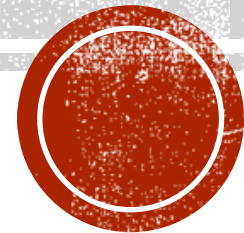


# **NOTICE AND RESPOND: ASSISTING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS**

**OCTOBER 8, 2020**



**Catherine Thrasher-Carroll, Mental Health Promotion Program Director**

**Katherine Goldberg, CAPs Therapist and CCI Specialist**

**Cornell Health**

# AGENDA

- Logistics
  - Enroll in and take this Canvas course now
- Content overview of online (Canvas) training program
  - Signs & levels of distress
  - Corresponding response options
  - Situational examples
  - Current resources
- Remaining questions and comments



# THE 2020-2021 ACADEMIC YEAR IS... DIFFERENT

- COVID-19
  - Fear of infection-self & others, loss of loved ones, grief, wearing face masks, reduced socializing and physical contact, xenophobia, quarantine fatigue, online instruction/ hybrid courses, campus surveillance testing, ambiguous loss, prolonged uncertainty
- Economic crisis
  - New/Increased financial worries – self, parents/family, financial aid concerns, funding concerns for graduate students, significantly reduced internship and job prospects, global and domestic markets uncertainty
- Current social movement against racism in the U.S.
  - Racism and violence by police - departmental practices, policies and attitudes
  - Peaceful protests, agitator counter-protesters and exacerbating, inflated police presence
  - Increase in white supremacy overtly asserting itself
  - Impacts on all; racial trauma for BIPOC (stemming from seeing or experiencing violence against Black and Brown communities)



# 1<sup>ST</sup> LEVEL OF DISTRESS: CONCERN

Experiencing 1 or 2 signs for a short period of time.

- **Signs of Concern:**

- Anxiety, sadness, crying, panic attacks, neglecting hygiene
- **Feeling overwhelmed by academics, COVID behavior expectations, or national/world events**
- Lack of motivation, drop in academic performance
- Problems eating or sleeping: too little or too much
- Irritability, arguments, anger
- Not showing up for classes, study groups, project teams
- Personal loss, traumatic life event, bias experience

- **Response options:**

- Talk with student directly
- Refer to campus resources; help with connecting
- Consult with someone else who can help



# RESPONSE OPTIONS: **CONCERN LEVEL**

- **Talk with the student**
  - Email and suggest meeting together on Zoom
- **Refer the student**
  - Academic, health-related or social support resource
- **Consult with someone else who can help**
  - Advising or student services in the college
  - Cornell Health → CCI



# CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

- **Academic Support**

- [Advising/ Student Services](#)
- [OADI & College Diversity Programs](#)
- [Learning Strategies Center](#)
- [Cornell Writing Centers](#)
- [Math Support Center](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Librarians](#)

- **Cornell Health (24/7 phone consultation)**

- [Medical Services](#)
- [Counseling & Psychological Services](#)
  - [Individual & Group](#) counseling
  - [Medication management](#)
- [Let's Talk drop-in consultation](#)
- [Let's Meditate](#)
- [Nutrition Support & Body Positive Cornell](#)
- [Patient Advocate](#)
- [Student Disability Services](#)

- **Social Support**

- [Residential staff](#)
- [Africana](#)
- [Akwe:kon](#)
- [Asian, Desi, Asian-American Center](#)
- [Latino Living Center](#)
- [LGBT Resource Center](#)
- [Ujamaa Residential College](#)
- [Women's Resource Center](#)
- [Cornell United Religious Work](#)
- [Cornell Minds Matter](#)
- [First Gen, Low Income Student Support](#)
- [Student Development Diversity Initiatives](#)
- [Undocumented and DACA Student Support](#)

- **Additional Support**

- [Bias Response: biasconcerns.cornell.edu](#)
- [EARS peer counseling](#)
- [Hazing: hazing.cornell.edu](#)
- [Sexual Harassment and Assault](#)
  - [share.cornell.edu](#)
  - [Victim Advocate](#)
- [Caring Community website](#)



## Integrated services for a diverse community

- Primary Care
- Mental Health Care
  - Individual Counseling
  - Group Counseling
  - Let's Talk
  - Workshops
  - Mental Health Resources
  - Resources for Faculty & Staff**
- Pharmacy
- Lab Testing & X-Rays
- Immunizations & Allergy Shots
- Nutrition & Healthy Eating Services
- Sexual Health Care
- Gender Services
- Alcohol & Other Drug Services
- Student Disability Services
- Sports Medicine
- Physical Therapy & Massage
- Travel Services
- Occupational Medicine

### Resources for Faculty & Staff

If you're concerned about a student, we can help.

