

# **A Guide for Responding to Students in Distress**



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# CHAPTER 1: RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

Rest assured that in any given situation, there are several right ways to reach out to students in a caring manner. The only real risk is in doing nothing at all.

## SECTION 1: RECOGNIZING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

**As a faculty or staff member, you may be the first to notice a student who is experiencing difficulty.**

Keep in mind that you do not have to take the role as a counselor or diagnose a student. You need only notice signs of distress and communicate these to the appropriate department on campus. If you have a rapport with the student, you may choose to speak with the student directly to gather more information about what they are going through, express your concern and offer resource referral information.

**How do we recognize students in distress?** As a staff or faculty member, you are in a position to spot someone who may be emotionally distressed. Your expressions of interest and concern may be critical factors in getting the student to seek the appropriate help. You may also be able to alert University staff so that an appropriate intervention can be made.

**How do you know when to react?**

There are several **indicators** that may be visible when a student is experiencing distress.

- **Academic Indicators**
  - Extremely poor academic performance
    - Asking inappropriate or irrelevant questions
    - Repeated absences from class
    - Missed assignments including exams or appointments
    - A change from high to low grades
  - Extreme disorganization or erratic performance
  - Failure to comply with directives from faculty and staff
  - Inappropriate interaction with other students
  - Written or artistic expression of extreme violence, morbidity, despair or self-harm
- **Behavioral and Emotional Indicators**
  - Exhibiting worrisome behaviors
  - Depressed or apathetic mood

- Excessive activity or talkativeness, crying
- Extreme mood changes
- Excessive, inappropriate display of emotions
- Unexplained hostility toward others
- **Physical Indicators**
  - Noticeable change in appearance and hygiene
  - Disoriented or confused behavior
  - Excessive fatigue, exhaustion; falling asleep in class repeatedly
  - Evidence of drug/alcohol abuse
  - Noticeable signs of physical abuse (cuts, bruises, burns, etc.)

Faculty and staff may notice one indicator or have a “gut-level feeling” that something is wrong. A student may be coping with a serious mental health issue which can alter the content of students’ communication and/or their behavior in class. For example, an academically successful student may become withdrawn, depressed and potentially suicidal. This drastic change may lead to poor grades, lack of attention in class and other similar behaviors. A simple check-in with the student may help you to better understand his or her situation.

**When in doubt, consult with the University of Memphis Counseling Center at 678.2068, or visit our website for more information:** <https://www.memphis.edu/counseling/>

Faculty members may be concerned about reporting sensitive information concerning students to others. Faculty members should review FERPA guidelines that are disclosed in this guide.

#### **Safety Risk Indicators:**

- Written or verbal statements that mention despair, suicide or death
- Severe hopelessness, depression, isolation and withdrawal
- Statements to the effect that the student is “going away for a long time”

If a student is exhibiting any of these signs, they may pose an immediate danger to themselves. In these cases, you should stay with the student and contact the Counseling Center (678.2068) immediately or Police Services at 678.4357.

#### **The situation is an emergency if:**

- Physical or verbal aggression is directed at self, others, animals or property
- The student is unresponsive to the external environment because they are:
  - Incoherent
  - Passed out
  - Disconnected from reality
  - Exhibiting psychosis
  - Displaying unmitigated disruptive behavior

- The situation feels threatening or dangerous to you

If you are concerned about immediate threats to safety, call the Police Services at 678.4357.

## SECTION 2: RESPONDING TO STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

### Choosing a Pathway

There are pathways to choose once you have identified a student in distress: staff or faculty can speak directly with the student, contact a campus office or submit a Report/Concern to the appropriate department at <https://www.memphis.edu/report/submit-a-report/student-conduct.php>

**If you have a relationship or rapport** with the student, speaking directly to the student one-on-one may be the best option. During your conversation with the student, express your concern about specific behaviors you have observed.

**If you do not really know the student**, you may prefer contacting a University staff member who can reach out to the student in an official role.

Your decision about which path to choose also may be influenced by:

- Your level of experience
- The nature or severity of the problem
- Your ability to give time to the situation
- A variety of other personal factors

### Action Step #1: Consult

The University of Memphis has many campus resources available to help students in distress. See below for a list of offices you can consult for advice before reaching out to a student you suspect of being in trouble. \*

You might also wish to consult with people who know the student better than you do to see if they share your observations. If it seems appropriate, consider reaching out to some of them to get a fuller picture of the situation with the student, or to alert them to your observations. The people on this team might include:

- Counseling Center | 678.2068
- Title IX Prevention Center | 678.1686
- Dean of Students | 678.2187
- Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support | 678.2298
- Disability Resources for Students (DRS) | 678.2880
- Student's primary academic advisor (You can find this information in Banner, by asking the student or by contacting Academic Advising.)
- Student Leadership & Involvement | 678.8679

- Athletic coach (staff directory: <https://gotigersgo.com/staff.aspx>)
- Residence Life | 678.2295
- University Center (UC) | 678.2041

#### Other Resources:

- ★ To file a police report: call 678.4357 (emergency) - 678.3848 (non-emergency) or email [police@memphis.edu](mailto:police@memphis.edu)
- ★ To file a Title IX report: <https://memphis.edu/oie/title9/index.php>

\*Some faculty members may be hesitant to share information about a student with other campus offices. Note that FERPA guidelines allow for the sharing of student information with other “school officials” who have “legitimate educational interests” in the information. More about FERPA below. † Note that Disability Resources for Students (DRS) and the Counseling Center have strict confidentiality guidelines that go beyond FERPA guidelines. While you are permitted to (and should) share your observations about a student with these offices, they are limited in the amount of information they are permitted to share with you in return.

## Action Step #2: Make a Contact

You will not be taking on the role of counselor. Only listen, care and offer resource referral information.

- Meet privately with the student (choose a time and place where you will not be interrupted).
- Set a positive tone. Express your concern and care.
- Make it clear to the student from the beginning that you are reaching out because you are concerned for their well-being, NOT because you want to punish the student for problematic behavior or poor class performance. Because of your faculty role, students may automatically assume they or their grade are in trouble if called in for a meeting.
- Ask questions. “How are things going for you?” “Are you OK?”
- Point out specific signs that you’ve observed. (“I’ve noticed lately that you...”).
- Listen attentively to the student’s response and encourage them to talk. (“Tell me more about that”).
- Allow the student time to tell the story. Allow silences in the conversation. Don’t give up if the student is slow to talk.
- Ask open-ended questions that deal directly with the issues without judging. (“What problems has that situation caused you?”).
- If there are signs of safety risk, ask if the student is considering suicide. A student who is considering suicide will likely be relieved that you asked. If the student is not contemplating suicide, asking the question will not put ideas in their head.
- Restate what you have heard as well as your concern and caring. (“What do you need to do to get back on a healthy path?”)
- Ask the student what they think would help.
- Suggest resources and referrals. Share any information you have about the particular resource you are suggesting and the potential benefit to the student. Offer to make contact, if

you have a connection. (“I know the director of that office and they are really good at helping students work through these kinds of situations. Would you like me to give them a call to let them know you’ll be coming in to see them?”)

- Avoid making sweeping promises of confidentiality, especially if the student presents a safety risk. Students who are suicidal need swift professional intervention; assurances of absolute confidentiality may get in the way. DON’T say: “Nothing you say here will leave this office.” DO say: “I will do everything I can to protect both your privacy and your well-being.”
- Communicate your duty to report. If the student discloses any form of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment or interpersonal violence, you must let the student know that it is your duty to report it to the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) and Title IX under the Mandatory Reporting Policy. Unless the student is suicidal, presents a danger to others, has committed or is the victim of a crime, or has experienced any form of sex discrimination or interpersonal violence, the ultimate decision to access resources belongs to the student. If the student says, “I’ll think about it” when you offer referral information, it is ok. Let the student know that you are interested in hearing how s/he is doing in a day or two. Talk with someone else — Academic Advising, Dean of Students, the University Counseling Center, Disability Resources for Students (DRS), etc. — about the conversation. Follow up with the student in a day or two.

### **Action Step #3: Refer**

Explain the limitations of your knowledge and experience. Be clear that your referral to someone else does not mean that you think there is something wrong with the student or that you are not interested or willing to help. The referral source has the resources to assist the student in a more appropriate manner.

- Provide a name, phone number, and office location of the referral resource, or walk the student to the office if you are concerned the student may not follow up.
- Try to normalize the need to ask for assistance as much as possible. (“Every semester, I see students struggling with this same concern.” “It’s okay to be upset about this.”).
- It is useful to know the names of staff members and be able to speak about their offices’ services.
- Be positive and hopeful. Help the student understand that troublesome situations can and do get better with support.
- Realize your offer of assistance may be rejected. People in varying levels of distress sometimes deny their problems because it is difficult to admit they need help, or they believe the issue will resolve on its own. Take time to listen to the student’s fears and concerns about seeking care. Let the student know that it is because of your concern for them that you are referring them to an expert.
- End the conversation in a way that will allow you, or the student, to come back to the subject at another time. Keep the lines of communication open. Invite the student back to follow up.



- If you have an urgent concern about a student's safety, stay with the student and notify the University of Memphis Police Services (678.4357), or walk the student to the University Counseling Center (678.2068) right away.

### **Distressed and Distressing?**

Sometimes when students are distressed, they act out in ways that are inappropriate or even disruptive to your class. If you have a student who exhibits this kind of behavior, communicate your observations to your department chair and the associate dean of your college or school. They will help connect the student with appropriate resources and support you in maintaining your desired classroom environment.

## **SECTION 3: Classroom Management**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. At times, members of the University of Memphis community may come into contact with classroom behaviors that are of concern. Specifically, students who are disruptive in the classroom warrant attention from faculty. Disruptive students in the academic setting hinder the educational process. These procedures provide information for faculty to resolve behavioral issues with disruptive students. Disruptive students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to University disciplinary action. These procedures apply to both undergraduate and graduate students.

### **Classroom Disruption**

Disruptive behavior in the classroom is defined as repeated, continuous or multiple student behaviors that prevent an instructor from teaching and/or prevent students from learning. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, persistently speaking without being recognized or interrupting other speakers, harassing behavior or personal insults and/or using electronic equipment such as cell phones and iPads in class without the express permission of the instructor.

**The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. The following process should be followed by faculty:**

- If the student's behavior is irritating, but not particularly disruptive, the faculty member should consider talking with the student privately after class.

***The time at which a disruption happens may not be the best moment to address it.***

*"I want to talk to you more about this after class or at the next free time we both have available."*

- If it is necessary to deal with a student's behavior during class, the faculty member should calmly but firmly inform the student that the behavior is disruptive and ask that it be stopped.

*“What you have to say is important, and I want to make sure I understand it. But right now, I feel distracted and not focused on getting through my lecture. I would prefer to talk later when I can give you my full attention in a private setting.”*

- If the disruptive behavior continues during either the present or in future classes, the faculty member should warn the student (perhaps in private) that such behavior may result in student conduct action.

*“I’ve already warned you about talking when I am speaking to the class. If you disrupt the class again in this manner, you will be referred to the Dean of Students office for student conduct action.”*

- If the student continues the disruptive behavior despite this warning, the student should then be asked to leave the classroom. Following the class, the instructor should contact the department chair and the associate dean of students for the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (OSAOS) and provide pertinent information about the student’s behavior. The associate dean will determine if student conduct action will be pursued.
- If the student refuses to leave the classroom after being instructed to do so, they should be informed that this refusal is a separate instance of disruptive behavior subject to additional student conduct action.
- If the student continues to refuse to leave the classroom, the instructor may choose to adjourn class for the day or call OSAOS (non-emergency - 678.2298), or Police Services (emergency – 678.4357), immediately after if the situation demands it and have the student removed.

