

Safety Best Practices: Public/Private & Legal Implications

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Agenda

- Culture of care created at institutions
- Breaking down silos
- Care for students in psychological distress
- Disruptive behavior
- Threats of violence
- Model Programs
- Summary numbers

Student Behavior Best Practices

- Culture of care
- Open communication
- Training for faculty, staff, and students
- Address distress before it becomes a crisis
- Have policies/protocol in place for addressing issues
- Comprehensive mental health support
- Well-trained and equipped Police/Public Safety

- UNCG Cares: 700+ faculty and staff trained to assist students in distress by proactively reaching out, actively listening, and problem solving using multiple campus resources; national award winning; recognized in state and national documents as best practice; Dean of Students Office program
- Guilford College = 165 total faculty, much less formal program. Outreach involves mandatory attendance by Student Affairs at Wed. Faculty Lunch, VP/Counseling role in faculty development series, and Public Safety outreach with faculty. (Highly recommend restructuring to bring Safety/Security into Student Affairs).

Outreach Programs: Philosophy and Purpose

- 1. A culture of care (usually easier with a smaller, teaching-focused faculty)**
- 2. Changing demographics/challenging circumstances**
- 3. Retention/graduation rates**
- 4. Proactive vs. reactive**
- 5. Students in distress assisted so they aren't disruptive**
- 6. Empowers faculty and staff**

Assessment Results

- 97% of respondents indicated an increase in their knowledge of available campus resources (3% indicated N/A or neutral)
- 95% stated that as a result of the training, they felt capable of recognizing signs of distress (5% indicated N/A or neutral)
- 98% claimed that they felt capable of responding to a student who showed signs of distress (2% indicated N/A or neutral)

Another way of reaching out..

- On line form for faculty, staff, or students to submit regarding students in distress
- Academic issues are facilitated by Student Academic Services
- Personal/multiple issues are facilitated by the Dean of Students Office
- Offices reach out to students in distress and offer support; leverage resources
- Pilot in progress now through Teaching and Learning Center for Blackboard program that establishes automatic parameters for meeting with students who show a lack of success

Guilford College Student Success Program (SSP)

- Initially intended to provide extra academic support for at risk students
- Extremely successful in that regard (67% to 80% retention in one year)
- BUT, faculty loved the program so much it led to early identification of other “at risk” students
- Assistant Academic Dean
- Personal/multiple issues are facilitated by the Division of Student Affairs
- Offices reach out to students in distress and offer support; leverage resources

Student Safety and Concerns Committee

- Dean of Students, chair
- Chief of Police, Capt. of detectives
- Chief of Staff to Chancellor
- Vice Provost
- Directors of Housing, Campus Activities and Programs and Counseling and Testing
- Meets every Monday morning

Guilford Student Concern Response Protocol

- VP and Dean of Students, Director of Public Safety, Director of Counseling, Director of Judicial, Director of Residence Life, and Associate Deans.
- Meet every Monday afternoon

What Happens?

- Students we are worried about: crime, serious/out of control mental health, behavior
- Who is helping student? Are there victims? Who is helping them?
- Helps address individual concerns, make sure there aren't silos of information about students
- Helps us see patterns in student behavior/concerns so we can address through staffing/programming

The Crisis Management Process

- Attempted suicide or ideation that disrupts the community; occasionally might include student with an eating disorder or psychotic break that is not complying with care recommendations
- Receive information from Police, local hospitals, family, faculty, staff, other students
- Contact is made with student explaining meeting needs to occur before the student returns to campus
- Student usually on campus at Guilford and must be retrieved or removed from classes.

