

The F.A.Q.s of Student Life

A Faculty and Staff Resource Guide for Assisting Students with Personal Concerns



MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY
MANKATO

Introduction

This brochure is designed as a basic guide for use in assisting students with personal concerns that may be impeding their ability to fully benefit from the educational process. You will also find information about effectively addressing student disciplinary issues, e.g. disruptive classroom behavior and academic dishonesty. Student services offices at Minnesota State University, Mankato are included for the purpose of consultation and student referral.

The Office of Student Affairs designed this publication to make your job easier and enhance student retention efforts. Students are best served through a holistic approach that facilitates growth on intellectual, emotional, physical, social, ethical, and occupational dimensions.

Student services are available for an increasingly diversified student population, but many students are not aware of these resources. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the frequently asked questions about student life. We know that faculty and staff are heavily invested in student success, and we appreciate your efforts to facilitate a referral to offices that assist students in overcoming obstacles and achieving their full potential.

– Mary Dowd
Office of the Vice President
for Student Affairs

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Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mission Statement

Minnesota State University, Mankato promotes learning through effective undergraduate and graduate teaching, scholarship, and research in service to the state, the region, and the global community.

STATEMENT OF GOALS

- The University will foster an actively engaged and inclusive learning community based upon civility, trust, integrity, respect, and diversity in a safe, welcoming physical environment.
- The University will prepare students for careers and for life-long learning by providing a clearly defined general education program and focused undergraduate pre-professional, professional, and liberal arts programs.
- The University will strengthen its role as a major provider of graduate education, offering intensive, scholarly graduate programs including collaborative efforts with other institutions and professionals, culminating in student expertise at professional levels.
- The University will enhance advising, support services, and learning experiences that aid students in identifying life goals, planning academic careers, and achieving timely graduation.
- The University will increase the quantity and quality of service to the state, region, and global community through collaborations, partnerships, and opportunities for cultural enrichment and continuous learning.
- The University will invest in the professional development of all members of the University Community and in the appropriate technologies necessary to achieve excellence in learning through teaching, research, and service.
- The University, as a whole and in all of its parts, will establish priorities through planning and assessment processes that anticipate our needs and focus our efforts and resources in support of our mission and goals.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

“When reading a student’s term paper, I discovered that large sections were downloaded from the Internet. How should I handle this?”

The Minnesota State University, Mankato’s “Statement of Student Responsibilities,” #1, “Individuals will fulfill their academic responsibilities in an honest and forthright manner” and #3 “Individuals will respect the integrity of the University’s academic and administrative records” outline academic integrity expectations.

Examples of violating behaviors include: plagiarism (such as using another’s phrasing, concepts, or line of reasoning as your own); submitting the same paper in different classes without prior approval from both instructors; cheating on assignments, laboratory reports, or examinations; acquiring or using test materials without faculty knowledge; failure to follow class policy; obtaining academic benefits through computer fraud or unauthorized access; violation of computer privileges; engaging in academic fraud alone or with others; downloading material off the Internet without proper citation; illicit attempts to influence grading; and failing to abide by test-taking procedures.

In cases where a faculty member suspects academic dishonesty, minimal due process rights apply. Accused students are entitled to the following when the faculty member addresses the situation:

1. Oral or written notice of the allegation(s);
2. An explanation of the evidence;
3. An opportunity to present their side of the story;
4. A written notice of the sanction(s) imposed;
5. An opportunity to appeal the sanction(s).

Decisions about the student’s grade for the course or assignment are the prerogative of the instructor. In addition, the professor may submit a written complaint to the Office of Student Affairs as a suspected violation of the “Statement of Student Responsibilities,” in consultation with their department chair. In cases where the student contests the allegation, the accused student may be scheduled to appear before the University Judicial Board. The instructor who submitted the complaint will be asked to appear as a witness for the University. Possible sanctions can include University disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. Educational activities are also typically assigned through the sanctioning process to familiarize the student with definitions of academic dishonesty and the importance of integrity. **For more information, contact the Office of Student Affairs, 336 Wigley Administration Center, 389-2121; also see ww.mnsu.edu/conduct/.**

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

"A student disclosed in a written class assignment that 'I really like to party, but sometimes I don't remember what I did the night before...compared to high school it seems like partying is the only thing to do here.' So far, the student's grade in the class is okay. Should I do anything?"

This student has experienced a "blackout," a serious condition of memory impairment, yet the person appears to function "normally." A blackout may indicate chemical dependency. Other serious consequences from alcohol or other drug use, thus chemical abuse, include but are not limited to: relationship problems, legal or campus judicial hearings, injuries or other medical problems, sexual assault or other forms of violence, personality changes, and reduced involvement in responsibilities or leisure activities. Poor academic performance usually occurs later in the progression of chemical abuse. More often, a person will drive vehicles under the influence or regret alcohol-related situations.

