

# TUTTLEMAN Counseling Services

## *referral guide* FOR FACULTY AND STAFF



### **Tuttleman Counseling Services**

1810 Liacouras Walk, 5th Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19122  
Phone: 215.204.7276  
Fax: 215.204.5419  
[www.temple.edu/counseling](http://www.temple.edu/counseling)





# REFERRAL GUIDE

## for Faculty and Staff

*The purpose of this publication is to assist faculty and staff in their efforts to support the psychological well-being and healthy choices of our students. A timely and skillful referral to Tuttleman Counseling Services may be instrumental in promoting our students' academic success.*

Temple University  
Tuttleman Counseling Services  
1810 Liacouras Walk, 5th floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19122  
(215) 204-7276  
Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Students entering the university are called upon to manage the special challenges of academic life in addition to confronting career decisions, learning to integrate into a large and diverse student population, and coping with the stresses of a new environment. Additionally, young adult students are living more independently from their families, communities and familiar cultures, and are developing a personal identity that will mark their maturation from adolescence to adulthood. Returning adult students often have to cope with the competing demands of family, work and college. Graduate students may experience stress from all of these sources. Every student enters the university with the dream of graduation; however, during such a difficult transitional time students may need the assistance that professional counseling can provide to be successful.

It is in recognition of the special needs of Temple students, and our commitment to meet those needs and support the educational mission of the university, that we offer these referral guidelines.

## Tuttleman Counseling Services

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FACULTY AND STAFF IN ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH PROBLEMS?

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A faculty or staff member's willingness to lend assistance to a student who is struggling with personal issues is influenced by the personal style and philosophy of the individual. You may be in a unique position to perceive when a student is troubled. Additionally, a student may turn to you for help because they perceive you as knowledgeable, caring and trustworthy. Your timely expressions of interest and concern for their welfare may be a critical factor in helping students identify solutions to their problems. If the problems are many, longstanding, and/or serious, you have the option of calling us for a consultation, referring the student to us for professional counseling, or referring the student for help outside the university system.

### IS CONSULTATION AVAILABLE?

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Tuttleman Counseling Services staff are available to speak with faculty, students and employees Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM. If you would like to consult with a counselor about a student please leave your name, phone number, and e-mail address along with the best time to reach you during the day. We will make every effort to reach you within one business day.

If you feel the nature of your concern is an emergency please tell the receptionist so that we can give the situation immediate attention.

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### REFERRAL

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The reasons that individuals seek help from counselors are as varied as people themselves. Motives might range from the emergence of serious symptoms, to wanting to solve a particular problem, to an opportunity for personal growth. In any case, the following indicators should be useful in deciding whether or not to refer a student to Tuttleman Counseling Services. Students often present with clusters of signs that appear at approximately the same time. It is advisable not to over-interpret a single behavior. In the event that a student states a direct need for help, you should feel comfortable recommending professional counseling. Sometimes the need for help is stated indirectly by students when they act distressed during a conversation, appear tearful, are agitated and angry or display an emotional reaction beyond what would be expected for the topic being discussed. Students may also be too shy or embarrassed to discuss a problem, but still want and need your help. At those times, listening attentively to words, expressions and gestures and asking the student directly if there is anything on their mind would be helpful. Noticing their distress and asking about it can alleviate the pressure on the student to face the embarrassment of asking for help. If students deny problems, letting them know that you are available if they need to talk in the future can be comforting to them.

## Tuttleman Counseling Services

### SPECIFIC INDICATIONS FOR A REFERRAL

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#### 1. References to Suicide

Students who say they are contemplating suicide or who allude to details of how, when or where they may commit suicide must be taken seriously. If you think a student is suicidal, asking him or her about it does not increase the chances of them committing suicide. In fact, it can be experienced as an expression of care and concern, which can be the beginning of decreasing the risk that they would actually act on their feelings. One of the hardest parts of dealing with a suicidal student is overcoming the fear of talking about it with them. You are not expected to assess the risk but discussing it openly can help them to take the step to talk to a counselor. It often helps if you offer to walk with the student to the counseling center to meet with us. Tuttleman Counseling Services staff are available to consult with you about any decision you may need to make regarding suicide. Call (215) 204-7276. In the unlikely event of an imminent suicidal threat in your presence, call Campus Safety Services at (215) 204-1234.