***Say something like, “Unfortunately, the class can’t continue today, so I’ll see you next class period.”***

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

### What does FERPA cover?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) prevents the University from releasing "personally identifiable student education records" to unauthorized individuals or organizations without the student's written consent. **However, University employees (for example, advisors) who have a legitimate need to see these records, and parents who can prove that a student is still a dependent for tax purposes, can view these records if they follow the proper procedures.**

*The portion of the education record known as "Directory Information" is available to the public unless access to it is restricted by the student.*

**May I disclose personal information, knowledge and impressions about a student, based on my personal interactions with the student?**

Yes. FERPA applies only to information derived from student education records and not to personal knowledge derived from direct, personal experience with a student. For example, a faculty or staff member who personally observes a student engaging in erratic and threatening behavior is not prohibited by FERPA from disclosing that observation to other school officials who have legitimate educational interests in the information.

**May information from a student's education records be disclosed to protect health or safety?**

Yes. FERPA permits the disclosure of information from student education records to appropriate parties either inside or outside the University of Memphis in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. For example, if a student sends an email to his resident advisor saying that he has just been diagnosed with a highly contagious disease such as measles, the UofM could alert the student's roommates, and perhaps others with whom the student has come in close contact, to urge them to seek appropriate medical care. Safety concerns warranting disclosure could include a student's suicidal statements, unusually erratic and angry behaviors, or similar conduct that others would reasonably see as posing a risk of serious harm.

**What should I do if I am concerned that a student poses a threat to self or others?**

If you are concerned that a student may engage in violent behavior toward self or others, and the threat appears to be imminent, you should contact UofM Police Services immediately at 678.4357. When circumstances permit, you should consult with professionals on campus or associated with the institution that may be able to assess the potential threat, identify resources for the student and provide information that could assist in deciding on an appropriate course of action. In consultation with the appropriate campus resources, a collective decision may then be made to contact a family member, an appropriate off-campus resource or others.

**For more information about FERPA:**

Visit <https://www.memphis.edu/registrar/students/records/faculty-access.php>

## SECTION 4: UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS NETWORK OF SUPPORT

### Police Services

678.4357 (Emergency) - 678.3848 (Non-Emergency)

<https://www.memphis.edu/police/>

**Email:** [police@memphis.edu](mailto:police@memphis.edu)

**Location:** 100 Zach Curlin Parking Garage

The University of Memphis Police Services is committed to providing professional and quality police services to the University community, which includes students, faculty, staff and visitors. Their mission is to keep the University of Memphis as a safe place to learn, live and work.

### *LiveSafe*

The UofM's new comprehensive personal safety mobile app is **LiveSafe** and can be downloaded for free. **This app allows you to receive instant alerts from Police Services.** Additionally, it provides a quick, convenient and discreet way to communicate directly with Police Services. The app will allow members of the campus to send text, pictures, video and audio directly to Police Services in real time. It also allows for a live chat with safety personnel. The app includes the option to share tips and information anonymously. In addition, subscribers can use SafeWalk to invite personal contacts to virtually escort you as you chat.

### Student Health & Counseling Services

901.678.2068

<https://www.memphis.edu/counseling/>

**Location:** 214 Wilder Tower

The Counseling Center provides free counseling, wellness and psychiatric services for University of Memphis students. We give students the support they need to make the most of their academic years — helping students manage emotional, psychological, and interpersonal problems. All services are confidential.

### ***Guide to Utilizing the Counseling Center:***

- First visits to the Center do not require an appointment. Students can walk in Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. — 4 p.m. to be set up with services and meet with clinical staff.
- Counseling services are confidential and free to enrolled students registered for 6 credit hours in the fall and spring semesters, and 1 credit hour in the summer semester.
- Students should allow about 30 minutes for the first visit, they will meet with a therapist on staff and complete a brief and confidential questionnaire. Students should be able to see a staff therapist within 15 minutes of their arrival but this cannot be guaranteed.
- If a follow-up appointment was not scheduled during your initial session, students will be contacted by the office administrative staff to schedule the next appointment

- Be advised that students are allotted 12 sessions per academic year and group therapy sessions are unlimited

#### **Overview of Services Available:**

- **Individual and group counseling for personal and career issues**
- **Career exploration and testing**
- **Workshops and seminars**
- **Substance abuse counseling**
- **Learning disorder testing**

### **U of M Psychological Services**

901.678.2147

<https://www.memphis.edu/psychology/centers/index.php>

**Location:** 126 Psychology Bldg.

9 a.m. — 9 p.m., Monday — Thursday

9 a.m. — 4 p.m., Friday

**The clinic is usually open even when University classes are not in session.**

**Therapists are on duty during operating hours to handle emergency situations.**

The Psychological Services Center provides general outpatient psychotherapeutic and psychological assessment services to individuals and families of the greater Memphis metropolitan area. Fees for services are based on the client's total family income. Students at the University of Memphis who are enrolled at least part-time are eligible for a special low fee. Also, University of Memphis faculty and staff receive a substantial discount for all services.

### **Office for Institutional Equity and Title IX**

901.678.2713

<https://www.memphis.edu/oie/title9/index.php>

**Location:** 156 Administration Building

The Office for Institutional Equity monitors the University's policy on equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment and education in that it will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex (except where sex is a bona fide occupational qualification), disability (where the person is a qualified disabled person) or because of their status as a qualified disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era.

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and mandates gender equity. Title IX protects students from unlawful sexual harassment in school programs and activities and provides many resources to students, faculty and staff. The University of Memphis is committed to

preventing campus sexual violence and investigating all reported allegations of sexual misconduct as defined by University Policy GE2031.

***Individuals with questions, concerns or a complaint related to Title IX are encouraged to contact the University's Title IX Coordinator:***

*Kenneth Anderson*

*Title IX Coordinator*

*Director, Office for Institutional Equity*

*156 Administration Building*

*Memphis, TN 38152-3370*

*901.678.2713*

*[ois@memphis.edu](mailto:ois@memphis.edu)*

## Office of Dean of Students

901.678.2187

<https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/>

**Location:** 359 University Center

**Email:** [deanofstudents@memphis.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu)

The Dean of Students Office, within UofM Student Affairs, plays a significant role in enhancing the learning experience for students. Many of our programs and services help students develop a connection to the UofM, supporting both their academic and personal success. This office can be helpful in creating a safety net of support across the campus experience for students in crisis.

Our departments include: Disability Resources for Students, Multicultural Affairs, Student Accountability, Student Leadership & Involvement, and Veterans & Military Student Services. The dean of students also serves as a liaison to religious life organizations and advisor for the Student Government Association.

### *Student Outreach and Support Services*

Student Outreach & Support (SOS) is a service of the Dean of Students Office that helps students navigate the issues they may have at the UofM. Many students face difficult times during college. Unexpected life events, personal crisis, mental health struggles or academic difficulties are all examples of challenges that can interfere with college success.

SOS uses an interdisciplinary approach which supports students by prioritizing academic and personal success. The primary goal of SOS is to help students succeed. SOS helps students:

- Understand UofM policies and procedures
- Problem-solve within the UofM and the community
- Access referrals for personal matters and emergencies
- Navigate the process for resolving academic concerns and complaints

### *Behavioral Intervention Team*

<https://www.memphis.edu/bit/>

It might start when you notice something small. Then you notice another incident. A threat towards another student. Getting enraged over something minor. Comments of self-loathing. The University of Memphis regularly monitors the care, welfare and safety of all of our students, faculty, and staff. We can't work, learn and live in an environment where we don't feel 100% safe.

That's where the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) comes in. Our experienced team members address student behavioral concerns that are not living up to the University's mission of providing a non-threatening environment where everyone feels safe and secure. BIT addresses critical student behavioral or mental health concerns through review of situations/incidents, information gathering and sharing, and providing recommendations to ensure the safety and educational success of the student. The BIT does not replace other classroom management or disciplinary processes nor does it address student behaviors that require immediate health, police or mental health attention.

The Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) addresses student behavioral concerns that are inconsistent with the University's mission. Within this context, the BIT has the authority to mandate assessment with a mental health professional and to recommend interim suspension be imposed in cases where a student has been determined to be a risk to the safety of others or themselves.

The success of this process hinges on the University's commitment to reporting concerns. So, we thank you for reviewing this site and doing your part to keep our college campus the best that it can be!

#### ***Types of Behaviors to Report & Appropriate Ways to Respond:***

<https://www.memphis.edu/bit/assessing.php>

***How to Make A Referral:*** <https://www.memphis.edu/bit/referral.php>

Complete a Student of Concern Report:

[cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout_id=2)

## Student Accountability

901.678.2298

**Location:** 405 Mitchell Hall

**Email:** [studentconduct@memphis.edu](mailto:studentconduct@memphis.edu)

<https://www.memphis.edu/osa>

The Office of Student Accountability at the University of Memphis advocates for student rights and promotes academic and personal success.

### *Guiding Principles*

Maintain an environment which is conducive to academic success;

- Promote a safe and secure campus by protecting the rights of all members of the University of Memphis community;
- Encourage students to assume self and social responsibility;
- Provide opportunities for individual growth and development;
- Enhance student decision making and conflict resolution skills;
- Advance the development of student ethical values.

## Disability Resources for Students (DRS)

901.678.2880

<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/>

**Location:** 110 Wilder Tower

**Email:** [drs@memphis.edu](mailto:drs@memphis.edu)

*Disability Resources for Students is a part of Student Academic Success, whose motto is: Students Learning through Engagement and Involvement.*

*The University of Memphis is committed to providing equal opportunity and challenge to all academically qualified students with disabilities and is compliant with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. From 800 to 900 students per year are registered with Disability Resources for Students; the students have a variety of disabilities, including mobility, visual and hearing impairments, a variety of chronic health disorders, psychiatric disorders, learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, seizure disorders, traumatic brain injury, and substance abuse.*

**Faculty members are partners with students with disabilities and with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) staff in ensuring equal access to course information, activities and tests through reasonable and appropriate accommodations. DRS staff is always available to consult with individual faculty members or with entire academic departments regarding issues of accommodation and access and about improving understanding of disability.**

## Disability Accommodations and Services



A comprehensive program of accommodations and services designed to provide access and opportunity is available to qualified students with disabilities through Disability Resources for Students. Services are available to all students registered with DRS, however, academic accommodations are individually determined and are based on the student's current functional limitations outlined in the provided documentation, the student's compensatory skills, and the requirements of a particular course or program.

The following general services are available to all students registered with DRS:

- Early registration
- Orientation to using disability services
- Assistance with strategic class scheduling to enhance academic success
- Semester Plan for accommodations and services
- Memos to faculty about disability needs
- Advocacy relating to disability access issues
- Orientation to and use of the Assistive Technology Lab in The McWherter Library
- Referral to other University departments and community agencies
- Math Lab tutoring
- Writing assistance
- Information about specific opportunities for students with disabilities

The University does not provide services of a personal nature such as: personal care assistance, personal counseling/therapy, personal study assistance, or individually prescribed aids, appliances, and equipment. Tutoring is also considered a personal service, and the University is not legally required to provide tutor service for students with disabilities above and beyond the tutoring available to any UofM student through DRS the Educational Support Program - (<https://www.memphis.edu/esp/>) or academic departments.

## Academic Advising

<https://www.memphis.edu/advising/students/index.php>

*The Academic Advising website can assist students in navigating through numerous resources that will help them develop their intellectual and personal goals to enhance their academic performance, and to ensure progress toward graduation. Academic Advising is often the first point of contact to assist a student who might be struggling in the classroom with consultation, referrals, and academic coaching.*

*If students are unsure if they will be enrolled next semester or not, we suggest that they still meet with their advisor so that they can register for classes just in case. This will ensure that students will schedule the classes needed to keep them on track for graduation.*

*Academic Advising at the U of M occurs within each college and the Academic Counseling Center. Appointments are available in-person, via video chat, or over the phone. Use the University's Navigate system or download the Navigate Student mobile app. **Do you need to know who your advisor is? Academic Advising Centers around campus are at your service!***

[memphis.edu/advising/findmyadvisor.php](https://www.memphis.edu/advising/findmyadvisor.php)

## Academic Counseling Center

**901.678.2062**

<https://www.memphis.edu/acc/>

*The Academic Counseling Center's mission is to provide effective, personalized, accurate and developmental advising to all undergraduate students who are:*

- *undecided about their major,*
- *pursuing pre-Nursing as a major,*
- *taking pre-major courses, or*
- *exploring alternate majors.*

Academic counselors are committed to student academic success.

