

STUDENT DISTRESS

A FACULTY & STAFF RESOURCE GUIDE

It is not uncommon for students to struggle with academic, social, and financial stress; physical and mental health concerns; adverse experiences; and other challenges to their well-being and academic standing.

Early identification and prompt referral of students in distress are crucial. If you work with students at Hopkins, this folder is intended to help you do these important things:

- understand your role as a partner in students' success
- recognize students who may need help
- respond supportively and safely
- refer students to relevant campus resources
- report as required and seek further guidance as needed

Note: Any reference to students in this document includes students AND trainees.



Scan here
to view more info
on how to recognize
and assist students
in distress.

What is my role in helping students in distress?

Faculty and staff are often in a unique position to observe and intervene when a student is experiencing problems, and students are much more likely to use campus resources if a faculty or staff member helps connect them to the services.

You are not responsible for assessing or treating mental or behavioral health issues. Nevertheless, your ability to recognize signs of serious distress, acknowledge your concerns directly and nonjudgmentally, and make an informed referral can play a significant role in helping students resolve their difficulties. In your classroom, office, and online forums, strive to foster an atmosphere of respect and compassion. Put tools into students' hands by including a list of essential campus resources in your syllabus. On the first day of class, let students know that they can speak to you if they need assistance. Set and maintain clear academic and behavioral expectations. Address concerns promptly.

SUGGESTED SYLLABUS LANGUAGE:

"If you are struggling with anxiety, stress, depression, or other mental health related concerns, please consider contacting Mental Health Services. You can learn more about the many resources available at wellbeing.jhu.edu/MentalHealthServices. If you need more immediate support, or if you are concerned about a friend who might be in crisis, please contact the Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team (BHCST) at 410-516-9355, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The BHCST provides mobile crisis response to Baltimore campuses within the Charles Village, Mt. Vernon, and East Baltimore Public Safety footprints, and consultation for Washington, DC."

How do I help a student in distress?



TALK TO THE STUDENT. Let the student know of your concerns, and ask whether that individual feels distressed. Please remember, however, that if you are not comfortable expressing your concerns to the student, your first step can be to consult with the university's mental health professionals (see resource section).



BE ACCEPTING AND NONJUDGMENTAL. Help the student determine what the problem might be, without minimizing the student's feelings or judging the student for feeling distressed.



KNOW YOUR LIMITS AS A HELPER AND AS A RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE. All faculty members and many staff members (especially staff who work with students) are Responsible Employees under university policy. If you are a Responsible Employee, you cannot promise a student that you will keep confidential a matter that you are required to report, and you have an obligation to promptly report any information you learn regarding sexual misconduct or other protected status-based discrimination or harassment to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE).



KNOW THE RESOURCES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU. Familiarize yourself with the listed resources (see resource section) and don't hesitate to contact a resource for consultation if you are not sure how to proceed.

STUDENT AFFAIRS CONTACTS FOR USE IN NON-EMERGENCY CASES

- **AAP**
202-452-1940 or aapstudentservices@jhu.edu
- **BSPH**
443-287-7277 or bsph-studentlife@jhu.edu
- **Carey (Baltimore, DC, Online)**
410-234-9240 or carey.student@jhu.edu
- **KSAS Grad**
KSASGradAffairs@jh.edu
- **KSAS/WSE Undergrad**
410-516-7857 or studentoutreach@jhu.edu
- **Peabody**
peabodystudentaffairs@jhu.edu
- **SAIS**
202-663-5705 or saisstudentaffairs@jhu.edu
- **SOE**
410-516-2414 or soe.studentaffairs@jhu.edu
- **SOM-Grad**
410-614-3385 or ogbe@jhmi.edu
- **SOM-Medical**
410-955-3416 or somstudentaffairs@jhmi.edu
- **SON**
410-955-7545 or son-studentaffairs@jhu.edu
- **WSE Grad & Engineering for Professionals**
443-927-8172 or wse-studentaffairs@jhu.edu

How can I gauge how serious or urgent the problem is?

When and where should I refer? When must I report?

AN EMERGENCY OCCURS WHEN

a student is:

- seriously injured,
- incoherent or delusional,
- violent,
- threatening others verbally or physically,
- or voicing overt thoughts of or plans for suicide.

IF AN EMERGENCY IS OCCURRING

- dial 911,
- call Public Safety for your campus,
- or call the Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team (BHCST) at 410-516-9355.

Do not leave a person who has thoughts of or plans for suicide alone. Stay with the person until help arrives. For more information, see the emergency resources listed on the outside of this folder.

MODERATE DISTRESS OCCURS WHEN you observe behaviors including:

- marked changes in mood, hygiene, attendance, or academic performance
- violent or disturbing content in schoolwork or communication
- repeated requests for special consideration
- behaviors that push the limits and may disrupt others
- thoughts of suicide without plan or intent
- uncharacteristic or exaggerated emotional responses that seem inappropriate to the situation

Moderate distress also occurs when a student is experiencing non-emergency illness or injury.