Assumptions

- Although technically the meeting determines ability of student to return, assumption is made that student will return although conditions may be modified (living on campus, dropping classes, etc.)
- Our philosophy is that students are better off with us than in the real world.
- We believe compassionate, supportive and nurturing initial meeting fosters better long term relationship and compliance with requests.
- The more distressed the student, the more compassionately directive the meeting

The Crisis Management Meeting

- Meet with Dean of Students and Director of Counseling and Testing Center
- Evaluate ability to function safely as a student
- Develop plan for continual care
- Success plan
- Compliance and follow up

Success Plan Example

- By Monday, March 31 at 5:00 p.m. you will fill out paperwork at the Counseling and Testing Center for counseling. You will continue in counseling with a licensed professional until that professional believes it is no longer necessary for your continued success. I've got your release so I can keep track of your attendance.
- I've emailed your faculty and asked them to work with you. Please contact me if you run into any issues. I've also emailed Professor X and asked her to reschedule your advising appointment. Please email her on Monday.
- You said you are going to Charlotte this weekend with friends. Please be safe and use your emergency contacts if needed.

- continued

Success Plan Example continued

- You've asked to stay in Mendenhall. Please be aware that we must balance your request with the health and wellness of your floor mates. If last night's event caused undue hardship or any other behavioral concerns occur, it is likely you'll have to move.
- Don't forget about the Wellness Center. I think you would enjoy talking with staff there.
<http://www.uncg.edu/shs/wellness/>
- We spoke to your mother during our meeting. Thanks for signing a release so we may continue to keep her informed.

Follow Up

- Faculty notification if requested (wording: *significant health issues or personal issue*)
- Periodic check-ins via email
- Deadline management
- Late withdraw appeal, financial aid appeal, insurance verification, refund appeal, etc.
- Network of partners- Housing, Disability Services, faculty, Police, etc.
- Release with Counseling Center
- Student Safety and Concerns Committee

Crisis Management Meetings at UNCG

2004-2005: 37, 0 deaths

2005-2006: 56, 0 deaths

2006-2007: 44, 0 deaths

2007-2008: 39, 0 deaths

2008-2009: 85, 2 deaths (neither student had participated in the crisis management process)

2009-2010: 50 to date, 1 death (did not participate in the crisis management process)

Students Who Go Through the Crisis Management Process

Freshman:	27%
Sophomore:	29%
Junior:	16%
Senior:	24%
Graduate student:	.03%

Suicidal ideation with disruption	50%
Suicide attempt	50%

Average number of contacts with Dean of Students office after crisis meeting: 6.23

Themes from students

- The majority of students are on medication before they come to campus.
- Many have been under the care of a therapist before coming to campus.
- Most suicide attempts come after a student goes off of his or her medication.
- Very few want to leave school.
- Very few believe school has anything to do with why they have suicidal thoughts.
- Most students want their families involved.

Themes from students continued

- Most have complaints/concerns about their medication.
- Most make use of counseling and psychiatric care once they have a crisis meeting.
- Many families have concerns about staying full time due to insurance or financial aid.
- Almost every student has to use some kind of appeal process- late withdraw, financial aid appeal, etc.

Involuntary Medical Withdraw

- Student who is seriously interfering with University purpose of ensuring equality of educational opportunity while fostering an environment that promotes education and the growth and safety of all members of the community
- Very rarely used at UNCG; 3 cases in last five years; two psychotic breaks, one threat assessment result
- Guilford numbers are similar, but with a much smaller population; 2 cases in last five years; one psychotic break and one direct threat to a faculty member.

How It Works - Big School

- Dean meets with student, explains policy and options, arranges psychological evaluation, decides on interim suspend or not
- Psychological evaluation done by objective group; paid by Student Affairs
- Results given to Committee
- Student appears at hearing
- Decision made: involuntary withdraw, modified attendance, behavior contract, etc.
- Appeal to VC and Chancellor

How It Works - Guilford

- Dean meets with student, explains policy and options, decides on interim suspend or not
- Psychological evaluation can be obtained by student; paid by student as a means of disputing the intention of the college to involuntary withdrawal
- Decision made: involuntary withdraw, modified attendance, behavior contract, etc.
- Appeal to President

Extraordinary Admissions Process

- Yes is answered to any of the security questions on application for any applicant (undergraduate, graduate, continual learning, etc.)
- Mandated background check done by contracted company
- Student provides letters of reference, further explanation
- Dean of Students Office makes initial determination
- If denial of admittance or postponement of admittance pending some further action is recommended, goes to Extraordinary Admissions Committee for determination
- Recommendation is made to appropriate admissions office