Our Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) counselors are available to assist faculty and staff members regarding students in distress. You can call us for consultation at 607-255-5155. During business hours, press 1 for urgent concerns, or 2 to be connected with a CAPS receptionist. When Cornell Health is closed, your call will be answered by our answering service, and an on-call health care provider will return your call within 30 minutes.

Faculty members should contact their school's/college's Advising or Student Services office when concerned about a distressed (or distressing) student. They are prepared to assist you.

More resources:

- Visit our [Concern for Others](#) webpage to learn about common signs of distress
- Learn about our [Notice & Respond trainings](#) for faculty and staff

### Community Consultation & Intervention (CCI)

\*See information below about CCI services during COVID-19\*

Community Consultation & Intervention (CCI) provides a continuum of consultation services to faculty and staff who are working with students with possible mental health concerns. These services can include on-going consultation, case management, community-based support, and crisis-intervention.

CCI counselors work closely with faculty and staff members who are concerned about a student. They offer perspective, explore strategies for helping the student (or others affected by the student), and provide information regarding useful resources. When needed, these consultations can result in direct intervention with students, which may include counseling, advocacy, case management, and crisis intervention.

The CCI approach helps mobilize a student's existing relationships, connections, and resources to provide support, and can sometimes lead to a student accessing Cornell Health's services directly. A goal of the program is to find ways to streamline and strengthen campus systems for identifying and assisting students in distress.

Contacting CCI:

We encourage faculty, staff, advisors, and other third parties to contact us ...

- When academic, behavioral, physical, emotional, or other factors seem to be causing a student significant stress
- When you're not sure what you can do to support a student
- When you are concerned – or multiple parties have expressed concern – about a student

Please call 607-255-5155 and ask to schedule a CCI consultation. You may also contact a CCI counselor directly with questions: [Karen Williams, PhD](#) or [Katherine Goldberg, DVM, LMSW](#).

Contact CCI sooner rather than later; there does not need to be a crisis in progress for you to call us to consult. We are happy to provide ongoing consultation and follow the situation as it unfolds over time. NOTE: To honor student autonomy, CCI is a voluntary service, and our offers of support may not always be accepted by students.

### CCI services during the COVID-19 pandemic

Community Consultation and Intervention (CCI) will continue to be available to Cornell faculty and staff to discuss your concerns for students' mental health and well-being as we transition to remote work.

To reach us, please continue to call us at the main Cornell Health number: 607-255-5155. A message will be taken for the CCI counselor of the day, and that person will return your call within the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday. As always, if you have an imminent safety concern for a student, call CUPD at 607-255-1111 or your local police dispatch at 911.

CCI or Community Consultation & Intervention is a resource developed to support faculty and staff who are concerned about a student's mental health and well-being.

# How faculty can support students during COVID-19

Live Well to  
Learn Well

Web:  
[health.cornell.edu](http://health.cornell.edu)

Phone (24/7):  
607-255-5155

Fax:  
607-255-0269

Check web for hours,  
services, providers,  
and appointment  
information

110 Ho Plaza,  
Ithaca, NY  
14853-3101

## General considerations

Students, staff, and faculty are experiencing the COVID-19 pandemic together. Many of us are worried, uncertain, disoriented, grieving, feeling isolated, and generally "not at our best," yet we are having individual experiences, too.

This situation is unprecedented. There are no clear road maps, no playbooks. We are all doing what we can to adapt and cope. Below are some considerations for engaging with students about the pandemic through your virtual classroom environments.

## Potential stressors & concerns

- Fear of COVID-19: for themselves and others
- Uncertainty: duration of crisis; implications for health, finances, education, career
- Upheaval and disruption of daily routines
- Loss: of normalcy, opportunities, social connections
- Frustration, boredom, social isolation
- Re-immersion in family of origin: may be experienced as oppressive, constricting, conflictual, and/or abusive
- Grief: illness or death of loved one; secondary trauma/grief
- Performance issues: unclear thinking, diminished focus, inability to do best work
- Other stressors: financial, limited access to technology/tools needed for academic work, food insecurity, etc.

## Supporting students online

- Remind students that they are not alone; that this is new for us all, but we are in it together.
- Provide resources (to CAPS, Let's Meditate, crisis lines, chat lines, etc.) in your course materials.
- Remind students of your office hours, your e-mail address, and/or your willingness to "meet" individually online.
- If a student is notably upset or teary in class, or if you have other reasons to be concerned about an individual or a group of students:
  - Consider making a general statement of support for student concerns (i.e., expressing that you care about student well-being both in and outside of class, and are familiar with resources that can help



*Cultivate community & promote self-care in your class.*

- when times get tough); express faith in the helpfulness of campus resources.
  - Consider reaching out with a private message indicating that you are checking in to see how they are doing. It's ok to say something like, "It seemed you might be having a hard day. Is there anything I can do to help?"
- Provide guidance for anything in your realm of expertise: study skills, time management, managing anxiety with technology, adapting to new formats, etc.
- Provide referral when appropriate (e.g., to CAPS, Cornell Health, etc.). Don't be afraid to say "I don't know about that, but let me connect you with someone who can help."
- You and other online Instructors may be students' only connection to Cornell but...
  - You do NOT have to be everything to them.
  - You CAN be a GOOD BRIDGE.