IF A STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING MODERATE DISTRESS refer the student to one of the moderate distress resources listed on the outside of this folder. Refer students to Primary Care if they are experiencing non-emergency illness or injury.

If you observe behaviors listed above that strongly suggest something is wrong, refer the student to Mental Health Services.

MILD DISTRESS OCCURS WHEN there is concern for a student whose behavior does not suggest the potential for harm to self or others.

IF A STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING MILD DISTRESS you may be able to help prevent a situation from escalating simply by expressing your concern, encouraging the student to seek help from a relevant resource listed in the resource section, and following up later with the student.

IF A STUDENT COMES TO YOU AND SHARES INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OR OTHER PROTECTED STATUS-BASED DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT it is important to be supportive and explain that you will connect them with the appropriate offices that can help.

If you are a Responsible Employee, you are obligated by university policy to promptly report the instance to a university official in the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE). Please also be aware that if you are a Responsible Employee, you should tell the student you have to contact OIE about what you have heard, and that this likely will result in OIE emailing the student with information and request to talk.

IF YOU HAVE INTUITION THAT A STUDENT IS ABOUT TO DISCLOSE AN INSTANCE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE OR MISCONDUCT TO YOU gently stop them before they go further.

If you are a Responsible Employee, remind them that you are not a confidential resource and must report anything you become aware of related to sexual violence or misconduct.

Let them know that you are still willing to listen, but that there are other campus resources at wellbeing.jhu.edu/youdecide with whom they can speak confidentially without a report to OIE.

You could say something like, "I think you may be about to share something personal with me related to sexual misconduct. I want to support you in any way that I can, but I need you to know that I am required by law and by JHU policy to report anything you tell me to the Office of Institutional Equity. If you want to speak with someone who does not have to report what you say, I can help connect you with a confidential resource."

Resources

Resources are available to all students unless otherwise noted.

EMERGENCY

911

Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

988

Offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing emotional distress.

Public Safety

East Baltimore: 410-955-5585
Harbor East: 410-234-9300
Homewood: 410-516-7777
Peabody: 667 208-6608
Washington, DC: 202-663-5808

Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team (BHCST)

410-516-WELL (9355)

Responds to behavioral health crises, with coverage 24/7/365 within the Charles Village, Mt. Vernon, and East Baltimore Public Safety footprints, and consultation for DC.

MODERATE DISTRESS

Mental Health Services (MHS) (410-516-3311 or wellbeing.jhu.edu/MentalHealthServices)
Offers counseling, psychiatric services, group therapy, workshops, and online resources.
Ⓧ *Locations at Homewood, East Baltimore, and Washington, DC.*

Primary Care (410-516-3311 or wellbeing.jhu.edu/PrimaryCare)
Provides a variety of medical services for the evaluation and treatment of an illness or injury, preventive health care, and health education.
Ⓧ *Locations at Homewood, East Baltimore, and Washington, DC.*

Case Management
Provides one-on-one support for students who are experiencing educational, personal, and interpersonal concerns.

- Student Outreach and Support (410-516-7857 or tinyurl.com/jhuoutreach)
Ⓧ *Serves KSAS and WSE undergrads.*
- Engineering Student Support & Advocacy (ESSA) (tinyurl.com/wsegrads)
Ⓧ *Serves WSE grads.*
- Peabody Student Support (tinyurl.com/peabodysupport)
Ⓧ *Serves all Peabody students.*
- BSPH Student CARE Team (tinyurl.com/bsphsupport)
Ⓧ *Serves BSPH students.*

If your academic division doesn't have a dedicated Case Management office, see the inside of this folder for Student Affairs contacts.

MILD DISTRESS AND OTHER RESOURCES

Student Disability Services (sds.jhu.edu)
Coordinates academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and other reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Student Conduct and Ethics (410-516-2509 or tinyurl.com/jhuconduct)
Oversees all student misconduct violations of the Student Conduct Code for the university.

Food Pantry
Helps address food insecurity for all Hopkins affiliates.

- Homewood (tinyurl.com/jhupantry or studentoutreach@jh.edu)
- East Baltimore (tinyurl.com/ebpantry or foodsecurity@jh.edu)

SEXUAL ASSAULT, VIOLENCE OR HARASSMENT

Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) (410-516-8075 or oie.jhu.edu)
Coordinates the investigation and adjudication of all matters related to sexual misconduct and protected category-based discrimination and harassment.
Ⓧ *Non-confidential.*

Sexual Assault Helpline (410-516-7333)
Provides confidential assistance to those affected by sexual misconduct.

Gender-Based Violence Prevention & Education (443-927-3548 or HopkinsGBVP@jh.edu)
Offers confidential support to students who have experienced gender-based harm.

We listen. You decide. (wellbeing.jhu.edu/youdecide)
A comprehensive list of confidential resources.