



# Assisting Students in Distress

See Something. Say Something. Do Something.

**SEE SOMETHING:** Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) faculty and staff are in a unique position to demonstrate compassion for FDU students in distress.

Undergraduate and graduate students may feel alone, isolated, and even hopeless when faced with academic and life challenges. These feelings can easily disrupt academic performance and may lead to other serious consequences.

You may be the first person to SEE SOMETHING distressing in a student since you have frequent and prolonged contact with them.

**SAY SOMETHING:** Students exhibiting troubling behaviors in your presence are likely having difficulties in various settings including the classroom, with roommates, with family, and even in social settings.

Trust your instincts and SAY SOMETHING if a student leaves you feeling worried, alarmed, or threatened.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern in connection with a health and safety issue to an appropriate campus resource.

**DO SOMETHING:** Sometimes students cannot or will not turn to family and friends.

Doing something, like expressing concern and/or informing a student of services available to them, may be a critical factor in getting them to seek help.

## Indicators of a Distressed Student *Look for clusters; frequency, duration, and severity – not just isolated symptoms.*

Academic Indicators	Physical Indicators	Safety Risk Indicators	Psychological Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden decline in quality of work and grades</li> <li>• Frequent absences</li> <li>• Disorganized performance</li> <li>• Multiple requests for extensions</li> <li>• Conduct that interferes with classroom or activity engagement</li> <li>• Bizarre content in writing/presentation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marked changes in physical appearance</li> <li>• Excessive fatigue</li> <li>• Trouble sleeping</li> <li>• Intoxication</li> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Bizarre, out of context behavior</li> <li>• Disoriented, or loss of contact with reality</li> <li>• Unusual repetitive behaviors or rituals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unprovoked anger or hostility</li> <li>• Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others</li> <li>• Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, and despair</li> <li>• Suicidal ideations or violent behaviors (a cry for help)</li> <li>• Stalking or harassing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-disclosure of personal distress (family problems, financial difficulties, contemplating suicide, grief)</li> <li>• Excessive tearfulness, panic reactions, irritability or unusual apathy</li> <li>• Verbal abuse (e.g., taunting, badgering, intimidation)</li> <li>• Expressions of concern about the student by his/her peers</li> <li>• Delusions and paranoia</li> </ul>

# **FDU Response Protocol**

Follow the chart to determine who to contact when faced with a distressed student.

**Is the student a danger to themselves or others, and/or does the student need immediate assistance for any reason?**

## **Yes**

The student's conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous, or threatening including self-harm behavior.

Call 911 or Public Safety  
(973) 443-8888.

After speaking with Public Safety, report the concern to the Dean of Students Office  
(973) 443-8935.

## **Not Sure**

The student shows signs of distress but I am unsure how serious it is. My interaction has left me feeling uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.

During Business Hours:  
Call Office of Mental and Emotional Wellbeing:  
(973) 443-8504 or the Dean of Students  
(973) 443-8935.

After Hours & Holidays:  
Call the Public Safety Office.

## **No**

I am not concerned for the student's immediate safety, but he/she is having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.

Refer the student to an appropriate resource. Many of them are listed to the right. -->

**Dean of Students:** (973) 443-8935

**Office of Mental and Emotional Wellbeing:**  
(973) 443-8504

**Office of Health Wellness:** (973) 443-8535

**Student Conduct Office:** (973) 443-8935

**Disability Support Services:** (973) 443-8079

**Sexual Violence/Harassment/Discrimination Claims/Questions:** (201)-692-2466 or (973) 443-8888

**Academic Resource Center:** (973) 443-8538

**Athletics:** (973) 443-8017

**Office of Housing & Residence Life:** (973) 443-8586

**International Student Services:** (201) 692-2743

**Regional Center for Students with Learning Disabilities:** (973) 443-8981

**Florham Park Police Department:** (973) 377-2200

**Madison Police Department:** (973) 593-3000

**Morris CARES 24-hour Sexual Assault Hotline:**  
973-829-0587

**Healing Space (Rape Crisis Hotline):** (201) 487-2227

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 988

**National Sexual Assault Hotline:** (800) 656-4673

**Uwill Crisis Prevention Hotline:** (833) 656-1526

## **Ways to Report Students of Concern:**

- 1. Student Concern Report ([fdu.edu/fducures](http://fdu.edu/fducures))**
- 2. Dean of Students Office: (973) 443-8935**
- 3. Public Safety: (973) 443-8888**