Drinking alcohol is not a rite of passage. The majority of Minnesota State University, Mankato students have used alcohol at some point prior to University enrollment. Among those students who choose to drink, most drink responsibly. It is not "normal" for students to drink and drive, or drink to the point of intoxication. However, there still are many students who "binge" when they choose to drink. Binge drinking is defined as four standard drinks in a sitting for women and five drinks in a sitting for men. This definition is based upon the correlation between the number of drinks ingested and the likelihood of students experiencing alcohol related consequences. Students often define social drinking as drinking with friends; in contrast to social or responsible drinking defined as consistently limiting ingestion to avoid intoxication, maintaining a low alcohol toleration, and viewing alcohol use as an optional aspect of social interaction rather than the focus of interaction.

Most people will not voluntarily seek help for chemical abuse problems. Warning signs of chemical abuse are subtle in the early stages of an addictive process. It is crucial to approach a student at the first inclination of a problem to prevent further problems and contribute to the student's success at Minnesota State. The following steps are advised: 1) Attend to the student from a perspective of care and concern. 2) State the facts (your observations) as well as information you have heard from others. 3) Refer the student to the Alcohol and Drug Education Office at 389-5689 or the Counseling Center at 389-1455. Services include on-campus and Mankato area resources for students

seeking counseling, chemical dependency assessments, or support groups. Additional services include general alcohol and drug education and resources for academic support. Another option would be to refer the student to a physician in Student Health Service, 389-6276, who can examine the student and facilitate a referral to the Alcohol and Drug Education Office. Making an appointment in your presence can motivate the student to follow through in seeking assistance. 4) Inquire about the student's progress toward seeking assistance particularly if you observe additional concerning behaviors, alcohol-related or otherwise.

BIAS INCIDENTS

"An international student mentioned to me that someone used shaving cream to write racial slurs on the student's car. How are bias incidents handled at Minnesota State?"

Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to maintaining an educational environment that supports the academic, professional, and personal development of ALL members of the community. Acts of harassment, prejudice, and oppression have no place in an institution of higher learning or anywhere in society. Violations of law and/or the student conduct code are aggravated in severity when bias motivation is involved. **Incidents of bias should be reported promptly to Security, 389-2111.** All reports are forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs for further investigation and disciplinary action, as appropriate. Bias incident reports are also sent to the Mankato Department of Public Safety for consideration of criminal charges.

Advocacy and support services are available through the International Student Office, 389-1281; Multicultural Affairs, 389-6300; Women's Center, 389-6146; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center, 389-5131; Office of Affirmative Action, 389-2986; and CADA, 625-7233.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

“What career development services are available to MSU students?”

The Career Development Center (CDC) offers a variety of interrelated services to all MSU students – no matter their stage of academic and/or career planning. The Center’s developmentally-based initiatives include career counseling, academic major selection, part-time and seasonal employment listings, internship information, and job seeking assistance. **For more information about career services, contact the CDC, 209 Wigley Administration Center, 389-6061, or visit the CDC website, www.mnsu.edu/cdc.**

COUNSELING REFERRALS

“Can you suggest an appropriate way to recommend personal counseling to a student?”

While most students come to the Counseling Center on their own, faculty and staff are often the first to recognize that a student may not be functioning well, academically or emotionally. Students may sometimes turn to faculty and staff at this time because of the respect they hold for a faculty or staff member. At other times, faculty and staff may recognize that a student seems troubled or that there has been a marked change in his/her behavior, and choose to initiate the conversation. In either case, during such a discussion faculty and staff may want to encourage the student to schedule an appointment at the Counseling Center.

The primary mission of the Counseling Center is to assist students to function effectively as students. In support of this mission, the Counseling Center offers confidential help to assist students in resolving the personal, social, and educational concerns that may be interfering with their ability to succeed. The Center provides direct service to students (i.e., short-term counseling, referral, crisis intervention, and psycho-educational workshops aimed at skill acquisition and prevention) and indirect service to members of the University community (i.e., consultation, outreach, and training).

If concerns are in the area of substance abuse and/or eating disorders, please note that staff specializing in these particular problem areas are available

through contacting Student Health Services, 389-6276; the Nutrition Health Education, 389-5689; or the Counseling Center, 389-1455 for assistance with intervention or providing support during the recovery process.

When referring a student, it is important to state in an open and clear manner the behavior you have observed which is causing concern. Remind students that the Center is available to them as a confidential place to begin resolving that concern. For some students, it may also be appropriate to describe consequences which may occur should certain behaviors persist. Counseling can then be suggested as an avenue the student might wish to pursue in an effort to bring those behaviors or stressors under better control.

During the initial consultation, the student and the counselor discuss the student's concerns, work to clarify its nature and possible contributing causes, and begin to formulate a plan for resolving it. Because counseling is confidential, staff recommend following up with the student to see if he/she acted on the suggestion and, if needed, to renew the recommendation. Finally, when making a referral, be sensitive to student readiness; a student may not act on a recommendation immediately, but might do so at a later date. **Counseling Center psychologists are available at 389-1455, CSU 245.**

DATA PRIVACY

"A student's parents called requesting information about semester grades and class attendance. Can I disclose this information without written permission from the student?"

