**AWA/R.altENESS COMMUNICATION ENGAGEMENT**

Students in distress may be struggling with academic or personal challenges. Remember that you are in a unique position to identify students who may be in need of help.

**INDICATORS OF DISTRESS: WHAT TO LOOK FOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC INDICATORS</th>
<th>PHYSICAL INDICATORS</th>
<th>PSYCHOLOGICAL INDICATORS</th>
<th>SAFETY RISK INDICATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudden decline in quality of work/grades</td>
<td>Marked changes in physical appearance (deterioration in grooming or hygiene, significant weight gain/loss)</td>
<td>Self-disclosure of personal distress, including family problems, financial difficulties, suicidal thoughts, grief</td>
<td>Unprovoked anger or hostility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated absences</td>
<td>Excessive fatigue or sleep disturbance</td>
<td>Unusual/disproportional emotional response to events</td>
<td>Physical violence (shoving, grabbing, assault, use of weapon)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disorganized performance</td>
<td>Intoxication, hangovers, smelling of alcohol</td>
<td>Excessive tearfulness</td>
<td>Implying or making a direct threat to harm self or others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple requests for extensions</td>
<td>Disoriented or “out of it”</td>
<td>Panic reactions</td>
<td>Academic assignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness, rage, worthlessness, isolation, despair, acting out, suicidal ideations, violent behaviors, or other “cries for help”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disengagement through failure to hand in assignments, missing exams, and lack of participation</td>
<td>Garbled, tangential, disconnected, or slurred speech</td>
<td>Irritability or unusual apathy</td>
<td>Stalking or harassing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overly demanding of faculty/staff time and attention</td>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal abuse (e.g. taunting, badgering, intimidation)</td>
<td>Communicating threats via email, texting, phone calls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bizarre content in writing/presentations</td>
<td>Increased need for personal (rather than academic) counseling</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We welcome your feedback. Email casemanagement@rit.edu with comments and suggestions. Version 1.1 – Spring 2020

**AWA/R.altRENS AND TIPS**

**RESOURCES AND TIPS**

Consider the tips below to help refer students to appropriate resources.

**SAFETY FIRST**
The top priority is always the welfare of the campus community. Do not hesitate to call for help if someone is displaying threatening or violent behavior.

**LISTEN SENSITIVELY & CAREFULLY**
Use a calm voice and a non-confrontational approach. Avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating responses.

**REACH OUT**
Engage students early on and set limits on disruptive behavior.

**COMMUNICATION**

Sharing your concern directly with the student and reaching out to campus / community resources are important first steps in the helping process.

A Tiger Concern report is a way to communicate your concern about a student to get them connected to resources. The report can be accessed here: rit.edu/reporting-incident

**ENGAGEMENT**

Students may not be aware of what resources are available or how to find help. It’s okay to check in with students to see how they’re doing.

Demonstrating a culture of care and compassion strengthens the campus community.

**BE DIRECT**
Don’t be afraid to ask students directly if they are under the influence of alcohol/drugs, feeling confused, or having thoughts of harming themselves or others.

**FOLLOW THROUGH**
Ensure the student knows the physical location of the identified resource. Consider walking over together to help them get connected when possible and appropriate.

**BE PROACTIVE**
Always document your interactions with distressed students. Consult with your department chair/supervisor after any incidents of concern.
**DO...**

- Make time and space available to speak to students
- Use empathy and active listening skills
- Connect students with available resources
- Ask for additional help if needed

**DON’T...**

- Make promises you can’t keep
- Try to “fix” everything
- Pass judgement or dismiss the student’s needs
- Wait to refer if you are concerned about a student

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**WHOM TO CONTACT | Follow the chart to determine next steps**

Is the student a danger to self / others or otherwise in need of immediate assistance for another reason?

**YES**

The student’s conduct is clearly and imminently reckless, disorderly, dangerous or threatening.

RIT Public Safety: 585-475-3333
RIT Public Safety Text Line: 585-205-8333
Call 911

**NOT SURE/NO**

The student shows signs of distress, but I'm unsure whether it is serious. I'm left feeling uneasy or concerned about the student. or I'm not immediately concerned for the student, but the student is having significant difficulties and needs support.

Submit a Tiger Concern report at rit.edu/reporting-incident.
RIT’s Student Behavior Consultation Team (SBCT), made up of staff from multiple disciplines across campus, will work together to coordinate resources in order to recommend collaborative and purposeful (non-punitive) interventions in response to your submitted concerns.