## Center for Academic Retention and Enrichment Services

500 Wilder Tower  
Memphis, TN 38152  
901.678.2393  
[cares@memphis.edu](mailto:cares@memphis.edu)

The mission of the Center for Academic Retention and Enrichment Services (CARES) is to increase retention and graduation rates by enriching the academic progression of academically at-risk students. CARES assists students with identifying and overcoming personal concerns, academic deficiencies and life difficulties that could continue to impair their chances of succeeding in college, while helping them develop good study habits, self-management and decision-making skills that increase retention and graduation rates. The Center for Academic Retention and Enrichment Services "CARES" about the academic and personal well-being of students and exists to partner with them in reaching their academic goals.

Services:

- Intrusive Counseling
- Academic Support
- Academic Success Seminar (ACAD 2200)
- Early Intervention Reporting
- Academic Fresh Start
- Student Progress Reporting

## Student Health Center

901.678.2287

<https://www.memphis.edu/health/>

**Location:** 200 Hudson Health Center

Email: [studenthealth@memphis.edu](mailto:studenthealth@memphis.edu)

**The Student Health Center's emphasis is** on maintaining, restoring and/or improving the physical and emotional health and well-being of students. The Student Health Center is an accessible, cost-effective healthcare facility that emphasizes campus wide health promotion, disease prevention, and acute episodic outpatient medical care. Individualized attention, courtesy and patient confidentiality to all is of primary importance.

In the event of injury or emergency occurring in the classroom or on campus, Police Services (678.4357).

### Community Clinics

<https://www.memphis.edu/health/clinics/index.php>

- *Christ Community*
- *Church Health Center*
- *Memphis Health Center*
- *Shelby County Health Department*

***Please note that appointments are required for Community Clinics.***

## Student Leadership & Involvement (SLI)

901.678.8679

**Location:** 211 University Center

<https://www.memphis.edu/studentinvolvement/>

Student Leadership & Involvement's mission is to engage students in promoting positive social change through transformative learning, community engagement and leadership development.

There are opportunities for students to engage in organizations and activities that promote personal and professional development, community engagement, transformational relationships and positive social change that will enhance the student experience and prepare them to be competent professionals and alumni of the University of Memphis.

## Religious Life

<https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/religiouslife/index.php>

Religious Life is on campus to make sure that students can worship, pray, serve others, find fellowship and express themselves spiritually. Each religious organization has a weekly worship

experience (Catholic Campus Ministry celebrates Mass four times a week). Students often turn to campus ministers from these organizations for advice, mentorship and counsel concerning their everyday needs — things like dating, finances, parents, as well as the powerful tug of spiritual needs.

## Multicultural Affairs

901.678.2054

<https://www.memphis.edu/multiculturalaffairs/>

**Location:** 223 University Center

Recognizing that diversity and inclusion are key components to our students' learning experience, we offer a wide range of opportunities for leadership development, programs, events, scholarships, travel and guest lectures to help you embrace the diversity around you. Additionally, the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) challenges you to think critically and lead the way in finding solutions to society's toughest issues.

Regardless of race, ethnicity or religion, we welcome and encourage you to get involved and join the multicultural family at UofM.

### **Become a Diversity Ambassador:**

*The Diversity Ambassador Program is a six-week program to encourage students to take an active role on campus with the intention of promoting awareness toward issues of multiculturalism, ableism, gender identity, social justice and equality. Through encouraged dialogue, students are able to gain awareness and respect for cultural similarities and differences as well as create a safe space to discuss issues including, but not limited to: stereotypes, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender and socioeconomic status. The second tier will allow students who have completed the first tier to become peer educators available to departments and student organizations.*

<https://www.memphis.edu/multiculturalaffairs/organizations/dap.php>

### **Looking for Volunteer Opportunities? Check out our annual programming:**

*The OMA provides student-centered programming that not only creates an overall inclusive environment, but encourages students to be their true, authentic selves as well as embracing their cultures. We strive to encourage students to become involved and maintain a strong connection and relationship with their institution through peer engagement and student involvement. Below are some of our annual multicultural programs:*

- *Black History Month*
- *Hispanic Heritage Month*
- *Empowered Men of Color (EMOC) Annual Men's Conference*
- *PAUSE Annual Women's Conference*
- *Freedom Awards/Mahogany Ball*
- *Multicultural Festival*
- *Multicultural Mixer*
- *Multicultural Student Leaders Retreat*

**Here are some resources below that may be helpful:**

**Memphis Career Preparation Academy – 678.400**

400 Wilder Tower

**Hooks African American Male Initiative – 678.3974**

107 Scares Hall

**Student Success Programs – 678.2351**

102 Brister Hall

*If you have any questions about our annual programs, or if you are interested in volunteering, contact 901.678.2054.*

## Housing and Residence Life

901.678.2295

[memphis.edu/reslife/about/index.php](http://memphis.edu/reslife/about/index.php)

**Location: Main Office – 175 Centennial Place**

The University of Memphis' Residence Life strives to provide a premier community that is an inclusive residential experience with safe, well-maintained environments that support academic achievement, foster personal development and promote college success. Residence Life (ResLife) not only serves housing needs, they act as a liaison between the students, the campus and the community by providing students with direction to the appropriate department that provides resources (e.g., Student Outreach & Support) that address students concerns.

Students are also referred to dedicated residence hall staff members such as residential advisors (RAs) who reside at ResLife and who builds a rapport with students that creates a positive connection with students.

ResLife's staff experience with students is two-fold. They see both sides of students' lives such as adjusting to college life and students not being aware of the resources and the opportunities available to them. The staff serves as a bridge by providing students with the referrals they need.

## Prescribed Programs

ResLife staff members provide prescribed programs to address the needs of students throughout the year. Police Services, Financial Aid Planning and Dating Violence are only a few of several presentations that are presented to students on a monthly basis to provide other resources to help educate and connect with students.

## Veterans & Military Student Services

901.678.4269

499 University Street

<https://www.memphis.edu/veterans/>

The VMSS Department offers a campus space where veterans and military-related students can relax, study and interact with their peers. At the center of the VMSS hub is a large community table for

studying and/or socializing, a printer and computers equipped with CAC readers for students to manage DoD records and information. The main hub also contains a refreshment station with a mini-fridge, microwave, and coffee pot. VMSS also offers a separate quiet study/conference room that can be reserved for group projects or individual study.

The [Veterans Lounge](#) includes comfortable furnishings, and amenities such as a flat-screen TV, Sony PS3, cable TV, and adjustable lighting.

### **Mission of VMSS**

To increase persistence and timely graduation of military-connected students through a model of support that cultivates camaraderie and inclusion, maximizes student access to resources, and fosters community alliances that promote career development.

### **Goals**

To cultivate academic and personal success among veterans, military students and their dependents through collaborative on campus partnerships. The Veterans and Military Student Services Department (VMSS), in conjunction with the Veterans Educational Benefits and Certification (VEBC), Disability Resources for Students (DRS), Veterans Student Success Team (VSST), and the Student Veteran Organization (SVO) partner to create an efficient, streamlined approach so that students can graduate in a timely manner and be adequately prepared for professional success.

#### **Veterans and Military Student Services**

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm  
Email: [veterans@memphis.edu](mailto:veterans@memphis.edu)

#### **Veterans Educational Benefits & Certification (VEBC)**

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm  
Registrar's Office  
[003 Wilder Tower](#) (basement)  
University of Memphis  
Memphis, TN 38152-3520  
Phone: 901.678.2996  
FAX: 901.678.1425  
Email: [vetedbenefits@memphis.edu](mailto:vetedbenefits@memphis.edu)  
Website: <https://www.memphis.edu/registrar/vetedben>

### **Additional On-Campus Student Resources**

#### **Campus/Community Resources**

<https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/index.php>

*During a student's college experience, there may be times when they may face personal or financial difficulties. The University of Memphis has compiled a list of resources to assist*

*students in finding support for emergency housing, financial assistance, food and clothing resources, healthcare needs and more.*

*If a student is experiencing challenges, we also encourage them to talk to someone at the University. Whether it is their academic advisor, their professor or a University staff member, we are all here to help them succeed.*

## **The Athena Project – 678.3973**

### **For women experiencing domestic violence**

<https://www.memphis.edu/athena/>

*Domestic violence, including physical, sexual or emotional abuse, affects millions of women each year. This abuse can result in not only physical injuries but emotional problems as well. These problems can include but are not limited to:*

- *Frequent memories of the violence and abuse*
- *Trouble concentrating*
- *Being Jumpy or Irritable*
- *Depression*
- *Anxiety*

*These reactions are normal but sometimes these feelings get in our way. We would like to help women move past these negative emotional responses to domestic violence and abuse.*

## **Tigers Fight Hunger Initiative**

Location: Dean of Students Office, University Center 359

<https://www.memphis.edu/deanofstudents/crisis/tigers-fight-hunger.php>

The Tigers Fight Hunger (TFH) initiative provides food assistance by connecting University of Memphis students to food resources like the Tiger Pantry and Tiger Meal Swipe program in efforts to alleviate food insecurity and support the overall well-being of students. TFH spreads awareness by educating the UofM community about food insecurity among college students.

The Tiger Pantry is centrally located on campus and is available to any University of Memphis student. The pantry carries both perishable and non-perishable foods, as well as hygiene products. Accessing the pantry is made simple and discreet for students to obtain items they need. The pantry is stocked through community agencies like the Mid-South Food Bank and community donations.

The Tiger Meal Swipe program utilizes guest meals donated by UofM students in the fall and spring semesters. Tiger Meal Swipe cards are developed and distributed to students providing access to free meals in the on-campus dining facility, the Tiger Den.

*To access the Tiger Pantry and obtain information on the Tiger Meal Swipe program, visit the Dean of Students Office in 359 University Center.*



## CHAPTER 2: PROMOTING STUDENT WELL-BEING

*With clear expectations in the classroom, and attentive advising outside it, students can handle new challenges and thrive.*

### SECTION 1: FOUNDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS

During the undergraduate years, students experience life changes from being away from home and family to adjusting to the college community. Relationships between parents and children transform into relationships between parents and young adults. Students are forming a new identity that integrates the many contexts in which they live. With guidance and support, students will be equipped with the confidence they need to face many issues within their living and learning environment. During this time, students address a variety of developmental tasks in their lives:

- **Becoming autonomous:** Developing instrumental independence that includes self-direction, problem solving ability and mobility. This can include managing time, money and other resources; taking care of oneself; working independently; asking for help when needed.
- **Establishing identity:** Developing a realistic self-image, including an ability to handle criticism; defining limitations and exploring abilities.
- **Achieving competence:** Managing emotions; developing interests; identifying problems; becoming confident.
- **Understanding diversity:** Encountering differences and learning to respect others.
- **Establishing connection and community:** Learning to live with others; developing skills in working together in groups.
- **Developing purpose:** Developing clear vocational goals, making meaningful commitments to specific personal interests and activities.

Although the college years can be times of discovery and excitement, these developmental tasks are taxing and difficult. Stress responses can be triggered by both the positive stimulation of these challenges and the negative influence of these demands. As a negative influence, stress can result in fatigue, anxiety and feelings of helplessness. Prolonged stress creates an experience of imbalance that may manifest itself as difficulty concentrating, disorganization, forgetfulness and irritability. Stress also impacts performance, relationships, sleep, and concentration. If this is left unchecked, prolonged stress can lead to breakdown causing physical complaints, illness, feelings of hopelessness or depression and withdrawal.

You may find that students who are showing stressful behaviors may be experiencing academic difficulty, financial difficulty, relationship issues, family problems, sleep difficulties, personal

health issues or other concerns. It is important to remember that all students experience stress at one point throughout their college careers.

