

USF[®] Faculty & Staff Emergency Alert Guide

Recognizing Signs of Student Distress

Green Light: DISTRESS

Recognize:

- Significant changes in mood, appearance or behavior
- Expresses stressful events that have occurred in their lives
- Missing class more frequently / Falling behind on course work
- Relationship changes (death, loss, break ups)
- Repeated requests for special accommodations
- Persistent drowsiness or lethargy
- Marked deterioration of hygiene or appearance

Relate:

- Express concern and interest
- Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental
- Remember, even if the problem does not seem urgent to you, it may be very important to the student

Refer:

[SUBMIT A SOCAT REFERRAL](#) / usf.edu/socatreferral

Yellow Light: DISTURBING/DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Recognize:

- Incongruent emotional responses
- Bizarre or strange behavior
- Student discloses mental health concerns and you're unsure if they are receiving help
- Suspicious thoughts
- Irritable or aggressive behavior and/or emotional or anger outbursts
- Disorderly conduct: inappropriate outbursts or persistent interruptions; continued arguing beyond the scope of academic debate

Relate:

If safety is not an immediate concern:

- Ask the student to meet with you outside the classroom and express concern
- Explain the impact of the behaviors on the class
- Help the student explore options and alternatives and outline your expectations

Refer:

If there are threatening behaviors:

- Take immediate action Contact University Police
- [SUBMIT A SOCAT REFERRAL](#) / usf.edu/socatreferral

Red Light: DANGEROUS

Recognize:

- Oral or written expression of suicidal thoughts or gestures
- Makes threats to others/concern for the safety of others
- Displays self-mutilating behavior
- Demonstrates intimidating behavior
- Seems out of touch with reality

Respond:

Safety is an immediate concern! Call 911 for Law Enforcement officer to respond, assess & assist

Refer:

[SUBMIT A SOCAT REFERRAL](#) / usf.edu/socatreferral

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

If you are involved in an intervention with a student, it doesn't mean you must (or can) resolve the student's difficulties. Responding to distressed students can be emotionally challenging. It is important to obtain support for yourself from colleagues, partners, friends or consultation with the Employee Assistance Program 1-800-327-8705.



A QUICK GUIDE FOR HELPING STUDENTS

1. RECOGNIZE

- Distress
- Disturbance/Disruption
- Danger

2. RELATE

Talk with the student in private if possible, and use **OARS** to help a student who may be struggling.

- **Open-Ended Questions**
 - Ask questions that require a full answer
- **Affirmations**
 - Acknowledge the student's distress without judgment
- **Reflective Listening**
 - Understanding what a person says and feels and then relaying this back to them
- **Summarize**
 - Validate student for seeking help

Determine if you are able to provide academic assistance at that time, and encourage them to connect with support resources on campus.

3. REFER

Submit a SOCAT referral: www.usf.edu/SOCATreferral

An SOS Case Manager will work with the student to develop a plan to assist with their concerns.

Feel free to contact Student Outreach and Support for updates, or to provide additional information.



TITLE IX

It is especially important in Sexual Assault/Misconduct (Title IX) situations that you refer the student to the appropriate resources, report the information to the appropriate office/s and do not attempt to investigate.

Submit a mandated Title IX Incident Report.

If you have any questions on how to complete the Incident Report, please contact the DIEO Office at (813) 974-4373.

EMERGENCY

If a student poses a danger to themselves or others, immediately contact UPD at 911.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS CONTACTS

- Center for Victim Advocacy – 813-974-5756
- Counseling Center – 813-974-2831
- Student Outreach & Support/SOCAT – 813-974-6130
- Student Rights & Responsibilities – 813-971-9443
- UPD Non-Emergency – 813-974-2628
- USF Police Department - 911

AFTER HOURS RESOURCES

- Counseling Center – 813-974-2831
- UPD Office – 911
- UPD Cell Phone – 813-974-2628
- Center for Victim Advocacy – 813-974-5757

Help Us Help You:

SOS trainings are available for individual departments, organizations, or groups. Please connect with SOS to request training for your area. Topics include working with students in distress, connecting students with resources on campus, and how to report students of concern.

Take a Mental Health First Aid Course at USF

Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course that teaches you how to help someone who may be experiencing a mental health challenge. The training helps you identify, understand and respond to signs of mental distress or illness. Sign up through GEMS/Learning and Development. Enter "Mental Health First Aid" in the search bar.



**UNIVERSITY OF
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Student Outreach and Support/Student of Concern Assistance Team
www.usf.edu/sos • 813-974-6130 • Students Services Center 2058