



OFFICE OF COUNSELING SERVICES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST

A Department of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management

FAQs from Faculty

How do I inform a student that counseling services exist on our campus?

There are several ways that you can inform students about The Office of Counseling Services at Indiana University Northwest. (1) The easiest is to make the contact information available on your course syllabus along with a brief description about our services. You can access this information from our website. (2) You may request a handout electronically by sending an email to iunoocs@iun.edu. You can copy this handout and make it available to students. (3) You may request "Introduction to Counseling Services" which is a thirty-minute classroom presentation that educates students about our services. Please note that a request must be made at least two-weeks prior to the date that you are requesting the presentation.

How do I refer a student to counseling services at IU Northwest?

A referral could occur when a student is presenting information to faculty that is personal, emotionally distressing, and possibly negatively affecting academic progress i.e. family issues, relationship concerns, homelessness etc. At this time, it is very appropriate to remind a student that our office exists and with a staff of trained clinicians who can assess and treat their concerns. It is ideal to have a brochure handy at this time that a student may find useful.

What if I refer a student and they do not go either because they tell me they did not go or the concerns persists?

While it is understandable that you would want a student to use a service that is conveniently on campus, free of charge, and designed to address their needs; ***it is ultimately the decision of the student to use counseling services. It is a voluntary service.*** The most that you can do is continue to remind the student about the service and hope that they will see the benefit of using it.

If I have a student who I just feel in my heart would really be better in my class and in life if they came to counseling, could I send their name and contact information to the Office of Counseling Services so that they can reach out to that student?

No. The office of Counseling Services is a confidential counseling office on the campus of Indiana University Northwest that operates under a scope of practice that is no different from any other counseling office or agency. We understand the concerns of the source of referral to our office but our primary obligation is to the integrity and ethical practice of confidentiality and individual rights of self-determination. Of course, matters of safety and preservation of life take precedent. There are extremely rare extenuating circumstances where consultation with faculty will occur to determine the next best steps; however, these are on a case-by-case basis.

Should I refer a student who is threatening me, or their classmates to counseling services?

No. Situations where there are threats to safety of the student or anyone on the campus community should be referred to Indiana University Northwest Police, and the Dean of Students. It is possible that the student may be referred to the Office of Counseling Services **after** a threat has been assessed by the proper office, but in this case the primary intervention is threat assessment.

If I refer a student, how will I know that they followed through with scheduling an appointment?

You may or may not know. ***Unless a student decides voluntarily to use our office by way of faculty referral, and agrees to sign a release of authorization allowing specific disclosure of clinical or procedural information, there will be no communication by or from the Office of Counseling Services.*** Sometimes a student will informally report to the source of referral with a positive acknowledgement; however, that is the student's choice.

Does the Office of Counseling Services offer other services besides individual counseling for students?

Yes. Currently we offer several outreach events to screen a number of concerns including but not limited to depression, anxiety, self- esteem, test anxiety, healthy relationships, and procrastination. In addition, we facilitate open-ended psych-educational groups during the semester including Mindful Moments, Neurodivergent Support Group, and Resiliency. We also provided yearly outreach events including, Suicide Awareness, "Paws" for Stress, and Walk Against Stigma.

Is someone available all the time to see students if I send a student to your office?

Our hours are Monday-Thursday 8am-5pm and Friday 8am-4pm. We see students on an appointment basis and therefore can only see walk-ins if they are in a crisis as defined by our office. A student who walks into our office and is not in crisis will have the ability to schedule an appointment with a counselor within 72 hours.

***Please refer to the TimelyCare handout regarding 24/7 virtual mental health services.