No. All students attending Minnesota State University, Mankato including dependent minors, have confidentiality rights in accordance with University, State, and Federal regulations. Only student information designated by the University as directory information may be released without the student's written, informed consent.

Minnesota State University, Mankato has designated the following items as Directory Information. As such, this information may be released to the public without the consent of the student except in situations where the student has requested that this information not be released to third parties.

1. Name
2. Date and place of birth
3. Local and permanent address
4. Major field of study

5. Local and permanent telephone number
6. Dates of attendance
7. Previous college/university attended
8. Degrees received
9. E-mail address
10. Awards and honors
11. Height and weight information for athletic participation
12. Performance records and participation in competitive events
13. Participation in officially recognized activities, sports, and organizations

Students may request that their directory information be kept private by contacting the Office of the Registrar at 389-6266. After the student submits a confidentiality form, the student's address will only be used for internal purposes such as accessing grades. The phrase "confidential address" will appear on the screen of University personnel with authorized access to student records. However, students should be aware that addresses appear on many reports, e.g. advisor reports, grade reports, etc.

Individuals requesting Directory Information should be referred to the current telephone Campus Directory. If the information requested is not listed there, refer the individual to the Office of the Registrar, 389-6266. You may also contact the Office of the Registrar or the Office of Student Affairs, 389-2121 for assistance in responding to third party inquiries. Contact Finance and Administration, 389-6621, upon receiving a subpoena or request for student information from law enforcement.



DISABILITIES

“There is a bright, but easily distracted, student in my lab who often asks me to repeat instructions. Does it sound like the student may have a disability? If so, should I bring up the possibility?”

Students with hidden disabilities such as learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, hearing loss, vision loss, psychiatric disabilities, medical disabilities, and physical disabilities should make their accommodation needs known as soon as possible. All students needing accommodations are required to provide documentation of the disability to the MSU Office of Disability Services Director. Once documentation is received, and it is determined that the student is eligible for disability related accommodations, a Disability Services plan is developed and given to the student to share with faculty. Please refer all students with disabilities to the Office of Disability Services, 132 Memorial Library, or phone 389-2825 to schedule an appointment to discuss their needs.

Too often students wait until they are in trouble to ask for help. Students may be more willing to seek help early if the professor includes an invitation to meet privately to discuss any learning needs. A statement on the syllabus or as part of announcements of office hours, etc. allows the student to decide whether or not to self-identify and seek assistance.

A student with a learning disability may have difficulty with understanding relationships, number and/or word reversals, and difficulty in listening to and remembering instructions. Students may demonstrate extremely poor handwriting, poor spelling, poor comprehension and retention of reading material, and be unable to complete assignments within imposed time limits. Time management, note taking, and recall for tests may also be weak. Students with other types of hidden disabilities may have similar problems as well as difficulty seeing the board, concentrating, hearing/understanding when the speaker's face is hidden, attending class regularly, etc.

There are a number of possible accommodations for each type of disability. Needs vary significantly among individuals; all accommodations are not necessarily applicable to all students with a particular disability. Effective accommodations must be identified according to the needs of each individual student, and this is done on a case-by-case basis. **Faculty observing students having difficulty in their class that may be attributable to a disability are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services, 389-2825 or 711 (MRS/TTY).** A faculty/staff handbook,

Accommodating Students with Disabilities, has been prepared and distributed to each academic and administrative unit on campus. The handbook contains information about resources on campus for students with disabilities, information about types of disabilities and possible accommodations, and general guidelines about requirements mandated by federal and state law. It is available on the MSU Affirmative Action website, www.mnsu.edu/affact/handbook.html.

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

"I'm worried about a student employee who is being emotionally and physically abused in a dating relationship. Where should I refer the student?"

Strongly encourage anyone who may be in an abusive relationship to seek counseling and advocacy. **The MSU Women's Center, 389-6146, provides information, options, and support for men and women who are survivors of domestic abuse.** Women's Center staff can assist the survivor in reclaiming self-esteem and personal power. Information is available for obtaining an Order for Protection or a Harassment Restraining Order. Encourage students to provide Security with a copy of the restraining order. Faculty may consult with the Office of Student Affairs or Security for assistance in handling situations where a student has obtained a restraining order against another student in the same class or department.

Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Verbal abuse is often a predictor of a potentially violent relationship. Domestic abuse can occur between couples of every age, race, affectional orientation, class, and spiritual affiliation. A person who is prone to sexual or physical violence is motivated by a desire to appear powerful and in control. This façade masks fear, shame, insecurity, and inadequacy.

Domestic abuse indicators include:

- Insults, criticisms, put-downs, sarcasm;
- Quick temper, the "silent treatment," jealousy, unpredictable behavior, mood swings;
- Dishonesty, manipulation, mind games;
- History of relationships that ended bitterly;
- Roughhousing, wrestling, pinching, pulling hair, squeezing breasts, being forcibly restrained;
- Throwing objects, breaking things, slapping;
- Shoving, punching, choking, threatening with a weapon;
- Sexual assault.

