

Recognize Engage Assess Connect Help

Faculty and Staff Guide to Student Mental Health Services

905.721.3392

studentlifeline@ontariotechu.ca
ontariotechu.ca/mentalhealth



Recognize warning signs



As an Ontario Tech University faculty or staff member, you're in a key position to notice warning signs that may indicate that a student is in need of assistance. While students are resilient, there may be times when stressors become overwhelming and affect their academic performance. You may observe students:

- ▶ Missing class, assignments and exams.
- ▶ Showing significant decline in quality of academic performance or class participation.
- ▶ Expressing thoughts of despair or harm to self or others (e.g. submitted work or email).
- ▶ Displaying extreme disorganization or inappropriate content in written assignments.



Visible signs

The student demonstrates...

- ▶ Risky behaviour
- ▶ Panic or anxious behaviour
- ▶ Aggressive or paranoid behaviour
- ▶ Tearfulness or difficulties making eye contact
- ▶ A change in appearance or personal hygiene
- ▶ Burn marks, cuts or scars



Verbal signs

The student discloses...

- ▶ Thoughts of suicide or harm to others
- ▶ Worries about coping with life stressors
- ▶ Disorganized speech
- ▶ Feelings of sadness, hopelessness or helplessness
- ▶ Traumatic experiences (e.g. sexual assault or bullying)



Emotional signs

The faculty or staff member...

- ▶ Has an instinct that something is wrong
- ▶ Senses isolation or withdrawal

Privacy Act (FIPPA)

Staff and faculty are required to comply with Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) which, among other things, requires that the university protects the personal information of its students from improper disclosure.

Disclosure within Ontario Tech

Within Ontario Tech, employees may disclose personal information about students to another employee of the university who needs the information in the performance of their duties and where the disclosure is necessary and proper in the discharge of the institution's functions. This means you may disclose a student's personal information to staff in Student Mental Health Services for the purposes of assessing or assisting a student.

Disclosure outside of Ontario Tech

Outside of the university, privacy legislation is not a reason not to share information if a person is in danger (i.e. it is reasonable to believe that a student may harm themselves or another person). It also allows for disclosure in compassionate circumstances to facilitate contact with a close family member or friend. Any such decision to disclose a student's personal information without consent is extremely difficult and requires reasoned judgement, and if circumstances permit, General Counsel should be consulted.

Engage the student



A Acknowledge the warning signs that students are displaying. You may consider reaching out to the student if you have a good rapport and feel comfortable meeting with them in your office. Students may also inform you of their challenges directly.

“I noticed that two of your assignments haven’t been completed. I’m concerned about you.”

“It sounds like you’re worried about school.”

B Believe in the importance of empathy. Show compassion and display a non-judgemental attitude. Show interest and listen actively by recognizing their feelings. This lets students know that someone cares.

“I’d like to support you.”

C Create a space where you and the student can explore options that may help them. You may be able to offer a resolution through your role (e.g. providing an extension as appropriate) and/or you may need to refer students to services on campus.

“ I am able to consider these options: _____ ”

“There are services available on campus that can help you.”

Assess risk level



Assess the student’s risk level to determine the type of assistance required.

HIGH Student is in imminent risk of harm to self or others

MEDIUM Student is in distress

LOW Student is in need of mental health support

Immediate suicide plan or attempt

Unresponsive due to substance use

Display of threatening behaviour and escalation in disruptive or aggressive behaviour that is unresponsive to intervention

Panic attack

Thoughts of suicide

Experiences of abuse, trauma or sexual violence

Escalation in disruptive behaviour

Worries about academic and test performance

Hopelessness and sadness

Conflict in any relationship

Sexuality related concerns

Stress and sleep problems

Culture shock

Procrastination and lack of motivation

Connect To

Help

HIGH Immediate response is required

MEDIUM Response is available within 1 to 3 days

LOW Response is based on availability

On Campus

Call Security
905.721.3211 or ext. 2400

Off Campus 24/7

Call 911

Student Mental Health Services:

905.721.3392
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For medical support:

Campus Health Centre
905.721.3037
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Student Mental Health Services:

Consult or Make a referral to Student Mental Health Services

“With your consent, I can make a referral on your behalf to Student Mental Health Services.”

For more information about student mental health resources, workshops, and groups: visit ontariotechu.ca/mentalhealth

List of 24/7 community distress resources

Distress Centre Durham

905.430.2522 and 1.800.452.0688

DMHS Crisis Access Linkage Line

905.666.0483 and 1.800.742.1890

Durham Rape Crisis Centre

905.668.9200

Good2Talk

1.866.925.5454 or text 686868

Ontario Shores Crisis Line

1.800.263.2679

Suicide and Crisis Helpline

9.8.8

Toronto Distress Centre

416.408.4357

List of campus resources

Academic Advising

Visit your faculty website

Campus Health Centre

ontariotechu.ca/campushealthcentre

Human Rights Office

usgc.ontariotechu.ca/human-rights

Office of Campus Safety

ontariotechu.ca/campussafety

Registrar's Office

ontariotechu.ca/registrar

Student Award and Financial Aid

ontariotechu.ca/safa

School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

ontariotechu.ca/graduatestudies

Student Accessibility Services

ontariotechu.ca/sas

Student Services

studentservices.ontariotechu.ca

Campus Connected



Staff and faculty can attend a Campus Connected orientation session for more information on how to engage with students.

Campus Connected is a movement that connects the people on our campus. Members of this movement affirm their ability to engage with others with an attitude of caring and kindness, as well as listen with empathy and without judgment. Visit ontariotechu.ca/campusconnected to register for a “Faculty and Staff” session.