## SECTION 2: ATTENDING TO STUDENT WELL-BEING IN THE CLASSROOM

### Day One: Clarify Class Expectations and Communication

By giving students clear and consistent information of what is expected of them in the classroom enables them to get the most out of their education. Providing clear expectations from the beginning of the first of day of class and throughout the semester starts with the syllabus. This way students will feel more at ease.

*Take time during first class meetings to answer students' questions and clarify rules and expectations for their behavior.*

#### Willingness to Clarify

- Use the first class meeting to go over those expectations.
- Take time to address questions about classroom expectations.
- Provide a rationale for each rule outlined in your syllabus.
- Tell students the potential consequences of their actions if they fail to abide by the rules.
- Ask students what they want to get out of you and your class.
- Explain your grading scale — including how a low grade on one assignment impacts a course grade — and reassure students that a B is a fact of life and not the end of the world.
- Detail the amount of work that will be expected and recommend study strategies.
- Point out resources for students if they find themselves struggling, such as the Educational Support Programs (ESP). Contact the Learning Centers at – 678.2704.

Laying out clear expectations, but also setting a supportive tone in your syllabus and in your first day's interaction, sends a message of concern for students and establishes a welcoming environment in the classroom.

### Throughout the Semester: Class Atmosphere and Building Student Confidence

**Ways faculty members can support student learning in the classroom include:**

- Call students by name.
- Provide opportunities for and encourage student participation and questions.
- Make sure comments and questions have been heard by all.
- Treat questions from students seriously, not as interruptions.
- Invite alternative or additional answers.

- Involve a large proportion of the class.
- Prevent or terminate discussion monopolies.
- Make it safe to speak and safe to be wrong.
- Allow students to respond to one another.
- Accept and acknowledge all answers (“I see what you mean”) or reflect, clarify or summarize.
- Praise thoughtful answers.
- Encourage the sharing of multiple perspectives.
- Demonstrate and foster mutual respect.

**Here are some ways faculty can create a more connected atmosphere:**

- Encourage students to go to faculty office hours.
- Respond to student emails conscientiously.
- Create occasions for out-of-classroom interaction, such as student-faculty conferences, field trips and departmental social events.
- Reinforce students’ healthy lifestyle behaviors, such as sleep and exercise.
- Address academic concerns when first noted.
- Communicate that seeking assistance when needed is a sign of strength.

## **Humility**

*Demonstrating humility will help foster a feeling of trust between you and your students.*

- Letting students know that you’re not infallible, but that your intent is never to be harmful.
- Being as transparent as possible.
- Avoid a hardline stance.
- Communicate with and treat your students as you would like to be treated if you were in their shoes.

## **Throughout the Semester: Evaluating Students Without Causing Undue Stress:**

**Six evaluation practices that lower student anxiety:**

- Providing regular feedback so students know where they stand academically.
- Giving out review outlines or other reviewing tools for exams.
- Assigning frequent low-stakes work rather than one or two high-stakes exams.
- Clarifying what will be expected on exams and in papers.
- Furnishing examples of high-quality work.
- Offering the opportunity to drop the lowest score for some part of the assigned work.

## Grace and Mercy:

*When students ask for special considerations or courtesies, be willing to listen and consider how you would like to be treated under similar circumstances, but don't let yourself be taken advantage of.*

- Listen to students and what they are going through.
- Be willing to extend undeserved courtesies.
- Act with a sense of equity.
- Do not become an enabler.
- Make real-world courtesies.

## Faculty Support

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) strives to promote effective teaching through a commitment to best practices in instructional design and technology that maximize learning for the University community. Current services include facilitating sessions on technology use for on-ground and online classes, support and consultations of campus applications including eCourseware (D2L) and Turnitin. CTL actively explores new technologies and participates in projects and programs to further effective use of technology in classes. More information can be found on the umTech website. <https://www.memphis.edu/umtech/index.php>

## Self-Knowledge:

- Know how past experiences influence your teaching
  - Consider how past experiences have affected your current position
  - Think about your own college experiences

## Willingness to Consult:

- Turn to those around you for insight and help.
  - Talk to colleagues about how they approach different situations you have encountered in class.
  - Use faculty meeting as opportunities for informal training.
  - Be willing to help others learn from you.

**Dealing with a student in distress may be physically, mentally and emotionally draining. Take care of your own wellbeing by relying on the resources available to you. Help for faculty, staff or family members, contact Psychological Services at 901.678.2147.**

## SECTION 3: ATTENDING TO STUDENT WELL-BEING IN ADVISING

### Take Time to Advise Students

Good advising goes a long way in heading off student distress. Here are some suggestions for improving advising in undergraduate and graduate level programs:

- Send a welcome letter to your cohort advisees, new majors or graduate students before they come to campus each semester. Ask for information about incoming students to help prepare for their arrival.
- Meet your new cohort advisees, majors and graduate students early in the semester to elicit information about their experiences and goals. Ask “What are you looking forward to?”, “What are you concerned about?” and “How can I help you?” Then listen.
- Regular meetings, phone calls or emails ensure that faculty advisors remain in touch with their students’ lives so they can help with scheduling courses and providing academic and career advice.

### Graduate Student Advising

Graduate programs at the University of Memphis attract many types of students. Some students are preparing for further study at the doctoral level or fulfilling requirements for admission to other professional schools. Others are changing career paths or seeking to enhance their current career. And still others are pursuing a graduate degree for personal enrichment. While many of our students are seeking to balance school, work and family obligations, no matter the status of our graduate students, the quality of their experiences is greatly enhanced when they receive a level of academic advising that supports their personal and professional goals. This section provides some ideas on the responsibilities of good advisors of our graduate students at various times throughout their degree programs.

### Advising During Recruitment

It is important that academic advising begin at the time of prospective students’ inquiries into graduate programs at the University of Memphis. It is imperative that prospective students be provided with accurate, up-to-date information about the academic programs, degree requirements, admission criteria, financial aid availability, average time to degree completion and other relevant information.

There are times when it is helpful for department chairs/program coordinators, and program faculty to meet with prospective students and begin the advising process. This can take the form of an informal conversation and/or a formal interview as part of the admission process. Faculty can share ideas on the:

- Program and its requirements

- Research interests of faculty
- Advantages and benefits of pursuing a particular degree
- Employment opportunities after graduation, including the job placement record of the program

### **Advising New Graduate Students**

Advising new students is a shared responsibility between the Graduate School and the faculty member assigned as a student's academic advisor by the department chairperson or program coordinator. The admissions counselor assumes the responsibility of:

- Coordinating new student orientation for fall and spring semesters
- Assisting students in understanding services available
- Encouraging new students to reach out to their academic advisor to schedule an initial meeting
- Ensuring student matriculation and managing the enrollment process as needed in collaboration with the records management assistant
- Providing support for students including responding to questions, offering advice, identifying resources and other activities required for creating a supportive environment for students

Not all new graduate students will contact their advisor, believing that as an adult, they are able to facilitate their own progress through a program. For these students, it is important that the faculty member reach out to their new advisees to schedule an appointment. At this early stage in a student's program, an advisor can be instrumental in assisting students to:

- Choose courses to take in the first semester
- Plan a program of study and timeline for program completion, including important deadlines (graduation application, submission of thesis/essay/creative project)
- Explain program requirements (language, thesis/essay/creative project, comprehensive examinations, internships)
- Familiarize themselves with the campus and faculty

### **Advising Continuing Students**

Advisors are encouraged to maintain a relationship with their graduate advisees throughout their program. A primary goal in advising graduate students should be assisting students in a timely completion of degree requirements. This may include reminding them of deadlines and meeting with them to choose appropriate courses. In addition, advisors can assist graduate students in attending professional conferences, presenting at professional conferences and publishing their work.

Those advising graduate assistants have a distinct obligation to provide these students the support that comes through advising. Some of the responsibilities of an advisor in this situation might be:

- Assisting students to develop grant writing skills where appropriate
- Helping students to develop analytical, interpretive, writing, verbal and laboratory skills where appropriate, in accordance with the expectations of the discipline
- Helping students gain an appreciation of teaching, assist students in improving their teaching skills and providing them guidance in how to prepare an appropriate teaching portfolio
- Providing students with information about the variety of employment opportunities available to graduates of the program

### **Advising of Thesis/Essay/Creative Project Students**

In programs that require a thesis, essay or creative project, the advisor may or may not be the student's academic advisor. The advising of thesis/essay/creative project advisor is a faculty member in the department/program who typically has particular expertise in the student's area of research or interest and who has primary responsibility for guiding the student through the research and writing process. The main responsibilities of the advisor include:

- Taking reasonable measures to ensure that each student initiates the thesis/essay/creative project in a timely manner
- Approving the proposal and reviewing the progress of the paper along the way at specific intervals as defined by the advisor and the student
- Providing advice, comments and recommendations on the work in a thorough and timely manner
- Coordinating with the readers, in the case of a thesis, to ensure that materials are read by committee members (readers) in a timely fashion
- Providing approval of the work upon completion only after he or she determines that it reflects the level of graduate work expected by the department/program
- Suggesting opportunities for professional presentations and submission of the work to appropriate scholarly journals as they arise

### **Advising of Graduating Students**

Students should be provided the assistance needed in finding jobs or continuing their education. This assistance includes preparation for making a successful job application, including resumes, access to information about job opportunities and PhD programs, letters of recommendation and encouragement of student participation in or an awareness of networking possibilities.

## CHAPTER 3: STUDENT CONCERNS AND CONDITIONS

*Some students struggle with the adjustment to college life and need assistance in the short term; others are dealing with chronic conditions or trauma and will need support throughout their college careers.*

### SECTION 1: ACADEMIC CONCERNS

#### **Responding to Disturbing Content in Student Work**

Faculty sometimes find disturbing comments in the written work of students, such as:

- Disclosure of personal trauma or abuse
- References to suicidal thoughts or severe depression
- Violent or morbid content that is disturbing or threatening
- Sexual content that is disturbing or excessively graphic
- Bizarre or incoherent content
- Disclosure of severe problems with alcohol or drug abuse

Such writing may simply indicate a dramatic or unusual style but may also suggest psychological or emotional problems or possible danger to self or others. It may also indicate a bid for attention or a cry for help. The following guidelines may help determine whether there is a reason for concern and how best to respond.

#### **Acknowledge the Content:**

- Offer written comments on the work, such as “That must have been hard for you.”
- Invite discussion with comments such as, “Sounds like that was difficult for you. Do you have someone to talk to about this?” or “If you would like to speak with me, stop by during office hours.” An email to the student is a good way to communicate and document your initial concerns and outreach.

#### **Consider the Student’s Behavior in Class:**

- Does in-class behavior reinforce or lessen your concern? For example, writing about suicide is more concerning if the student appears sad, withdrawn or angry.

#### **Consult:**

- Consult with your associate dean or with Academic Advising.
- The Counseling Center is also available for consultation to determine if referral, immediate intervention or outreach to the student is indicated. The counselor also may provide suggestions about how to talk with the student.

#### **Meet the Student?**



- If you feel threatened or uneasy, do not meet with the student alone. Consult with your associate dean and consider having another person present or other options to ensure safety.
- If meeting with the student, ask about the inspiration for the work, to provide a context and see if the student has been influenced by similar writings. Consider asking the student directly if she/he is thinking about suicide or other destructive behavior
- Know your limits: Keep your role at the University in mind — most of us are not counselors. Even a brief acknowledgement or expression of concern can be very meaningful and supportive for a student; however, the conversation does not need to be lengthy or beyond your limits.

#### **Resource:**

Valentino, M. J. (1995). Responding When a Life Depends on It: What to Write in the Margins When Students Self-Disclose. Retrieved from:  
<http://ezproxy.memphis.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED385852&site=eds-live&scope=site>

## **The Student Who is Struggling Academically**

When students struggle academically at the University of Memphis, it is often because something outside the classroom gets in their way — health, financial difficulties or family issues. Student reactions to not doing well in a course vary widely. Some students will withdraw into silence. Some will complain loudly. Some will doggedly persevere. The Academic Advising Office is equipped to support students through their struggles. As you become aware that a student in your course or one of your advisees is struggling, the most effective way to assist the student is to contact the Academic Advising Office. Once the office has been informed about a particular student's difficulties, they will be able to check whether the student has broader problems or whether the difficulty is isolated (not all students, after all, will succeed in every subject).