Violence is a learned behavior promoted in a society that has historically condoned violence against women, children, and oppressed people. Violence is a main staple of the entertainment industry. Children are desensitized to violence through cartoons and video games that depict killing and mass destruction. Men and women can work together to deconstruct these images and offer healthy alternatives.

“An embarrassed and upset student disclosed being forcibly fondled by an acquaintance at a University outdoor concert. The student doesn’t know whether to report it. Help! What should I do?”

When an individual makes a disclosure of a campus crime, the individual should be advised to immediately contact Security or local law enforcement. Reports can be made to either Security or local law enforcement regardless of whether or not the suspect is a Minnesota State student. If the individual will not agree to speak with Security or local law enforcement, notify a Campus Security Authority. See page 15 for the definition of a Campus Security Authority. The Campus Security Authority receiving the disclosure of the campus crime may withhold identifying information about the victim when the crime is reported to Security or local law enforcement for statistical reporting purposes. Students may also be referred to support services offices and agencies such as the Counseling Center, Women’s Center, Department of Residential Life, Blue Earth County Sexual Violence Resource Center, and Student Health Service for assistance in deciding whether to formally report a campus crime.

When a student reports being a survivor of sexual violence, listen without making any judgments or assumptions, offer support, and give the survivor the time needed to speak about it. **The Women’s Center, 389-6146, has staff available with special training in crisis intervention.** Offer to walk with the student over to the Women’s Center. **Sexual assault advocacy is also available through the Blue Earth County Sexual Violence Resource Center, 800-630-1425 (24 hour SAFELINE).**

Sexual violence is an umbrella term for sexual assault, rape, acquaintance rape, stalking, child sexual assault, and incest. They are all violations of our personal space and bodies. They are all crimes! Verbal harassment (on the phone, on the street, in the classroom, and in the workplace), unwanted touching, forced or manipulated sexual acts and rape all exist on a continuum of violence. Students may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, high levels of anxiety, alcohol or other drug abuse, suicidal thoughts, loss of memory, inability to concentrate, inappropriate boundaries, a period of grieving, or other signs of duress.

As with many aspects of life, the sooner after the incident survivors receive help, the sooner they can begin their process of healing. However, it is never too late for survivors to begin a process of healing. If left unattended, students may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or increasing depression. Students may do poorly in classes, fail classes, or leave the University.

For more information about sexual violence, visit www2.mnsu.edu/assault.

EATING DISORDERS

“One of my work study students lost 20 pounds on a low carb diet. The student is already seriously underweight. Is this a symptom of an eating disorder?”

Two major eating disorders are anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Traditionally, females have more pressure than males to conform to physical stereotypes of what is acceptable. The pressure may explain why more females than males develop eating disorders.

Anorexia nervosa is a disruption in normal eating habits characterized by an all consuming fear of becoming “fat.” People with anorexia nervosa may be able to work or study and have some social life, but they usually are depressed and function far below their potential. Anorexia may be the result of an attempt to gain control over life when a person has felt little control in the past.

Bulimia is a cycle of uncontrolled binge eating followed by purging through vomiting or the use of laxatives. Individuals with bulimia are often of normal weight or even slightly overweight. Persons with bulimia are often aware that their eating patterns are abnormal and out of control and that their lives are dominated by their eating habits. Once caught in a pattern of bingeing, the resulting shame and sense of helplessness may make it difficult for the person to seek the help that is needed.

An important first step in overcoming an eating disorder is for the person to acknowledge to him or herself and to helping professionals that an eating pattern is a problem. It is also important to remember that a person with an eating disorder is a person first and a person who has trouble with food second. Being available to listen and reaching out to a students with an eating disorder may be helpful in having them regain control. **If you have reason to believe that a student has an eating disorder, contact Student Health Service, 389-6276, the nutrition Health Educator, 389-5689, or the Counseling Center, 389-1455, for assistance with intervention or providing support during the recovery process.**

LEADERSHIP/INVOLVEMENT

“Students in my First Year Seminar class complain that it is hard to meet people here. I’ve been telling them they won’t meet people sitting home watching TV. How can I get them more involved in student life?”