## If you have time/feel comfortable

- Emphasize self-care (your own care & that of your students): include suggestions, tips, and advice.
- Lead by example: provide time during class to discuss concerns & feelings if students are willing; encourage supportive, non-judgmental sharing when possible.
- Validate and normalize emotions & feelings: acknowledge your own feelings; expressing confusion, concerns, etc. can be enormously validating to students.
- Model help-seeking behavior. For example,

# CCI created, downloadable resource for faculty


[https://health.cornell.edu/sites/health/files/pdf-library/Faculty\\_COVID-support-for-students.pdf](https://health.cornell.edu/sites/health/files/pdf-library/Faculty_COVID-support-for-students.pdf)





# CONCERN LEVEL EXAMPLE #1: HOW COULD YOU RESPOND?

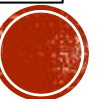
**Your student shares in a written assignment that they are feeling homesick and lonely.**

1. Invite them to come to your office hours. If conducting virtual drop in office hours, offer to meet at a specific, private, time.
  2. Acknowledge that you saw what they wrote, and invite them to tell you more. Validate their feelings by saying something like: “I think I get it; what you wrote about. It’s really hard and completely normal to feel lonely while starting college even during “non-pandemic” times! Not to mention adding in physical distancing, masks, not being able to visit family, and hybrid classes into this mix...it can be really hard to make friends and find your place here right now. I know that many people are feeling this way, you are not alone in this, and try not to be too hard on yourself.”
  3. Ask: “What’s one thing that might help you feel more connected?” Gently suggest they might try to start or join a study group or attend programming offered by the Tatkon Center, Rec Services or one of the student orgs.
- 

## CONCERN LEVEL EXAMPLE #2: HOW COULD YOU RESPOND?

A student shares that they are finding it hard to stay on top of the workload with the hybrid classes they are taking.

1. Acknowledge and validate the student's feelings, by saying something like: "I can understand that this format of part online and part in-person class can be challenging. What would you say is the most challenging part for you?"
2. Ask: "Have you met with someone from the Learning Strategies Center yet? They have staff who can help you with whatever it is. Motivation, concentration, time management, or understanding the material."
3. Then say: "Everybody needs a little help sometimes and especially this year with everything that is way more different than usual."



# 2<sup>ND</sup> LEVEL OF DISTRESS: URGENT

- **Signs of Urgent Situations:**

- Concern level signs lasting more than a week
- Worsening symptoms of psychological distress
- Expressions of hopelessness
- Talk of suicide or harm to others
- Writing about death, dying, suicide
- Student has not slept in past 72 hours
- Any bizarre, atypical behavior for the student

- **Response option**

- Get immediate assistance from a mental health provider 24/7
  - Cornell Health 607-255-5155



## URGENT LEVEL EXAMPLE: HOW COULD YOU RESPOND?

You receive a writing assignment in which the student says they feel really anxious because their roommate isn't physically distancing or wearing a mask when they should. The writer says they are having more frequent, severe panic attacks because of this and they don't know how much longer they can take it.

1. Email the student: "I'm so sorry this is happening and I'm really glad you told me. Are you able to meet virtually today so we can sort this out together?"
2. Before you meet with the student, you could speak with CCI about the situation. When you meet virtually: "I'd like to help. Can you tell me a little bit more about this? Is this familiar to you or is this new?"
3. And /or go right to: " In your paper you said 'I don't know how much longer I can take it.' I am wondering if you are having thoughts of suicide."



# NEXT STEPS BASED ON STUDENT RESPONSE

**No! I'm not suicidal – I just want to feel better, not anxious and panicky all the time.**

- “Of course you want to feel better. So let’s talk a little bit about what you need right now, what would make things better for you.” It sounds like there are two issues here, first, deciding about how to respond to your roommate’s behavior, and second, coping with panic attacks. Am I getting that right? What’s concerning you the most right now?
- Okay, so let’s talk about some ways to deal with your roommate’s behavior. What are your ideas for how to approach this? I also want to mention that you can talk with your residence hall staff and/or report the behavior confidentially if you’re comfortable with that. Reflect/summarize generated plan.
- I want to circle back to what you shared about struggling with panic attacks. What do you think might help/how have you coped with this in the past? Reflect and validate. There are also a few resources that might be helpful. Would it be alright for me to share a couple with you? Would you be interested in trying out a drop-in Let’s Talk virtual visit with a CAPS counselor?” Reflect/summarize generated plan.
- Make a plan to check back in with the student to see how the resource worked out for them.