Disruptive Behavior

- Out of class behavior goes through Student Code of Conduct Process
- In class behavior may also go through Student Code of Conduct Process and/or faculty may use the Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom Policy
- Range of behaviors; most common in class: aggression/failure to comply with classroom standards/faculty requests regarding behavior; out of class behavior: aggression paired with substance use

Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom Policy

1. Faculty consults with department head and Dean of Students (Policy, behavior contracts, behavioral history, notification of issue).
2. Student notified in writing that instructor proposes to drop for disruption, identify behavior, policy, time/place for meeting within 5 days, right for support person. Copy Department Head.
3. Faculty can interim suspend student from class until final resolution.
4. "W" before drop deadline; "W" or "WF" after.
5. Student appeal through Department Head, Dean, Provost. Same at Guilford, but appeal goes to President after President.

Threat of Violence

- Research shows there is some association between severe mental illness and violence, especially when mental illness is accompanied by substance abuse.
- However, the vast majority of people who are violent do not suffer from mental illnesses.
- Highest correlation for violence: male, young age, lower SES.

Information Sources

- Police
- Other students
- Faculty/Staff: writings, behavior in class
- Families
- The students themselves
- FaceBook
- Mental Health professionals: duty to warn for *imminent* harm to self or others
- Associational relationships

Threat Assessment

- Secret Service Protocol to help determine the likelihood that the threat may be carried out based on investigative/analytical approach focused on what student is doing or saying; no known profile
- A series of questions are answered:
 1. What are the student's motives and goals?
 2. Has the student shown inappropriate interest in weapons, incidents of mass violence, prior attacks or attackers?
 3. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?

4. Has the student engaged in any attack related behaviors?
5. Is the student's conversation and story consistent with his or her actions?
6. Does the student have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?
7. Is the student experiencing hopelessness, desperation or despair?
8. Does the student have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?

9. Are other people concerned about the student's potential for violence?
10. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?
11. Does the student see violence as an acceptable/desirable/only way to resolve problems?

Dean of Students Office Role

- Gather information from all the SA offices involved, faculty, and other service offices about the student-background, his/her behavior, interactions with others
- Speak with the student (police do in-depth interview) about any University actions
- Speak with any victims or intended victims
- Work with the family
- Work with the faculty of the student
- Work with others such as on-campus employer, roommates, organization members, etc.
- Make decisions about and implement options such as: interim suspend, no contact orders, involuntary medical withdraw, modified attendance/living arrangements, etc.
- Answer calls from/meet with concerned students, faculty, families, the press

If a threat is determined...

- Campus Security and Student Right to Know Act
- Warning to the community; mandated by law to warn the community of potential danger; used to be criminal activity only
- “Timely”
- August, 2008: amendments to Clery Act: must notify the community when in our judgment there is a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or staff
- Institutions and individuals cannot be sued for issuing such a warning
- Done by Police/Campus Safety: their records not covered under FERPA

No Contact Order

- Used for student-student and student-faculty/staff negative interactions

“Effective immediately, you are not to have any contact, direct or indirect with XX. This University No Contact Order includes but is not limited to phone, voice mail, e-mail, text messages, letters, instant messaging, “Facebook, “My Space,” and messages transmitted via other individuals. You are also not to be within 100 feet of XX, on or off campus.

Violation of this University No Contact Order may lead to your suspension from the University.

Within 24 hours of receipt of this notice, you must contact the Dean of Students Office at 334-5514 to make an appointment to meet with staff in the Dean of Students Office regarding this situation.

If you have any questions, please contact me.”

- Guilford Policy very similar - can be provided upon request

Interim Suspension

- Used when situation creates a concern for the student or the community which involves danger or threat of danger
- Temporarily removes the student from campus pending resolution of Student Conduct Process and/or threat assessment
- If student is allowed to return, Dean of Students Office works with faculty so that students are “held harmless” in classes

Examples of Student Code of Conduct Charges

- Disruptive Behavior
- Violation of University Drug or Alcohol Policy
- Destruction of Property
- Threatening or causing physical harm or harassment
- Hate crime

Questions?