Faculty and staff can greatly ease the transition to college by encouraging or requiring students to explore opportunities out of the classroom; participate in residence hall programs and governance; join clubs and organizations; attend intellectual, artistic, social, political events coordinated by the IMPACT Team campus programming board; attend athletic events; and participate in service-learning projects. Students are more apt to persist to graduation if they feel connected to peers, faculty, and staff. A sense of belonging correlates with motivation, purpose, academic performance, and positive regard for the institution. Student involvement extends the learning environment beyond the classroom allowing students to test new ideas and develop interpersonal competencies. Faculty and staff also play a key role in identifying students with untapped leadership potential. A simple word of encouragement from a respected professional can be all it takes for a bright, but hesitant, student to run for president of an organization. **For more information on student involvement and leadership opportunities, contact Student Leadership Development & Service-Learning, 173 Centennial Student Union, 389-6076.**

Many leadership and involvement opportunities are also available in the residence halls. Students may be elected or appointed by their peers to volunteer positions in one of the 60 floor governments, one of the three Complex Councils, or the Residence Hall Association. In addition, Residential Life employs students as Community Advisors, Night Owls (night building security), student janitors, and desk staff. For students who are simply looking to make friends and meet people with similar interests, floor meetings and programs provide a structured opportunity to develop relationships. **For more information on leadership and involvement opportunities in the residence halls, refer students to the Community Advisor on their respective floors, or contact Residential Life, Carkoski Commons, 389-1011.**

LGBT NEEDS AND CONCERNS

“What resources are available for addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender people’s needs and concerns?”

The mission of Minnesota State University, Mankato’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center (LGBT Center) is to provide the campus community with educational resources, support, and advocacy. One of its goals is to create a positive environment for the diversity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people at Minnesota State University, Mankato by increasing community awareness and understanding of the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning people. Another goal is to reduce the effects of alienation by actively supporting the concept of Minnesota State University, Mankato as a multicultural community which welcomes and appreciates diversity.

The LBGT Center provides the following services.

- Develops educational resources and strategies for reducing heterosexism and homophobia, and for celebrating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer cultures.
- Advocates for the needs of the entire transgender, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer community.
- Coordinates and communicates community-wide efforts on behalf of bisexual, transgender, queer, lesbian, and gay people.
- Provides resources, information, and referrals for the MSU community on queer, bisexual, lesbian, transgender, gay, and questioning issues.
- Provides a safe and accessible space for reporting of incidents of harassment and discrimination.
- Networks with other organizations working to address the issues of lesbian, queer, gay, transgender, and bisexual people.
- Works in coalition with others to transform MSU into a supportive, multicultural community.

For more information call the LGBT Center at 389-5131, visit the Center located in CSU-173, or visit the LGBT Center website at www.csu.mnsu.edu/slds/LGBTC/Home.html

MAJOR DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE

"I'm concerned about a student who writes about 'wanting to end it all' in a weekly journal. In class the student seems sad and withdrawn. How should I approach the situation?"

College students experience many forms of stress contributing to a significant incidence of depression, substance abuse, eating disorders, low self-esteem, poor academic performance, and suicidal ideation in the student population. Early detection of stress-related feelings and clinical depression is important to suicide prevention. Possible warning signs of a serious problem can include marked behavior changes, increasing isolation, eating and sleeping difficulties, self-recrimination, anger, a recent loss of a loved one, giving away personal possessions, comments about wanting to end it all, and overwhelming expressions of hopelessness and despair.

When approaching a student who appears despondent, establish rapport by listening empathetically and indicating behaviors that prompt concern. If a student gives indirect messages about suicide, it is appropriate to ask, "Are you thinking about hurting yourself?" Always assume a suicide threat is serious. Explain that counseling can assist the student in obtaining relief from pain that feels intolerable. It is extremely important to consult with a mental health professional if you feel the student may pose a risk to self or others. A professional will consider the level of threat based on such factors as the student's implied or stated intent, coping skills, lethality of a plan, any pending criminal charges, previous self-destructive behavior, history of hospitalization, substance abuse, precipitating crisis, recent loss, preoccupation with death, and access to a support system.

Consultation is available through the Student Health Services at 389-6276 or the Counseling Center at 389-1455. Despondent students can be referred to Student Health Services for evaluation of clinical depression. Appointments can be made by calling 389-6276. Immediately call Security at 389-2111 (24 hours/day) to summon appropriate medical treatment if a student has made a suicide attempt resulting in injuries or illness. Security can also advise on intervention procedures if the student is making suicidal threats.

MISSING PERSONS

"I'm concerned that my graduate assistant missed work this week. There is no answer when I try calling the student's home phone number. Is there any way of finding out whether the student is okay?"

On-campus students: When a concern arises as to the welfare or whereabouts of a student living in the residence halls, **contact the Department of Residential Life at 389-1011 or Security at 389-2111.**

Off-campus students: When a concern arises as to the welfare or whereabouts of a student living off-campus, **contact Security at 389-2111, the Office of Student Affairs at 389-2121, or the Mankato Department of Public Safety, 911.**



REPORTING CRIMES

“A student disclosed being approached in the arboretum last night by a stranger who demanded his wallet and struck him. The student hasn’t reported it yet. What would you advise me to do?”

For the protection of all members of the University community and to ensure compliance with federal legislation, any suspected criminal activity must be immediately reported to Security or to a Campus Security Authority.

The Clery Act requires that Universities compile and report accurate statistics to current and prospective students and employees. Violations of the Act result in civil penalties up to \$25,000 and the Department of Education must report to Congress any school that is determined to be out of compliance. Data is collected from a wide variety of positions designated as “Campus Security Authorities.”