#### 2. References to Homicide

Student references to thoughts, feelings or plans to harm someone else need to be taken seriously. All references to homicide need immediate attention, whether it is to someone in the campus community, or to family, friends or acquaintances outside the university. You can not assume that a student will not act on homicidal feelings. Counseling center staff have been asked to consult when verbal threats are made, or e-mail, text or voicemail messages contain homicidal threats. Sometimes writing assignments or visual images may raise concerns as well. As with suicidal threats, if there is concern about an imminent situation, call Campus Safety Services at (215) 204-1234.

#### 3. Changes in Mood or Behavior

Actions that are inconsistent with an individual's normal behavior may indicate that he or she is experiencing psychological distress. An individual who withdraws from usual social interaction, demonstrates an unwillingness to communicate, commits asocial acts, has spells of unexplained crying or outbursts of anger, or demonstrates unusual irritability may be suffering with psychological problems.

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### 4. Anxiety and Depression

Anxiety and depression are two of the more common psychological disturbances that can present significant problems for students. Both of these emotional states can impair an individual's ability to function academically and socially. In cases of prolonged or severe symptoms of anxiety or depression a student's risk for suicide can increase as well. Professional assistance is recommended for students whose normal functioning is impaired due to anxiety or depression.

### 5. Child Physical or Sexual Abuse, Domestic Violence, Rape, Sexual Harassment

The stress of academic demands or new relationships can trigger thoughts and feelings about traumatic events in a student's past. Unfortunately, students are sometimes the victims of violent crimes. Faculty and staff may hear that a student has been physically assaulted, raped, physically abused by a partner or family member, stalked or sexually harassed. Tuttleman Counseling Services employs therapists who specialize in the treatment of trauma. The Sexual Assault Counseling & Education (SACE) unit provides individual and group therapy for these students as well as survivors of childhood sexual abuse, rape and those with post-traumatic stress symptoms. They also offer education on these topics.

### 6. Psychosomatic Symptoms

Individuals who experience tension-induced headaches, nausea or other physical pains that have no apparent organic cause may be experiencing psychosomatic symptoms. Such psychosomatic symptoms are real for that individual, and so is the pain. Other physical symptoms of possible problems may include a loss of appetite or excessive eating, insomnia or excessive sleeping or gastrointestinal distress.

### 7. Traumatic Changes in Personal Relationships

Psychological distress often results when an individual experiences traumatic changes in personal relationships. The death of a family member or close friend, trouble with a peer group or roommate, the end of a partnered relationship, divorce of parents, changes in family responsibilities, and stress in other significant relationships can all result in psychological difficulties.

### 8. Drug and Alcohol Use

Use of drugs and/or alcohol puts students at risk for physical, emotional, financial and familial problems. Tuttleman Counseling Services employs addiction specialists in the Campus Alcohol & Substance Awareness (CASA) unit. Clinicians working in this pro-

gram provide individual and group counseling and educational outreach for substance abuse issues including problem identification, recovery, relapse prevention, co-dependency and adult children of substance abusers.

### 9. Career Choice Problems

It is rather common for college students to go through periods of career indecision and uncertainty. Such experiences are often characterized by dissatisfaction with an academic major, unrealistic career aspirations, and/or confusion with regard to interests, abilities or values. Familial expectations can also complicate the decision-making process around career choice. Chronic indecisiveness or conflict about choices can be a debilitating experience and many students need assistance in developing alternative goals when previous decisions need to be revised.

### 10. Learning Problems

Many students find the demand of college-level academic work to be greater than they anticipated. While it is expected that all students will go through some adjustment period in this regard, those who demonstrate a consistent discrepancy between their performance and potential may need assistance. Poor study habits, incapacitating test anxiety or repeated absences from class are all issues that might benefit from professional counseling.

### 11. Eating Disorders

Eating disorders cross cultural and gender boundaries, and have been steadily increasing in the young adult population on college campuses. Eating disorders develop from a combination of social, psychological and interpersonal situations. Troubled family and personal relationships, sudden transitions/changes, feelings of inadequacy, cultural norms and media's idealization of the "perfect body" are some situations that may contribute to the development of an eating disorder. Dieting, bingeing, purging, obsessing over food, excessive weight loss and frequent and intense exercising are some of the behaviors engaged in by students attempting to gain a sense of competence, self-esteem and self-control. Eating disorders, once started, are self-perpetuating, detrimental to one's physical, mental and emotional well-being and can be life threatening if left untreated. Early intervention can be very beneficial to the student.