#### **Students may have questions or need help in the following areas:**

- Help with study habits
- Help with exam skills
- Help with writing and reading skills
- Help with math skills
- Supplemental instruction
- Tutoring in selected areas
- Online tutoring in selected areas

In addition to consulting with the Academic Advising Office, you may want to refer students to the following academic support resources:

### **Educational Support Program (ESP)**

- Academic Enhancement, 207 Mitchell Hall, 901.678.5226  
(General Education courses, developmental math courses)
- Business Learning Center, 256 Fogelman, 901.678.3912
- English Learning Center, 225 Patterson, 901.678.2059
- Math Learning Center, 143 Dunn, 901.678.2704
- Science Learning Center, 207 Mitchell, 901.678.2704

For more information go to:

<https://www.memphis.edu/esp/onlinetutoring.php>

### **The Student Who Needs a Major**

Many students come to the University of Memphis with a fairly clear idea about which major they will pursue. Once they start taking courses and exploring the programs available, however, they often discover options they had never considered. Some end up adding a major or minor to their original plan, but some may completely change academic direction. There are varying degrees of major program flexibility and depending on the major, it may be too late in the student's academic career to switch majors and graduate in four years. Whatever the case, the student's academic advisor may well be the first line of consultation. Further, the Academic Advising Office staff are well positioned to provide guidance if the change in major is complicated by a significant change in the number of required credits or any other complexity. Career Services also can be very helpful. Career Services works with students to help reduce their anxiety about choosing or changing a major. Through workshops, self-assessment and individual advising appointments, the staff help students engage in a decision-making process that enables them to fully explore their major/minor options. Guided by the understanding that a major does not necessarily directly connect to career, Career Services is committed to helping students find the major in which they will be challenged and thrive.

Career Services can help students clarify career goals, prepare them for their job and internship search and advise them on planning for graduate/professional school. Types of advising appointments include:

- Career advising
- FOCUS 2 (career assessment and exploration)
- Resume/cover letter feedback
- Mock interviews
- Job search strategies
- LinkedIn/networking
- Plan for graduate school

### **The Student Who Needs Career Direction**

Many students enter the University of Memphis uncertain about their career direction and may benefit from career exploration as early as their first year. Many others change their plans, often several times. Students early on may need reassurance that just because their life/vocational plan is not moving in the direction they had hoped, there are career counselors who are able to assist. Career Services helps with career counseling and advising, career interest assessment, internships, career-related skills development, major changes and job search strategies. As students approach graduation, they may experience a sense of fear about the prospect of leaving school and obtaining a career position or selecting a graduate school. Some start to approach this transition by gathering information and exploring options early on, while others wait until their senior year. Students may feel frustrated they cannot find a position of their choosing, especially when the economic climate adds to the uncertainty. Students may feel especially anxious or even depressed when employers, graduate schools or internship sites make their choices. Regardless of the challenges that students face, Career Services is prepared to help them move through their concerns and anxieties, determine their next steps and realize their post-graduation plans and goals. Whenever students are troubled or in doubt about their career plans or lack thereof, you can refer them to **Career Services**, 678.2239, where they will receive direct assistance or referral. The center is located at 400 Wilder Tower. Many students will find the information they need on the Career Services website <https://www.memphis.edu/careerservices/index.php>

### **The Student Who Needs Career-or Work-Related Experience**

The University of Memphis has a variety of opportunities for students who seek a career-related experience or who wish to gain skills or experience in a specific field. University of Memphis students work for a variety of purposes — to offset college expenses, gain practical career-related experience or to provide an outlet from academics.

Studies have shown that students who are involved in extracurricular activities and work experiences have better time management skills. In addition, experiential opportunities and internships enable students to broaden their perspective and gain practical experience that

applies concepts from the classroom to real-world situations. For more information go to [memphis.edu/careerservices/contact.php](https://www.memphis.edu/careerservices/contact.php) or call, 678.2239.

### **The Student Who is Considering Graduate School**

Sometimes you will meet with a student who has discovered some passion for say, biology. She is a sophomore and has decided that research in biology is her future and that means she must go to graduate school. The student considering graduate school, should be directed to the specific department of interest to begin exploring graduate work in that area. Advisors for graduate students are typically department-based. Often, departments will assign advisors to students upon admission based on areas of interest. Also, Career Services is a resource where the staff is knowledgeable about the various paths toward graduate work. For more information, visit [https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/future\\_students/index.php](https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/future_students/index.php) or contact 678.3685.

## SECTION 2: GENERAL CONCERNS

### Students Facing Financial Concerns

We know the cost of a college education and available financial assistance are crucial considerations when selecting a college. Our Financial Aid Roadmap is a publication we hope will help answer students' questions about financial aid and assist them with their college enrollment decisions. **For more information, go to [memphis.edu/financialaid/pdfs/2019-2020\\_financial\\_aid\\_roadmap.pdf](https://memphis.edu/financialaid/pdfs/2019-2020_financial_aid_roadmap.pdf)**

The Financial Aid Office administers federal, state and institutional aid programs to qualified students. To receive financial aid, qualified students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). **U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents and qualifying non-citizens are eligible for federal financial aid.**

If you have more questions, talk to one of our financial aid experts in person, via [financialaid@memphis.edu](mailto:financialaid@memphis.edu) or at 901.678.4825.

### Appeals/Special Circumstances

The appeal process is a way for families to convey their particular situation or concerns which may not have been accurately captured in the initial application. In some cases, a change of circumstances may have occurred recently that has affected the financial feasibility of continuing at the UofM. Encouraging students to discuss their situation facilitates careful, detailed review of circumstances, funding resources, and options.

### Academic Renewability Criteria

Students receiving aid, especially federal assistance, are required to maintain a certain standard of academic performance. Satisfactory Academic Progress is the consistent measurement tool used to determine the renewability of merit and need-based aid. Students' progress is reviewed for both GPA requirements as well as earned credit hours on a semester basis. These guidelines are established to ensure students successfully complete the courses and degree for which aid is awarded. Failure to meet these requirements presents a financial and academic challenge to students.

### Course Withdrawal and Complete Withdrawal

Financial assistance is awarded on the basis of a minimum number of credit hours. Depending on when and how many courses a student chooses to withdraw from directly affects their aid either in the current term or in future terms. Students may be struggling with this decision or may make it without realizing the implications of such a choice.

Students may experience financial stress in a variety of ways. It may be simply not having enough funding to make the University affordable or it may be an issue of balancing work and academics. Some students may benefit from taking a leave from the University to address financial and other concerns. Students can contact financial aid for clarification as to how withdrawal will affect their aid and repayment schedule at [memphis.edu/financialaid/contact/index.php](http://memphis.edu/financialaid/contact/index.php)

**Veterans Benefits** - Withdrawing can affect a student's future eligibility for veterans' benefits. If a student is attending school through a VA program, they should contact the University's Veterans Educational Benefits & Certification Office for clarification as to how their benefits will be affected at [memphis.edu/registrar/vettedben/index.php](http://memphis.edu/registrar/vettedben/index.php)

## **The Student Veteran**

The University of Memphis Veterans and Military Student Services Department (VMSS) provides the resources needed to empower and support veterans and military students, as well as their families, in pursuit of academic and career success. The primary purpose of VMSS is to support a smooth transition from “boots to books” in a post-secondary setting.

Veterans have a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences, both within the military and in the civilian world. Since they represent a very small minority in the United States and the University of Memphis classroom, they usually do not want to be the center of a class discussion, and sometimes do not want to be identified as a veteran. As non-traditional students, your flexibility and understanding of their situation is much appreciated. The average student veteran is older, has significant off-campus family/personal responsibilities and is a first-generation college student. They may have strong opinions (particularly in areas of personal experience), can be particular about security concerns (which is why they prefer sitting at the back of the classroom) and seek very direct instructions. Their “culture shock” comes from a transition from the military environment to the academic culture and can take several months to smooth out. Luckily, we have many supports at the UofM to assist in this transition.

### **VMSS Support & Services – 678.4269**

VMSS offers an array of services in partnership with on-campus and external community partners that visit the department on a regular basis. These partners are available to connect with students on an individual basis in a specially designated office space. Some of our partners include:

- UofM Disability Resources for Students
- UofM Counseling Center-Veterans Specialist
- UofM Career Services

- Memphis Vet Center
- VA Disability Claims Specialist
- VA Education and Benefits Office
- Mid-South Veterans Help Desk

#### **Some of the Most Common Challenges Are:**

- Becoming oriented to the new, flexible academic structure
- Staying focused in a slow-paced environment. Finding common ground/connecting with civilian peers
- Admitting they don't know something or need help (which they may see as a weakness)
- Refreshing/learning academic skills (writing an outline, studying for tests)

#### **Signs of Trouble/Concern:**

- Missing more than one class without any contact
- Not turning in assignments
- Appearing excessively tired/withdrawn

#### **What Can We Do?**

- Consult with staff coordinating Veterans Educational Benefits & Certification, 678.2996
- Talk to the student and show genuine interest or concern for their situation.

### **Students from Historically Underrepresented Groups**

The University of Memphis recognizes the importance of creating a campus community enriched with diversity and inclusion. The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) provides you with a space to broaden your horizons and learn about the backgrounds and cultures of others. Home to 11 diverse student organizations, OMA provides numerous opportunities to learn about diversity initiatives available on campus.

Recognizing that diversity and inclusion are key components to our students' learning experience, we offer a wide range of opportunities for leadership development, programs, events, scholarships, travel and guest lectures to help you embrace the diversity around you. Additionally, OMA challenges you to think critically and lead the way in finding solutions to society's toughest issues.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs recognizes that we are nothing without our students. We believe that possessing a staff with care and compassion towards students helps create an environment that is welcoming and comfortable like a "home away from home." We aim to provide students with the best programming experiences while encouraging academic

persistence, as well as recognizing the importance of relevant experiences gained through student engagement.

Regardless of race, ethnicity or religion, we welcome and encourage you to get involved and join the multicultural family at the University of Memphis.

### **Students Facing a Cultural Transition**

An international student is someone who will be attending college in the United States on an F-1 visa (full-time enrollment required). The University of Memphis welcomes students from all over the world, with 84 foreign countries currently represented in our student body. They have been an important part of the University community from many years. Students adjusting to a new country and a new academic environment may experience mild to severe culture shock. This is the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new place, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. Culture shock generally sets in after the first few weeks of arrival. In the “honeymoon” stage where everything encountered is new and exciting.

The [Center for International Education Services](#) (CIES) assists more than 1,000 foreign and international exchange students on our campus. The CIES supports international students by providing advice on immigration matters, employment, taxation, cultural adjustment and other practical issues. The office conducts an international student orientation each semester, coordinates insurance information and assists with International Night and other cultural functions. The office ensures the University is in compliance with the United States Student and Exchange Visitor System (SEVIS), which reports directly to U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

#### **Resource(s):**

- Center for International Education Services – 678.2814  
110 Panhellenic Building

### **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Students**

College is a fun and exciting time. Students are meeting new people and exploring diverse experiences. Despite the varied opportunities to connect with others on our campus, it can be hard to identify other LGBT+ individuals and allies. The University of Memphis recognizes this and wants our students to know that our campus is home to a strong and thriving LGBT+ community. Our LGBT+ campus community provides support for educational programming, community outreach, advocacy, social events, counseling services, career planning, emergency funds and professional development opportunities. Whether you are a longtime member of the LGBT+ community or just joining us – our LGBT+ events and services are open to everyone.



