbacks or nightmares

---

# Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

## Behavioral

- Avoidance of situations (phobic behavior)
- Ritualistic behaviors (e.g., washing hands)
- Restlessness

---

# Scenario - Anxiety

A student routinely emails you late at night right before an assignment is due. They share they have been struggling with anxiety and panic attacks that have kept them from being able to complete their work. The student tells you they will be unable to make it to the scheduled exam tomorrow because of this and wants to know if they can take it at a later date.

---

# Scenario - Anxiety

- What are the pieces of information that are most important to consider in this scenario?
- How do you balance the student's distress with the requirements of the class?
- What would you do in this situation?



---

# Examples of Trauma

- School shootings
- Combat
- Fire
- Moving vehicle accidents
- Assaults (i.e., muggings)
- Sexual assault

---

# Scenario - Trauma

One of your best students walks into class and you can tell that something is not right. After class, you gently ask the student if she is okay and she admits that she was sexually assaulted last night. She starts to cry intensely and tells you that you are the first person to find out.

---

# Scenario - Trauma

- How do you balance helping your student with your reporting duties?
- What can you do to help your student?
- What specific resource(s) on campus should you provide her?

---

# Overcoming Obstacles to Getting Help

- Some students may not want to see a professional due to stigma, lack of familiarity, or other reasons
- Find ways to “hook” the student (e.g., grades)
- Find ways to de-stigmatize seeing a professional (e.g., stress)
- Use normalization
- Familiarity (“I know Lisa at CAPS”)
- Stress confidentiality (“Your professors will not know”)

---

# EMU Resources

- CAPS
- Campus Police
- Title IX Office
- The Disability Resource Center
- Filling out a CareNetwork Report
- CAPS after-hours phone service

# Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)



---

# Therapeutic Services

- Free, voluntary, and confidential treatment
- Brief therapy model
- Usually individual outpatient
- Referrals provided to community resources

CAPS also has a psychiatrist who prescribes medication on staff - there is a fee associated with these services

---

**Questions?**