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### HOW TO REFER

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#### Non-emergency situations:

When you have determined that a student might benefit from professional counseling, it is usually best to speak directly to the student in an open, caring manner that will show your concern for his or her welfare. Be specific regarding the behaviors that have raised your concerns. The option to follow through with your recommendations must be left open for the student to accept or refuse counseling. If the student is reluctant to be in counseling, express your acceptance of those feelings so that your relationship with the student can continue in a comfortable manner. The student might need time to think about your recommendation and you can leave the situation open for possible reconsideration at a later time.

When speaking with students about your recommendation for counseling, it is best to be prepared with information on what they can expect if they do come to Tuttleman Counseling Services. Let them know where we are located on campus (1810 Liacouras Walk) and tell them we are not in a building where classes are held so they will not be running into many students or professors. Counseling sessions are free to registered students. Sessions are confidential unless students are a danger to themselves or others. Students counseling records are separate from academic records and are protected by state mental health law. Records are released only with the student's written permission, if there is a risk of harm to self or others, or as may be required by law.

Students can access counseling services by coming to our walk-in clinic Monday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Students will be asked to provide information about themselves and have a brief interview with a counselor. At that time an intake will be scheduled or the students may be provided with referrals for services elsewhere.

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#### Emergency situations:

Tuttleman Counseling Services has professional staff available for immediate intervention Mondays through Fridays from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Students in the midst of crises often appreciate faculty or staff members walking with them to the counseling center and, in some cases, staying with them throughout the intervention. We understand that this is not always possible. Having the students identify a support person who could escort them to the Center would be the next best option.

Issues that would constitute an emergency include: suicidal thoughts, homicidal thoughts, drug and alcohol overdose, addictions, rape, domestic violence, physical assault, severe psychological distress and psychotic behavior. This list is not all-inclusive and we suggest that any time you have serious concerns about a student's physical or emotional safety you treat it as an emergency.

If the student is in no condition to come to the counseling center you are advised to call Campus Safety Services at (215) 204-1234 and ask them to arrange transport to Temple University Hospital for physical and/or psychological intervention. The Counseling Services staff can be helpful in coordinating this response.

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### EMERGENCIES AFTER DAILY OFFICE HOURS, ON WEEKENDS OR HOLIDAYS

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The Psychiatric Emergency Service of Temple University Hospital provides an on-call service for psychological emergencies that occur after the university workday and on weekends and holidays. Call Temple Hospital's Psychiatric Emergency Services at (215) 707-2577. Campus Safety Services may assist in getting students to the hospital (215) 204-1234.

### TRAUMA RESPONSE TEAM

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In the event that a trauma occurs to a member of the Temple University community, Tuttleman Counseling Services is prepared to address it with three interventions, which are all coordinated by the Trauma Response Team: 1) Direct Trauma Response — the Team goes to a trauma scene to work with those who have been directly affected by the event; 2) Trauma Intervention — those who have had any contact with the victim of trauma can benefit from coming together to process their thoughts and feelings and receive information on stress management (this intervention should occur within 8 to 72 hours after an event). The Team uses a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing intervention for groups and is available for one-on-one consultation. 3) Trauma Education — when someone within the university community reveals to you that he or she is a survivor of trauma, a member of the Team will consult with you about your concerns.

A normal response to trauma is to re-experience the event through intrusive thoughts and dreams, to avoid reminders of the event and to experience sleep difficulties, poor concentration, irritability and hyper vigilance. The purpose of a Trauma Response Team intervention is to provide the proper support and care to trauma survivors and to prevent vicarious traumatization of those in contact with trauma survivors. Reduction of stress symptoms and prevention of burnout are further goals of the Trauma Response Team. In the past the Team has responded to the suicide death of students, the murder of a student and the arrest of a student for rape.