**Well, not actual plans or anything... I have struggled with some thoughts but I would never act on them.**

- It’s completely understandable to have these thoughts when you’re feeling so anxious and overwhelmed. I want you to know that it’s ok to share these feelings, and I appreciate you sharing this with me.
- I’m concerned about you and I think it would be best for me to connect you with someone at Cornell Health who is a professional and can help you with this better than I can.
- With your permission, we can make the call together. I’ll talk first and then if you’re comfortable, I’ll have you talk to the provider directly so we can come up with a plan for going forward. How does that sound to you?



## When to ask about suicide

- Expressions of hopelessness, giving up - “no one understands”, “things will never get better”, “I can’t take it anymore”
- Talking or writing about death, dying or suicide
- Loneliness, social isolation – “there’s no one I can talk to”
- Giving away possessions
- Sudden bright mood after long depression
- Your own gut level feeling

If you are going to ask, use one of these options:

Have you had thoughts of suicide?

Are you thinking about killing yourself?

Are you thinking of ending your life?

**REMEMBER: ASKING DIRECTLY ABOUT SUICIDE DOES NOT INCREASE THE RISK\* THAT THE PERSON WILL ACT EVEN IF THEY HAVE/ ARE HAVING THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE. AND THE ANSWER TELLS YOU WHAT YOUR RESPONSE OPTIONS ARE.**

**\*Evaluating Iatrogenic Risk of Youth Suicide Screening Programs - A Randomized Controlled Trial**

Madelyn S. Gould, PhD, MPH; Frank A. Marrocco, PhD; Marjorie Kleinman, MS; John Graham Thomas, BS; Katherine Mostkoff, CSW; Jean Cote, CSW;

Mark Davies, MPH *JAMA*. 2005;293:1635-1643. (\*Journal of the American Medical Association Vol. 293, # 13 April 6, 2005)



# **NEXT STEPS & POSSIBLE OUTCOMES WHEN YOU CALL CORNELL HEALTH IN URGENT SITUATIONS**

- **For the student:** The Cornell Health professional will assess the situation to make a recommendation for next steps for the student of concern.
- **For the faculty or staff member:** Report to your supervisor and then get support for yourself - debrief and de-stress.



# **3<sup>RD</sup> LEVEL OF DISTRESS: EMERGENCY**

- **Sign of Emergency Situations:**

- Immediate threat of harm to self or others

- A student emails/texts you to say they've taken "a lot of pills", when you email/text back they do not respond
- You're out on a walk and you see someone pacing and mumbling in front of the Stewart Ave bridge

- **Response options:**

- Get immediate assistance (from police)
  - Call 911 OR CUPD 607-255-1111





# TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF TOO...A COUPLE CORNELL RESOURCES

**Cornell Wellness Program** serves all staff, faculty, retirees, and their spouses and partners in the areas of fitness, nutrition, general health and wellness.

- Offerings during COVID-19 include:
  - Live Group Fitness Classes
  - Recorded Healthy Living Program Group Fitness classes
  - Free Wellness Consultations
  - Google Doc Of Wellness And Fitness Apps And Resources.
  - More!

## **Cornell Faculty & Staff Assistance Program**

During COVID-19, FSAP's in-person services have moved to Telehealth services (phone or Zoom video sessions) and are available to benefits-eligible faculty and staff members, postdoctoral fellows and associates, visiting scholars, retirees, and their partners/spouses, residing in NY State.

- Call FSAP at **607-255-2673** Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm to schedule an appointment; or anytime 24/7 for an urgent mental health concern.



**WHAT ARE YOUR REMAINING QUESTIONS?**

**WHAT ELSE WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR YOU TO KNOW?**



# CONCLUSION

- If you notice something → say/do something.
  - Remember: You do not have to handle a situation alone
  - Cornell Health and CUPD are available 24/7 to assist
- Familiarize yourself with campus resources
  - Reduce stigma by endorsing campus resources
- Remember → Things CAN get better for a student! Your support helps; mental health treatment works.

*For more information, visit [health.cornell.edu](http://health.cornell.edu)*

**Thank you!**

Catherine Thrasher-Carroll, Mental Health Promotion Program Director (ct265)  
Katherine Goldberg, CAPs Therapist and CCI Specialist (kjg25)