If someone tells you about a crime or an incident that may be a crime, you must report when it allegedly occurred and when it was reported to you.

Ways of Reporting:

1. Immediately call Security, x2111 or 911, if you see or experience an incident or have knowledge of a crime in progress.
2. Immediately call Security, x2111, if an individual comes to you to report a crime.
3. Contact a designated “Campus Security Authority.”

The law defines four categories of Campus Security Authorities:

- University Police
- Non-police security staff responsible for monitoring University property
- People/offices designated under our policy as those to whom/which crimes should be reported
- “Officials with significant responsibility for student and campus activities.” Examples: residential life staff, athletic coaches, student activities coordinators, student judicial officers, and faculty advisors to student organizations.

The Clery Act does **not** consider the following positions to be Campus Security Authorities. However, University policy indicates that these employees should make reports in accordance with the MSU Crime Reporting Requirements policy:

- Administrative staff not responsible for student activities (e.g., payroll, facilities)
- Clerical staff
- Individual faculty who do **NOT** serve as an advisor to a student organization
- Doctors in the Student Health Center or counselors in the Counseling Center who only provide care to individual students and do not advise student groups.

Licensed professional mental health counselors and pastoral counselors (employed by a religious organization to provide confidential counseling) who are working within the scope of their license or religious assignment at the time they receive the crime report are EXEMPT from reporting requirements.

Under the law, some off-campus locations are deemed so closely related to the University that crimes occurring at those locations are included in campus crime statistics. *Examples: Crimes occurring at student organization properties and at University owned or controlled facilities “frequently used by students,” such as the Kato Ballroom when rented by a student group.*

You do not need to report crimes not connected to MSU, but **DO** tell the student about reporting options and refer for help.

BEFORE collecting information about a possible campus crime, you must advise individuals of the following:

- “I am required by federal and state regulations to report campus crime to Security to promote accurate disclosure of campus crime statistics. While disclosure to me is voluntary, not sharing information will hinder timely warnings to the campus community which aid in crime prevention and the University’s ability to respond to campus crime. Security will forward the information to the student judicial system and local law enforcement.”
- Do not attempt to first investigate; report the incident to Security.

If the person will NOT agree to talk with Security, explain that you **MUST** report the incident as an anonymous crime statistic. Identifying information about the person making the report can generally be withheld, if requested. However, it is critical that you do not promise complete confidentiality when discussing an anonymous report.

“There is a 17-year-old Post-Secondary Enrollment Options student in my class who told me about being hit by a belt after coming home late. Am I mandated to report abuse of a minor by an adult to a child protection agency?”

Reporting is mandatory in accordance with the MnSCU policy on sexual discrimination, harassment, and violence policy. Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment or violence may constitute abuse according to Minnesota law. In such situations, professional educators employed by the system office and colleges and universities shall comply with the reporting requirements in M.S. Section 626.556 (reporting maltreatment of minors) and M.S. Section 626.557 (Vulnerable Adult Protection Act). **For information on reporting procedures, contact Security at 389-2111 or Carol Stallkamp at 389-1111.**



SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR

“Students have written in their journal about cutting on their legs or arms when they feel bad or overwhelmed. How should I approach something like this if it happens again?”

Self-injurious behavior may include superficial cutting; burning; scratching; hitting; pinching; extreme body piercing; restricting and purging food; and high risk behavior. The student may have a compulsive urge to take some sort of strong action in an attempt to release overpowering emotions. Although harmful, the behavior can bring temporary relief. Sometimes survivors of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse experience profound numbness and use self-injurious behaviors to feel alive. The behavior may be symptomatic of a desire to eliminate an aspect of the self or life situation that seems unbearable. Explain to the student your concerns in a supportive, non-judgmental way. Do not expect the student to immediately stop the behavior without first identifying deeper issues and alternative methods of coping in a therapeutic setting. Underlying depression and physical injuries may need immediate attention. **Assist the student in making an appointment with Student Health Service, 389-6276. Discuss contacting the Counseling Center, 389-1455, with the student.**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

"A student told me that she quit her on-campus job because she was offended by her supervisor's flirtatious comments and sexist jokes. Where should this situation be reported?"

Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported to the Office of Affirmative Action, AH-112, 389-2986.

Sexual harassment is an illegal form of sex discrimination prohibited by state and federal law, as well as Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) policy. There are two kinds of sexual harassment. Quid pro quo harassment occurs when a person in a position of power pressures another person to meet his or her sexual demands. Hostile environment harassment occurs when repeated sexually offensive behavior or comments create an unpleasant or intimidating environment and unreasonably interfere with receiving an education. Sexual comments or inappropriate touching on a one-time basis may also create hostile environment harassment.