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### HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING REFERRALS

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1. First and foremost, become familiar with university resources and the kinds of services they provide.
2. Listen carefully to students' stated concerns and be sensitive to those that may underlie the presenting problem (issues that are unstated, brushed aside or intimidated).
3. Be aware of additional indicators of a problem: poor grades, frequent absences; withdrawn or isolating behaviors; expressed hostility toward teachers, parents, friends or others; major and/or career uncertainty; complaints of loneliness; references to hopelessness and/or suicidal thoughts.
4. Communicate your understanding of students' feelings, acknowledging behavior you have observed ("You've been missing a lot of classes lately. What is happening with you right now?")
5. Avoid arguments with students and attempts to convince them of your point of view. Instead respond with warmth, kindness and clarity, using a firm but calm approach.
6. Explore students' previous attempts at resolution: what steps have already been taken, what resources have been utilized, what persons or agencies have been contacted. Ask about the outcome of such actions.
7. Discuss the possibility of referral with students. Be honest and direct about your limitations. Avoid judgmental language or vocabulary with negative implications ("You're in bad shape. You ought to see a shrink.")
8. Propose referrals in a direct and positive manner. Present accurate and specific information as to what services are provided and what kind of help can be expected.

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9. Solicit students' responses to the suggested referral: "What do you think about the idea? How does that feel to you?" (This allows for the examination of feelings and the potential for follow-through).
10. If students agree to be referred let them know what to expect when they arrive at our office. If the students seem reluctant to come to TCS, we recommend that you offer to walk with them if this is possible. Your investment of time and confidence in the services may help students to follow through. Sometimes friends can also support students by accompanying them to the counseling center.
11. If you are concerned about the seriousness or urgency of the problem and students are unwilling to be referred, please call Tuttleman Counseling Services for a consultation.
12. It is important to keep written documentation of your efforts to refer students to counseling services for future reference. Note the date and a summary of your discussion with students', recommendations and the students' reactions to your recommendations.
13. If students maintains contact with you after the referral, continue to be supportive, but be careful to stay within your realm of responsibility (e.g., academic needs, financial problems, health concerns).

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### REASONS FOR REFERRAL FAILURE

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On occasion, despite one's good intentions and accurate knowledge of resources, a referral is not successful. Before you judge yourself, the student or the referral source, consider the following possibilities:

1. Students may not have been ready to receive the kind of help offered. Readiness is an essential component of effective help; it is not a one-way process.
2. There may have been a disparity between students' expectations and the actual nature and extent of help provided by the referral sources.
3. The referral sources may have been inappropriate for the type of help needed.
4. The referral source may not have been aware of students' actual needs due to misunderstanding, misinformation or poor communication.
5. There may have been an incompatible relationship between students and the referral sources.

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### **FOLLOW UP WITH THE REFERRAL**

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Should you, in a follow-up contact, discover that referrals were unsuccessful, there are several steps you can take. Continue to be receptive to students, try to determine the reasons for failure, and once again explore options with the students:

1. If lack of readiness is the problem, be accepting of the students' feelings, but communicate your limitations and encourage the student to consider other options for assistance. It is possible that at a later date or under different circumstances, students will be more receptive.
2. If dissatisfaction with the referral is the problem, define more carefully with students their needs and expectations and investigate more thoroughly the nature of the help offered by the referral sources. Then try again!
3. If lack of awareness on the part of the referral source is the problem, obtain students' permission to contact the referral sources and communicate directly with the referral sources to correct or provide information about the students' needs.
4. If incompatibility is the problem, encourage students to try another person or another agency rather than giving up.

## Tuttleman Counseling Services

### **WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?**

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It is important for members of the university community to understand that the interviews conducted by Tuttleman Counseling Services staff are confidential in nature. Information about those interviews or the content of such interviews cannot be released except upon a student's written request, in circumstances which would result in clear danger to the individual or others, or as may be required by law. TCS adheres very strictly to this policy in accordance with mental health law.

If faculty members are interested in students' contact with TCS, information can best be obtained directly from the students. Students may be touched by your concern and they can decide how much information they are comfortable sharing.

### **ARE COUNSELING SERVICES AVAILABLE TO FACULTY AND STAFF?**

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While Tuttleman Counseling Services does not provide counseling services for university employees, staff will meet with individuals to assist in assessing a concern and making an appropriate referral to another source of help.