## LGBT+ Campus Community & Support

Some of the key developmental tasks for college students include identity formation, establishing mature relationships and learning to manage emotions. During this time our students may be questioning or exploring their sexuality and/or gender identity for the first time. This can be either an exhilarating and liberating experience, or a terrifying and shame-ridden time. They may not have friends with whom they can openly discuss their sexuality or gender identity. Additionally, seeking support and validation from family may be more difficult. In fact, LGBT+ students' minoritized status may be completely invisible to those around them. These students can feel quite isolated and often are not sure where to find support. There are many ways to reassure a student that you are open to learning about them and who they are. Some suggestions for responding if a student comes out to you include:

- **Listen.** The best way you can help and support a student is to hear them out and let the student know you are there to listen.
- **Offer support but don't assume a student needs any help.** The student may be perfectly comfortable with their sexual orientation or gender identity and may not need help dealing with it. It may be that the student just wanted to tell someone, or simply to tell you so you might know them better. Offer and be available to support your students as they come out to others.
- **Be a role model of acceptance.** Use inclusive language and set an accepting environment by not making assumptions about people's sexual orientation or gender identity, and by addressing biased language, stereotypes and myths about lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- **Respect privacy.** The student told you and may or may not be ready to tell others. Let the student know that the conversation is confidential, and you won't tell anyone else unless they ask for your help talking to another person. If they want others to know, doing it in their own way with their own timing is important.

### The Office of Multicultural Affairs and Inclusion & Sexual Diversity Supports

The Office of Multicultural Affairs is a great place to access and learn more about LGBT+ events and programming on campus. Our office manages special programs related to LGBT+ education, LGBT+ diversity training on campus – including Safe Zone Training 1 & 2: Gender Identity and provides individual supports to students as needed. If you have questions about name and gender changes, are interested in learning about use of preferred names on campus, want to take on LGBT+ leadership roles, or need connection to other LGBT+ resources/supports, the Office of Multicultural Affairs can help. Additionally, the office is home to 12 other diverse student organizations, so it is a great place to learn about other diversity initiatives on our campus. Our office allows students who identify with the LGBT+ community to

connect and create relevant student programming through our LGBT+ student organization, Stonewall Tigers Gender & Sexual Alliance. If you want to learn more about Safe Zone Training or Stonewall Tigers, visit the office in 223 University Center or call 901.678.2054.

**Embrace the Diversity Around You! Join one of our registered student organizations:**

The Office of Multicultural Affairs allows students to develop leadership skills and take control of their personal and professional growth. There are so many opportunities to get involved! Regardless of the ethnicity, religion or race, we encourage students to connect with organizations that represent their values to ensure that everyone feels included and connected to the University! Below are our in-house organizations:

- African Student Association
- Asian American Association
- Black Scholars Unlimited
- Black Student Association
- Empowered Men of Color
- Hispanic Student Association
- Muslim Student Association
- The NCAAP Chapter at the UofM
- Professional United Sisters of Excellence
- Stonewall Tigers Gender & Sexual Alliance
- Vietnamese Student Association

**Ways to connect directly with our LGBT+ community**

- **Stonewall Tigers Gender & Sexuality Alliance**

Stonewall Tigers is a registered student organization that aims to build community and advance advocacy efforts on campus and in the greater Memphis area. This student-led organization hosts several meetings a month and hosts special events, including LGBT+ Awareness Week. Contact [stonewalltigersgsa@gmail.com](mailto:stonewalltigersgsa@gmail.com) or Facebook @StonewallTigersGSA

- **Counseling Center**

Our counseling center is home to individual, couples and group therapy for all students. Whether you need support in adjusting to campus life or have concerns about coming out to your parents, the counseling center is available to support you. All services are free for current students. Stop by 214 Wilder Tower or call 901.678.2068 to schedule an intake appointment. In addition to providing counseling services, the counseling center

also offers the relaxation zone (302 Brister Hall) and oversees the Safe Zone 1: LGBT+ Ally Training.

- **Safe Zone Training**

The University offers two types of Safe Zone Training, one focused on LGBT+ allyship and one focused on gender identity. These trainings are open to students, faculty and community members. Trainings are advertised. If you need more information, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs (901.678.2054). You may see faculty and staff with a rainbow Safe Zone sticker displayed in their office. These are only given to those who have completed the trainings and are a good way to start conversations about LGBT+ issues with faculty and staff.

- **Name Change/Gender Change**

Information on this process can be found on the homepage of our Registrar's office: <https://www.memphis.edu/registrar/>

- **Gender Neutral Restrooms**

Gender-neutral restroom facilities are available across campus. A list of these facilities can be accessed here: <https://www.memphis.edu/multiculturalaffairs/pdfs/gender-neutral-restrooms.pdf> or by searching gender-neutral restrooms on the University of Memphis homepage.

- **Transgender Voice Development**

We offer voice services to support individuals who are transitioning. To learn more, visit <https://www.memphis.edu/mshc/services/slptransvoice.php> or contact John Sandidge at [jlsnddge@memphis.edu](mailto:jlsnddge@memphis.edu)

- **Office for Institutional Equity**

Sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are a few of the areas protected in our harassment and discrimination policy. If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, consider filing a complaint with the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE). More information can be found on the OIE webpage: <https://www.memphis.edu/oie/harrassment/index.php>

## **Resources in the Greater Memphis Area**

- **OutMemphis**

OutMemphis offers support groups, free HIV and STI testing and hosts special LGBT+ focused events. Additionally, their space is safe for working, mingling, and making connections with others in the community. [outmemphis.org](http://outmemphis.org)

- **The Haven**

The Haven is another great community center for LGBT+ individuals in Memphis. Students are welcome to hang out or do homework at The Haven. Additionally, they offer free HIV and STI testing, support groups and host special events on LGBT+ topics. The Haven on Facebook: @TheHavenMemphis

- **Focus Mid-South**

Memphis has its own LGBT+ magazine titled *FOCUS*. If you are interested in reading articles about LGBT+ issues and learning more about the local community, keep an eye out for this magazine (often available at Kroger stores). <https://focusmidsouth.com>

- **Pride Fest**

Local pride celebrations in Memphis occurs every September and includes a three-day weekend full of drag shows, brunches and community building. <https://midsouthpride.org/>

- **Choices Memphis Center for Reproductive Health**

Choices is a local clinic that offers LGBT+ friendly services. It offers a variety of wellness, sexual health and transition related services. <https://memphischoices.org/>

## Responding to Disability in the Classroom

Students with disabilities may experience difficulties in the classroom environment because, historically, the educational system was not designed to welcome a diverse student population. While educational institutions have made some progress, education remains largely inaccessible to students with disabilities. The University of Memphis values diversity and inclusion and is committed to equal access for all students. Furthermore, the University has a legal obligation to ensure that students with disabilities have access to all University programs and services. As such, Disability Resources for Students (DRS) is the University department charged with determining appropriate and reasonable accommodations in classes through an interactive process with the students and faculty.

In most situations, teaching students with disabilities does not require medical knowledge of the particular condition. It is really a matter of understanding how to design for diversity and to make reasonable and appropriate accommodations when the design fails to anticipate an aspect of human variation.

### *Course Design*

Planning for accessibility and inclusion as you design your course is a proactive and a sustainable approach to disability. To support course instructors in designing for diversity DRS is

available for consultation. You may also find some helpful information on our website at <https://www.memphis.edu/drs/faculty/>.

### *Accommodations*

Although it is important to design courses with diversity in mind, it is impossible to anticipate every aspect of human variation. Therefore, it is necessary to have a process by which students can request accommodations. Students experiencing barriers may request accommodations through DRS. At times, consultation with instructors is necessary for the DRS professional to understand the unique characteristics of the course environment.

### *Accommodation Process*

Once appropriate accommodations have been determined, instructors will receive an email notification listing accommodations that will provide access. Upon receipt of the notification, the student and instructor should discuss arrangements for accommodations. For example, instructors may choose to provide testing accommodations to students with resources from within their department, or they may use DRS Testing Services to accommodate their student. If choosing the latter option, instructors must complete the Test Information Form (formerly the testing contract) to give the student the access to schedule exams at DRS.

### *Self-Disclosure of Disability*

It is the student's right to disclose or not disclose specific information about their diagnosis to course instructors. The student's responsibility to self-disclose disability-specific information has been met if they are registered as a student with a disability at DRS. Course instructors should not request additional information or documentation of students registered with DRS. If a student is not registered with DRS, but self-discloses a disability or requests accommodations, refer them to DRS.

## **Students Experiencing Academic Difficulty**

As a faculty member, you are uniquely positioned to recognize when a student is experiencing academic difficulty. If you have a student who is experiencing difficulties in your class, invite them to have a private conversation regarding those specific difficulties. During the conversation, you can provide the student with a list of resources, including DRS. However, do not say to a student, "I think you have a disability."

### *Disability Resources for Students*

110 Wilder Tower

Phone | 901.678.2880

Fax | 901.678.3070

[drs@memphis.edu](mailto:drs@memphis.edu)

<https://www.memphis.edu/drs/>

*Disability Resources for Students is a part of Student Academic Success, whose motto is: Students Learning through Engagement and Involvement.*

Faculty members are partners with students with disabilities and with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) staff in ensuring equal access to course information, activities and tests through reasonable and appropriate accommodations. DRS staff is always available to consult with individual faculty members or with entire academic departments regarding issues of accommodation and access and about improving understanding of disability.

For more information, please visit the DRS website: [memphis.edu/drs](http://memphis.edu/drs).

## The Student with Health Considerations

**Student Health Center is staffed with** nurse practitioners, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, laboratory and x-ray technologist, health educators various administrative support personnel.

**Short-term, acute illnesses and injuries** are addressed at the UofM Student Health Center. Patients with chronic, complex or recurrent medical conditions must continue to use their primary care physician for issues related to their chronic illness. No routine physicals are performed at Student Health Center. Only lab tests ordered by Student Health Center medical providers will be performed.

**Job-related injuries** are not treated at the Student Health Center. If you are an employee or student employee at the University and are injured on the job, you must report the incident to your supervisor, who will obtain the appropriate paperwork from the Human Resources Department.

The University of Memphis Student Health and Wellness Center is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Tuesday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Need assistance? Contact 901.678.2287.

**\* The last patient sign-in time is 3:30 p.m. No patients may be signed-in after 3:30 p.m.** The facility is closed weekends, holidays and announced university closures.

### *ADA and Title IX: Accommodation of Pregnant Students*

Title IX prohibits the University from discriminating against a student based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery from any of these conditions. Title IX also prohibits a school from applying any rule related to a student's parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently based on their gender.

The following guidelines and FAQs are provided to assist faculty members in addressing pregnant or expecting students:

- Students should notify you as soon as possible to make you aware of absences due to pregnancy or related conditions.
- You should develop a reasonable plan for the pregnant student's completion of missed coursework or assignments. This plan could include substitution of assignments, modified due dates, or additional assignments. If faculty members cannot reach an agreement with the student, then the professor should contact the Title IX Coordinator.
- Absences must be excused if the doctor deems the absence medically necessary. Students should not be disadvantaged because of absences due to pregnancy or related conditions. If the class attendance policy allows for only a specific number of absences, then medically necessary absences due to pregnancy or a related condition must be removed from that count.
- Pregnant students who miss lectures must be given a reasonable opportunity to make up the missed lecture. This could include recording lectures, providing note-takers, or other means. Therefore, professors should work with the student to establish a means to access the content of missed classes.
- If a student reports a need for a prolonged absence or that a prolonged medical condition related to her pregnancy is causing functional limitations that create barriers to academic success, the student may qualify as a student with a disability under the ADA. Please contact the Title IX Coordinator for assistance in determining how to proceed.
- Any complaints of harassment or discrimination due to pregnancy should be referred to the Title IX Coordinator.