Although the person committing the act may think his or her behavior is harmless or funny, the person against whom the act is directed feels hurt and degraded. He or she may become physically ill, become unable to have comfortable relationships with others, withdraw from social or public situations, including interactions in the educational setting, etc. Sexual harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student to student, employee to employee, and other persons having business with or visiting the campus. Sexual harassment may occur when it is directed at members of the opposite gender or when it is directed at members of the same gender. Sexual harassment is a serious matter and should not be ignored or minimized.

STUDENT CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

“What behaviors are expected of students under the student conduct code?”

1. Individuals will fulfill their academic responsibilities in an honest and forthright manner.
2. Individuals will respect and foster the academic endeavors of others.
3. Individuals will respect the integrity of the University’s academic and administrative records.
4. Individuals will adhere to MnSCU System and University policies and regulations along with federal, state, and local laws that govern individual actions and relationships among community members.
5. Individuals will protect and support the personal safety of self and others.
6. Individuals will demonstrate respect for others in all their interactions.
7. Individuals will show respect for personal and University property.
8. Individuals will contribute to a safe and orderly environment.
9. Individuals will assist the University in fulfilling its administrative responsibilities.

For more information on the student conduct system, contact the Office of Student Affairs, 389-2121, or see www.mnsu.edu/conduct/. Any concerns regarding personal safety should be reported directly to Security, 389-2111. Reports involving students will be forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs.

“How do you define disruptive classroom behavior?”

Student behavior in the classroom that substantially or repeatedly interferes with the ability of an instructor to teach or the ability of other students to learn is a direct violation of the “Statement of Student Responsibilities.” While students have the right to freedom of expression and belief, disagreement and dissent must be expressed in a civil manner that does not disrupt the learning process. The behavioral expectations extend beyond the formal classroom to field trips, internship placement, and other off-site activities related to the fulfillment of academic requirements.

Examples of violating behaviors may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Loud or irritating noises, including cell phone use;
- Repeatedly entering or leaving a classroom without explanation;
- Non-compliance with reasonable requests from the instructor regarding class participation;
- Eating, sleeping, or reading the newspaper during class;
- Intoxication or drug impairment;
- Persistent, disrespectful interruptions of others;
- Targeted verbal attacks, beyond a reasonable statement of opinion, that may cause humiliation or stress to another;
- Sexual harassment;
- Computer fraud and abuse;
- Hazing, reckless endangerment;
- Blocking the entrance to a classroom or building;
- Intentionally damaging University facilities or equipment;
- Uttering “fighting words” that may incite violence;
- Harassing phone calls, threatening voice or email, stalking;
- Threats or acts of violence.

“What are some strategies for preventing and addressing disruptive classroom behavior?”

1. Clarify your standards and expectations at the beginning of the term. Setting standards up front is one of the best deterrents. The course syllabus can outline expected behaviors and consequences for disruptive behavior. This can include referral to the Office of Student Affairs. Model the attitudes and behaviors you value in the classroom. Including class participation on the

syllabus as a requirement is another way to address passive disruptive behavior such as sleeping through lectures for reasons other than narcolepsy. Limit cell and camera phone use during lecture and exams.

2. To prevent computer abuse, remind students of the University E-mail and Computer Usage policies. Explain that activities such as hacking and intentionally damaging operating systems are very serious violations of University policy and federal law (Title 18-Sec. 1030) subject to FBI investigation, loss of University computer privileges, suspension or expulsion, incarceration, fines, and restitution. Students may be unaware that violations of the computer usage policy are reported to Security and law enforcement agencies when the behavior is criminal in nature. Even possession of software with destructive capabilities can be illegal.
3. Recognize that students engaging in irritating behaviors may not realize that their actions are considered disruptive. It can be effective to speak with the student privately after class. Assist the student in identifying ways of interacting more appropriately.
4. It is often useful to define classroom courtesy rather than admonishing one student, e.g. "It's great to see all this enthusiasm, but remember to allow one another the courtesy of speaking without interruption."
5. If a student becomes highly agitated in a class discussion and prevents you from moving on to another topic that needs to be covered, be friendly but firm in indicating the need to move forward. Invite the student to meet with you after class or during office hours for further debate or review.
6. If a verbal instruction does not prove effective, give the student the option of modifying the undesirable behavior and remaining in the classroom or leaving the class on a temporary basis.
7. If you are seeing a pattern of on-going disruptive behavior, schedule a meeting with the student. Include a colleague in the meeting if you feel uncomfortable alone with the student. Consider a behavioral contract that sets parameters of conduct in writing. Provide a copy to the student. **You may also consult with your Department Chair and the Office of Student Affairs, 389-2121, about the situation. A meeting between the student and your Department Chair can reinforce your expectations. If you know or suspect that the student has a psychological disability, contact the Counseling Center, 389-1455, and the Office of Disability Services, 389-2825, for guidance in approaching the student.**

