



## *STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES*

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### **PURPOSE & MISSION OF STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES**

Counseling Services exists for the purpose of providing Christian mental health resources for the betterment of undergraduate and graduate students.

### **PSYCHOSOCIAL & THERAPEUTIC SERVICES**

Psychotherapy and counseling are not easy to describe in a few general statements. Effective treatment depends upon the particular problems you are experiencing, as well as personality factors and the establishment of a good therapist-client alliance. In an important respect, psychotherapy is dissimilar to visiting a physician in that it calls for more active effort on your part. For therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on the things we talk about both in and out of session. Treatment includes potential for some risk as well as benefits. Since therapy sometimes involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings. On the other hand, counseling has been known to produce many benefits such as a reduction in distress, solutions to specific problems, and better relationships. There can be no guarantees of what you will experience.

The first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of this evaluation period, the Staff Counselor will be able to offer you an initial impression of your needs and a plan for what treatment might include, if you decide to continue with therapy. If you ever have any questions about procedures, you should discuss them whenever they arise.

### **CLIENT FILES & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

The Staff Counselor will be responsible for maintaining a client file that may contain personal information such as demographics, symptomology, personal and family history, and diagnoses. Whereas the Staff Counselor is responsible for the maintenance of said files, the Executive Director of Student Services shares access to the files and holds the ultimate responsibility for them. The Director will be bound by the same level of confidentiality as the Staff Counselor. All client files are safeguarded by lock and key on a daily basis.

### **EMERGENCY CARE & CRISIS SITUATIONS**

A crisis may be generally defined as a situation or period in which the person's usual coping resources fail and they experience a state of psychological disequilibria in which they may be at risk for impulsive or harmful behavior. Examples may include suicidal ideation, hallucinations, paranoia, or uncontrolled drug or alcohol use. Such individuals may or may not constitute an imminent danger to themselves or others; nevertheless, sometimes a judgment must be made to protect the client.

In the event of an emergency or crisis situation, the client may contact the Staff Counselor. However, although the Staff Counselor maintains regular and on-call hours, there may be times when he or she is not immediately available. In those instances the client should contact the police by dialing (757) 226-2075 while on campus or 911 while off campus. The client may also contact Virginia Beach Psychiatric Center at (757) 627-5433 or the local Community Services Board at (757) 437-6150.

### **SUMMARY OF CLIENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a client of the Student Services Staff Counselor, you agree to:

1. Keep regular appointments and actively participate in your treatment.
2. Attempt any therapeutic assignments you agree to perform.
3. You agree to disclose to the Staff Counselor whenever you are in crisis and/or suicidal, to work with him/her to come up with a crisis plan, and to give the Staff Counselor discretion regarding needed disclosures in a crisis situation.
4. Not to present to the Staff Counselor's office under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
5. Ask the Staff Counselor questions right away if you are uncertain about your evaluation, therapeutic process or any related policy.