Individuals with questions, concerns or a complaint related to Title IX are encouraged to contact the University's Title IX Coordinator:

**Office for Institutional Equity**

**The University of Memphis**

**156 Administration Building Memphis, TN 38152-3370**

**Tel: (901) 678-2713 Email: [oie@memphis.edu](mailto:oie@memphis.edu)**

## ADA and Title IX Frequently Asked Questions

1. What types of assistance must the University provide to a pregnant student?

*To ensure a pregnant student's access to its educational program, when necessary, the University must make adjustments to the regular program that are reasonable and responsive to the student's temporary pregnancy status.*

2. Does the University have to excuse a student's absences due to pregnancy or childbirth?

*If the student's absences due to pregnancy or related conditions, including recovery from childbirth, is medically necessary, the University may have to make exceptions to standard attendance requirements. You should discuss with the student that they should provide you with a doctor's note.*

*The University may also offer the student alternatives to making up missed work, such as retaking a semester, or allowing the student additional time in a program to continue at the same pace and finish at a later date, especially after longer periods of leave. Questions regarding absences should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator.*

3. How do I determine if the absence is a medical necessity?

*You should not. In these cases, you must trust the judgment of the physician. If the doctor advises that the student should be absent, then the doctor's note should suffice.*

4. If part of the grade is based on class attendance, can I lower the grade because of the classes missed?

*It depends. If the pregnant student has not given you documentation that the absences were medically necessary, then yes, you may apply the same attendance policy that applies to other students. If the student has given you documentation that the absences were medically necessary, then no, you cannot apply the attendance policy. You must excuse any absences for which the pregnant student's doctor has written a note stating that the absence was medically necessary.*

5. What about internships, career rotations, and other off-campus elements of her program - does she have a right to participate in those?

*Yes, the University must allow the student to continue participating in off-campus programs. For example, if the student's program has a clinical component, the University cannot deny her participation based on her pregnancy.*

6. May I require a pregnant student to obtain a doctor's permission before allowing her to attend class late in her pregnancy if I'm worried about the student's health or safety?

*No. You cannot require a pregnant student to produce a doctor's note in order to stay in school or participate in activities, including interscholastic sports, subject to some exceptions. Questions about safety concerns should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator.*



7. Do these requirements include male students who are expectant fathers?

*No. These requirements do not include “paternity leave” unless the mother’s doctor believes that it is medically necessary for the father to be excused.*

8. Can harassing a student because of pregnancy violate Title IX?

*Yes. Title IX prohibits harassment of students based on sex, including harassment because of pregnancy or related conditions. Harassing conduct can take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, graphic and written statements, and other conduct that may be humiliating or physically threatening or harmful. Particular actions that could constitute prohibited harassment include making sexual comments or jokes about a student’s pregnancy, calling a pregnant student sexually charged names, spreading rumors about her sexual activity, and making sexual propositions or gestures. Reports of these incidents should be sent to the Title IX Coordinator.*

## SECTION 3: MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

**This guide is designed to raise awareness of mental health issues and decrease the number of students with untreated mental illness by destigmatizing mental health and highlighting available services on campus. The wellness of our students is a top priority. Having this knowledge prepares you to further not just their education, but their well-being too.**

In your daily interactions with people, keep in mind the *10 most common warning signs*. If you notice any of these becoming present in students, try connecting and engaging. When dealing with mental health maintaining connection can be very difficult and having support can make a world of a difference.

### ***10 most common warning signs***

- **Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks**
- **Trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so**
- **Severe out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that can cause harm to self or others**
- **Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason**
- **Not eating, throwing up or using laxatives to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain**
- **Seeing, hearing or believing things that are not real**
- **Repeated use of drugs or alcohol**
- **Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits**
- **Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still that puts a person in danger or causes school failure**
- **Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities**

You can always access reliable information on mental health from:

*nami.org | samhsa.gov | mentalhealth.gov*

*National Prevention Suicide Lifeline 1.800.273.TALK (8255)*

*NAMI help line | 1.800.950.NAMI (6264)*

**If you are unsure if a student is exhibiting any that is perceived as posing an immediate danger to themselves or others, you should stay with the student and contact:**

**University of Memphis Police Department, x-4357  
University Counseling Center (x-2068) immediately**

## SECTION 4: TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES

### **The Student Who is Experiencing a Family Crisis**

Being away from family can be stressful for some students. This stress is compounded when a family encounters a crisis. Crises can include divorce, death, the loss of a job, financial hardship, physical and mental illness, legal trouble or anything that disrupts a family's normal functioning. Academic performance can easily suffer when a student's attention is divided between responsibilities to family and school. What constitutes a family for many students may not fit the Western European/North American nuclear ideal. Many cultures define family more broadly than one's immediate blood relatives. Some families require older children to take on some of the financial and decision-making responsibilities. Some international students are caregivers for their siblings in the United States while their parents are back home. Some students are caregivers of their non-English-speaking parents who live in the United States. These expectations make juggling a family crisis with academic responsibilities especially difficult. Faculty and staff can support students who are experiencing a family crisis by offering flexibility on deadlines and other expectations within reason. Students whose academic performance is affected by outside stress should always be referred to Academic Advising for additional support. Faculty also can consult with academic advisors about reasonably accommodating the student.

**Resource:** Coping with Grief and Loss: A Guide to Healing. Harvard Medical School. 2003.

### **Responding to Title IX Concerns: Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence (Stalking, Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence and Dating Violence)**

The University of Memphis is required to comply with Title IX regulations for addressing sexual misconduct. In order to so do, the University adopted its Sexual Misconduct and Domestic Violence Policy (GE 2031). Sexual misconduct is not tolerated at the University, and reports of sexual misconduct are taken very seriously. In order to be compliant with Title IX, any incident of sexual misconduct that is reported, observed or suspected by a faculty/staff member must be reported to the University. The following guidelines at [https://www.memphis.edu/oie/resources/1819-oie-4742018-mandatory\\_reporter.pdf](https://www.memphis.edu/oie/resources/1819-oie-4742018-mandatory_reporter.pdf) outlines the responsibilities and obligations of the University's mandatory reporters.

#### **Mandatory Reporter**

If a student discloses information that could involve a matter of sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence and/or other form of sex discrimination, you must report what you learn to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible. You will also want to let the student know of

your duty to report and refer them to confidential resources for support. In speaking with the parties involved, you must not promise confidentiality. Faculty and staff members do not have a special privilege or ability to maintain the confidentiality of reports shared with them.

A University employee who has the authority to redress sexual misconduct, who has the duty to report incidents of sexual misconduct or whom a student could reasonably believe has this authority or duty, you are considered a [Mandatory Reporter](#) and are required to report all acts of sexual misconduct.

## CONFIDENTIAL DISCLOSURE

Information provided to the Counseling Center and Student Health Center will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any person or University official without your expressed permission.

If you have experienced or have knowledge of any form of sexual misconduct involving a student, staff, faculty member or affiliated person/organization, students, staff or faculty members should complete the following form:

### [Title IX - SEXUAL MISCONDUCT | COMPLAINT FORM](#)

The University of Memphis is committed to providing a variety of accessible means to encourage complainants to report incidents of sexual misconduct. In addition to making a report to the Responsible Parties as defined in the policy, a complaint can also be filed in person with the following University offices:

Title IX Coordinator Office for Institutional Equity 156 Administration Building 901.678.2713 <a href="mailto:oi@memphis.edu">oi@memphis.edu</a> <a href="http://memphis.edu/oi/">memphis.edu/oi/</a>	Dean of Students Office 359 University Center 901.678.2298 <a href="mailto:deanofstudents@memphis.edu">deanofstudents@memphis.edu</a> <a href="http://memphis.edu/deanofstudents">memphis.edu/deanofstudents</a>
University of Memphis Police Services 109 Zach Curlin St. 901.678.4357 <a href="mailto:police@memphis.edu">police@memphis.edu</a> <a href="http://memphis.edu/police/index.php">memphis.edu/police/index.php</a>	

## **The Student Who Has Experienced Sexual Misconduct**

### **Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse, Forced Sexual Intercourse, Non-Consensual Sexual Contact, Sexual Exploitation**

#### **What is Sexual Misconduct?**

Sexual misconduct is defined as dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and sexual assault. It may also include actions which would typically include sexual harassment. It is a form of sexual discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 of the Higher Education Act. Any allegation of sexual misconduct as defined herein will be investigated and adjudicated according to the procedures outlined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities in Section V.(1) of Disciplinary Procedures. Descriptions of prohibited behavior under this policy includes but is not limited to:

- **Stalking** – A willful course of conduct involving repeated or continuing harassment of another person
- **Sexual Assault** – Any forced or coerced sexual contact of a person's intimate body parts(s) made without consent
- **Sexual Harassment** – Unwanted contact of a sexual nature which (a) adversely affects a term or condition of employment, education, participation in educational activities or living environment, (b) unreasonably interferes with employment or academic performance, (c) creates a hostile or abusive environment or (d) is used as a basis or factor in a decision that tangibly affects employment, education, participation in educational activities or living arrangement.
- **Domestic Violence** – Violence against a person when the involved parties are/were married, living together or in a romantic cohabitation
- **Dating Violence** – Violence against a person when the involved parties are dating, have dated or have had a sexual relationship

## **The Student Who is Dealing with Intrusive Contact (Stalking)**

Some young adults find themselves victimized by unwanted intrusive contact by others. Stalking is a willful course of conduct involving repeated or continuing harassment of another individual that would cause a reasonable person to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed or molested, and that actually causes the complainant to feel terrorized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed, or molested. "Harassment" means conduct directed toward the complainant that includes, but is not limited to, repeated or continuing unconsented contact that would cause a reasonable person to suffer emotional distress, and that actually causes the complainant to suffer emotional distress. Harassment does not include constitutionally protected activity or conduct that serves a legitimate purpose.

These behaviors are of a harassing nature and may even provoke fear and anxiety. In most situations, an individual is dealing with an ex-partner, but others may become the target of obsessive attention. Stalking may include, but is not limited to persistent telephone calls, text messaging, social networking, instant messaging, monitoring behavior, being in physical proximity to the person, or taking pictures. In some cases, the behaviors can include threats and intimidation.

In many cases, the behavior is just annoying (multiple phone calls during the day), but other times it can be frightening (a person suddenly appears in a window of the home). It is not possible to determine which cases will end quickly and which cases of intrusive contact will continue for a long time. Regardless, the victim of this intrusive attention can often become distracted, anxious, tense, sensitive, and jumpy. The uncertainty of when or where the perpetrator may strike next can lead to tremendous fear. Interestingly, some young people tend to have enormous tolerance for this kind of harassment and do nothing, hoping it will go away.

**Referrals:**

Title IX Coordinator, 678.2713 (UofM)

Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Lambuth)

Jamilah Harris

705 Lambuth Boulevard

Jackson, TN 38301

731.425.1901

UofM Police Services, 678.4357

**Resource(s)**

The online Title IX Report form:

[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout\\_id=51](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout_id=51)

**Sexual Assault**

Nonconsensual sexual contact with the complainant by the respondent, or the respondent by the complainant when force or coercion is used to accomplish the act, the sexual contact is accomplished without consent of the complainant, and the respondent knows or has reason to know at the time of the contact that the complainant did not or could not consent. "Sexual contact" includes, but is not limited to, the intentional touching of the complainant's, the respondent's, or any other person's intimate parts, or the intentional touching of the clothing covering the immediate area of the complainant's, the respondent's, or any other person's intimate parts, if that intentional touching can be reasonably construed as being for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification.

## What is Consent?

Consent is a freely given and informed decision to participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Consent can be communicated through mutually understandable words or actions and can be withdrawn at any moment.

### Consent **CANNOT** be given

- By anyone who is asleep, unconscious or mentally or physically incapacitated
- By anyone who is incapacitated through the effects of drugs or alcohol
- By anyone who is under duress, threat, coercion or force

National studies from college campuses across the country report that approximately 20–25 percent of college women will experience an attempted or completed sexual assault by the time they graduate from college. The perpetrator is most likely someone known to the victim: a fellow student, someone with a romantic interest, an RA, a friend, etc. Ninety percent of sexual assault victims on campus are women violated by men. Men who are sexually assaulted are most often victimized by other men (but sometimes by women) who are partners, friends or even as a result of hazing or other peer rituals or pranks.