8. **In the event of serious disruption, the class can be adjourned and Security summoned at 389-2111.** A Security report will be forwarded to the Office of Student Affairs for disciplinary review. When it is believed that the health, safety, well-being and/or appropriate functioning of either the disruptive student or a member of the University community is in serious question, the University can enact an immediate summary suspension of the student from the University pending the outcome of a formal disciplinary hearing.
9. **The Office of Student Affairs, 389-2121, can advise you on formal and informal approaches to student discipline.** Log all incidents and document your attempts to resolve the situation. Formal complaints of disruptive behavior, including suspected acts of academic dishonesty, should be submitted in writing to the Office of Student Affairs. Individuals submitting complaints may be asked to appear as witnesses in a University disciplinary hearing.
10. Students found responsible for a violation of the Statement of Student Responsibilities as a result of engaging in disruptive behaviors may receive a sanction of probation, suspension, or expulsion depending on severity and/or frequency of the behavior. In addition, students are frequently assigned educational sanctions such as conflict resolution workshops, letters of apology, and proscribed behavioral contracts.
11. Suspected violations of law are reported to Security. Students who engage in alleged violations of the “Statement of Student Responsibilities” may also face civil or criminal penalties. An action involving the student in a legal proceeding does not free the student from the responsibility to participate in a University proceeding. The University will decide whether to proceed with action before, after, or simultaneously with a legal proceeding. In compliance with new U.S. Immigration Laws, the University must report international students and exchange visitors to the United States Government Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) if the student was disciplined by the University as a result of an incident that led to a criminal conviction in a court of law.

STUDENT HEALTH CARE

"I often have students who either frequently miss class or consistently come to class ill. What medical services are available for students, particularly if they are miles from their hometown doctor?"

Student Health Services/Health Education is the on-campus medical clinic with the purposes of providing high quality, low-cost medical care and assisting students in learning ways to maintain and improve their health. Services are provided for currently enrolled students and include treatment of illness or injury, allergy injections, a laboratory, and a pharmacy. Preventive care includes annual physical examinations as well as gynecological/contraception examinations.

The professional staff within the Health Education Office provides education to individuals and the campus community regarding nutrition, healthy sexuality, stress management, smoking cessation, and alcohol and other drug concerns. Students further benefit from individual counseling and instruction related to the above health concerns with specialists in these areas.

The cost of an office visit with a physician or a nurse practitioner is only \$10.00. Some charges may be incurred for laboratory tests, prescriptions, or special supplies such as splints or crutches. Your medical insurance plans may cover these charges. If you do not have insurance, you can purchase it at the clinic. Students are encouraged to bring an insurance card to speed up the insurance process. **Appointments may be made Monday through Friday by calling 389-6276.** The Student Health Service is closed when classes are not in session. **The Student Health Service – Medical Clinic is located in the lower level of Carkoski Commons, Room 21. The Health Education Office is also located in Carkoski Commons, 389-5689.**

STUDENT ILLNESS/ABSENCE

“A student in my class says he is scheduled for major surgery and will be absent for awhile. Should I ask for verification before giving him make up assignments?”

Students experiencing temporary illnesses or medical emergencies which lead to extended absences from the University should contact the Disability Services Office (DSO). The DSO will collect information from the student, document the reason for the absence, and contact that student’s instructors. The information provided by the DSO does not mandate any action on behalf of the course instructor. The information provided by the DSO will allow the course instructor to know that the absence is valid.

Examples of when to contact the DSO:

- Medical emergencies, such as surgeries, emergency room visits, major illnesses requiring hospitalization or extended absences from the University.

Examples of when NOT to contact the DSO:

- Regularly scheduled medical appointments, short-term illnesses not requiring medical treatment.



STUDENTS WITH POSSIBLE PSYCHIATRIC NEEDS

“A student in my class sees and hears things that aren’t there and appears disoriented in the classroom. I question whether the student is comprehending course material. How should I approach the student?”

Ask to visit with the student privately in a quiet place without distractions, assuming you are comfortable meeting alone with the student. Although odd behavior may elicit a fearful response, the emotionally distressed student is generally not dangerous. Recognize that the student may be fearful of others. Discuss the specific behaviors that concern you. If the student is experiencing hallucinations, acknowledge those perceptions without agreeing, e.g. “I believe you hear growling sounds, but I don’t hear anything.” Do not attempt to use reason or logic to challenge delusional thinking. Determine whether the student is connected with the appropriate services on campus or in the community. Offer on-going support and encouragement within limits of your time, expertise, and comfort level. **Contact Student Health Services, 389-6276, or the Counseling Center, 389-1455, if you have questions about psychiatric conditions or medication. Promptly seek consultation with Student Health Services if the student can no longer engage in a coherent conversation. If the student is disruptive, summon Security at 389-2111.**

Questions regarding accommodations or the student’s ability to fulfill degree requirements of a particular major should be discussed with the Office of Disabilities, 389-2825.

Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities to all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual preference, age, marital status, physical and mental disability, status due to receipt of public assistance, or any other group or class against which discrimination is prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Americans with Disabilities Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 363, and other applicable state or federal laws.

This document is available in alternative format to individuals with disabilities by calling the Office of Student Affairs at 507-389-2121 (V), 800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY).

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