The student who is sexually assaulted requires some special consideration. This kind of trauma can affect students in many ways, including difficulties with concentration and study, emotional flashbacks, feelings of powerlessness or lack of control, bouts of sadness, sleeplessness and nightmares, and/or requiring time away from academics due to judicial or criminal action. It is not uncommon for victims to remain silent about sexual assault, often hoping that the emotional pain will just go away and hoping that if they don't tell anyone, it didn't happen. Most do not seek criminal or judicial action, fearing they will be condemned for their behavior (such as drinking or what they were wearing) or their judgment will be criticized. Too many victims' testimonies are questioned or not believed, which contributes to the silence and self-blame that victims endure.

If a student discloses the assault to you, a sensitive response will help her/him heal more quickly. So, if a student tells you about an incident, it shows she/he trusts you. Open-ended questions such as "How can I help?" or "What do you need?" will prevent you from asking intrusive or judgmental questions (e.g., "Why did you trust him?" or "Couldn't you scream?") and convey a sense of support to the student.

Most victimized students want to stay on track academically and will appreciate the opportunity to complete coursework in a fair yet flexible way. You may be asked by the Title IX coordinator or the director for the Office of Disability Resources for Students to make alternate arrangements with a student to complete coursework. You also may need to put a timeline

with required work in writing. Students dealing with trauma may not be able to fully grasp details when they are discussed; a written agreement with coursework expectations is helpful.

If the student is looking for resources to help deal with the experience or needs information about options, the victim coordinator of the Office of Victim Services can provide support, resources and information to help the student manage the trauma. The Title IX coordinator can provide information about reporting options, support resources, interim safety measures and accommodations. The local community agency, Shelby County Rape Crisis Center is a 24-hour on-call resource line on which a victim can talk to someone or be put in touch with additional community resources. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### **Referrals:**

Title IX Coordinator, 678.2713

Office of Victim Services, 678.4471

Victim Coordinators

Contact UofM Police Services – 678.4357 after 4:30 p.m.

Shelby County Rape Crisis Center

1060 Madison Avenue, Suite 102

Memphis, TN 38104

901.222.3950 (Telephone answered after hours by the Crisis Center)

### **On-Campus Resources**

Counseling Center

214 Wilder Tower

[memphis.edu/cpcc](http://memphis.edu/cpcc)

678.2068

Student Health Center

200 Hudson Health Center

[memphis.edu/health/](http://memphis.edu/health/)

678.2287

Police Services

100 Zach Curlin Parking Garage

[memphis.edu/police](http://memphis.edu/police)

Emergency line: 678.4357

Tiger Patrol Program: 678.4663

The Athena Project

For women experiencing domestic violence

[memphis.edu/athena/](http://memphis.edu/athena/)

901.678.3973



- **Information for Complainants** ([memphis.edu/oie/docs/sexualmisconductinfoforvictims.pdf](http://memphis.edu/oie/docs/sexualmisconductinfoforvictims.pdf))
- **Sexual Misconduct information brochure** ([memphis.edu/oie/titleixbrochurefinal.pdf](http://memphis.edu/oie/titleixbrochurefinal.pdf))
- **Resources for Students** ([memphis.edu/oie/resources/1819-oie-479\\_2018\\_sexual\\_misconduct\\_resource\\_sheet.pdf](http://memphis.edu/oie/resources/1819-oie-479_2018_sexual_misconduct_resource_sheet.pdf))
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Coalition (SAPAC) - SAPAC holds programs, trainings and events to educate the UofM community and engage its members in dialogue about interpersonal violence. For questions, email [sapac@memphis.edu](mailto:sapac@memphis.edu) or contact 901.848.9977.

## **Off-Campus Resources**

TN Coalition to End Sexual Violence

<https://www.tncoalition.org>

1.800.273.8255 (24-Hour State-Wide Hotline)

Family Safety Center

[www.familysafetycenter.org](http://www.familysafetycenter.org)

901.222.4400

Memphis Police Department – DVU

[www.memphispolice.org](http://www.memphispolice.org)

901.636.3741

## **The Student Who Has Experienced Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is behavior used to establish power and control over another individual using fear, intimidation, violence and/or threat of violence. These behaviors can include, but are not limited to physical, verbal, emotional, financial or sexual abuse. Examples of abuse may include hitting, punching, slapping, throwing objects, biting, yelling, name-calling, belittling, threatening violence, stealing money, destroying possessions, isolated, committing sexual violence and suicidal threats. About one in four women and one in seven men have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner. Relationship violence can happen to anyone. It occurs between casual or intimate partners of the same or opposite sex, former partners, roommates or family members. It can sometimes be hard to detect if your relationship is heading down the wrong path. Generally, unhealthy behaviors begin gradually. Then manipulation is often used to make you think these behaviors are normal or your fault. Some warning signs of an unhealthy relationship are: jealousy, checking up on a partner, making all the decisions, pressuring you for sex and other things, portraying violence as a masculine trait, limiting your time with friends and family, calling you names, constant text messages/phone calls, losing one's temper easily, breaking promises, lying to you and withholding affection as a way to punish you. If you know of a student in immediate danger of relationship violence call Police Services, at 678.4357 or 911.

## Dating Violence

Violence against a person when the complainant and respondent are dating, or who have dated, or who have or had a sexual relationship. “Dating” and “dated” do not include fraternization between two individuals solely in a business or non-romantic social context. Violence includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

1. Inflicting, or attempting to inflict, physical injury on the complainant by other than accidental means
2. Placing the complainant in fear of physical harm
3. Physical restraint
4. Malicious damage to the personal property of the complainant, including inflicting, or attempting to inflict, physical injury on any animal owned, possessed, leased, kept or held by the complainant
5. Placing a complainant in fear of physical harm to any animal owned, possessed, leased, kept or held by the complainant

Also, you can encourage a student to speak with the Title IX coordinator or a deputy Title IX coordinator, or the Memphis Domestic Violence and **Child Advocacy Center Helpline (901.525.2377)** to speak with an advocate for support, develop a safety plan and learn more about resources and reporting options.

### Referrals:

Memphis Advocacy, Resources and Support (MARS) - provides advocacy, resources and support to students dealing with domestic violence.

[MARS@memphis.edu](mailto:MARS@memphis.edu). 901.678.6277 (24-hour helpline).

Memphis Child Advocacy Center  
901.525.2377 (Office Hours 8:30 a.m.-5  
p.m.)  
Monday — Friday  
On call 24/7.

Deputy Title IX Coordinator (Lambuth)  
705 Lambuth Boulevard  
Jackson, TN 38301  
731.425.1901  
Police Services, 901.678.4357

Title IX Coordinator, 901.678.2713

## **The Student Who Has Experienced Discrimination**

As our non-discrimination policy states, “The University of Memphis is committed to ensuring that each member of the University community works or studies in an environment free from any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment that is based on race, color, religion, age, disability, sex, national origin, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression or any legally protected class or basis (each a “protected class”). The University of Memphis is committed to compliance with all applicable laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and harassment in education and employment.”

Discriminatory behaviors are intentional or unintentional actions against someone because of their actual or perceived age, gender, religion, race, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, disability or other targeted aspect of one’s identity.

Possible types of discriminatory behaviors include offensive graffiti, degrading or offensive images, derogatory or offensive verbal or written comments, offensive jokes, outing someone’s sexual orientation, inappropriate references to one’s race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

The University of Memphis strongly supports and encourages prompt reporting of discrimination or harassment. It is important to the University that individuals feel free to come forward and not wait until issues of discrimination or harassment become severe or pervasive prior to reporting the conduct and seeking assistance. Complaints under the policy can be made to the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE). The University’s Title IX coordinator has been designated as the individual responsible for compliance with the laws and regulations applicable to discrimination and harassment. Further, all employees occupying a supervisory role are expected to be vigilant regarding such issues within their area of responsibility. Complaints of discrimination or harassment shall be made in accordance with University of Memphis Policy Discrimination and Harassment – Complaint and Investigation Procedure.

## **The Student Who has Experienced Hazing**

Students attending the University of Memphis have the opportunity to join a wide range of groups, including athletic teams, fraternities and sororities, performing arts ensembles, religious groups, public service organizations and others. Virtually all of our students belong to some form of student organization or extracurricular group. These groups, by and large, provide positive out-of-the classroom learning experiences, and in many cases are important platforms for social, cultural and interpersonal support. Entry into some of these groups may involve formal or informal initiation practices, which, in and of themselves, are not harmful to a student’s academic experience. There are, however, times when these practices become hazing, and are detrimental to the student.

### **Hazing Defined in the University of Memphis Code of Conduct:**

*“Hazing. As defined in T.C.A. § 49-7-123(a)(1), means any intentional or reckless act, on or off the property, of any higher education institution by an individual acting alone, or with others, which is directed against any other person(s) that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that person(s), or which induces or coerces a person(s) to endanger such person(s) mental or physical health or safety. Hazing does not include customary athletic events or similar contests or competitions and is limited to those actions taken and situations created in connection with initiation into or affiliation with any organization. Hazing also includes the following: any action taken, or situation created for the purpose of initiation into, admission into, affiliation with (or continued membership in), any group or organization which is intended to produce physical discomfort, injury, mental discomfort, embarrassment, or ridicule. Such actions or situations include but are not limited to the following: use of alcohol, paddling in any form, branding, creation of excessive physical and/or emotional fatigue; wearing of apparel which is conspicuous or not in good taste; engaging in public stunts; participation in degrading or humiliating games and activities. All acts (active and passive) of hazing as well as allowing oneself to be hazed are prohibited.”*

Please note: “The definition of hazing applies whether or not the participants or others involved perceive the behavior as voluntary. The implied or expressed consent of any person involved does not exempt a person from responsibility under this policy. Moreover, assertions that the conduct or activity was not part of an official group, organization or team event or was not officially sanctioned or approved by the group, organization, or team provides no exemption from responsibility. A determination of whether or not an activity constitutes hazing depends not only on the intent of the individuals leading the activity but also the perception of a reasonable person or the individual(s) participating in the activity.”

Students, faculty members, staff, alumni and all other employees of the University of Memphis should be alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include hazing. When hazing is discovered, it should be stopped immediately and reported to [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout\\_id=19](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofMemphis&layout_id=19) or the Office of Student Accountability. Students, faculty members and staff who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to University and/or national organization disciplinary action and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with federal, state, and municipal laws.

### **Referrals:**

Office of Student Accountability, 678.2298   Police Services, 678.4357

## **The Student Who Has Been Referred for a Student Code of Conduct Violation**

Any community member may report a student for an alleged policy violation of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. An individual reporting an alleged violation may file a report/concern at <https://www.memphis.edu/report/submit-a-report/student-conduct.php>. If the report contains information about a potential violation of local, state, or federal law Police Services will be notified.

Students who are responding to accusations of the University of Memphis Student Code of Conduct violations, most often in incidents involving alcohol, drugs, bias and assault are referred to the Office of Student Accountability, which has the responsibility to uphold community expectations as set forth in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

After a report is received, the Office of Student Accountability may investigate to determine if the report merits charging a student with a violation(s) of the Student Code. This may include requests to speak with possible witnesses and/or other involved parties.

The alleged parties will be notified of the allegations and appointed a date, time and location of the hearing. A determination of responsibility will be based on the report and the information available to the university at the time.

The standard of proof used for decision-making is a preponderance of the evidence, or more likely than not. The hearing shall follow the procedures outlined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities: <https://www.memphis.edu/osa/students/code-of-rights.php>.

At the conclusion of the hearing process, the student will have the right to appeal the disciplinary decision based on criteria found online in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

### **Referrals:**

*Dean of Students Office, 678.2187*

*UofM Residence Life, 678.2295*

*Title IX Coordinator/Title IX Investigator, 678.2713*

*Office for Institutional Equity, 678.2713*

*UofM Police Services, 678.4357*