BUZZ FOLDER
A quick reference guide on recognizing, responding to, and referring distressed students.

RECOGNIZE RESPOND REFER

HOW TO USE:
1. Recognize indicators of distress Common indicators are listed inside. Students may present with indicators not listed.
2. Respond appropriately Each situation is unique. Use the tips and decision tree inside to determine the most appropriate response.
3. Refer the student Use the list of resources inside to refer the student to the most appropriate campus resource.

Provided by:
The Office of Student Support
410.837.4755 Three orange circle icons with white illustrations. From left to right: a magnifying glass labeled as 'Recognize', a silhouette of a human head and shoulders labeled as 'Respond', and a circle with three lines extending outward labeled as 'Refer.'
1. Recognize. Indicators of Distressed Students. Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not only isolated symptoms.

1. RECOGNIZE

Indicators of Distressed Students

Look for groupings, frequency, and severity of behaviors, not only isolated symptoms.

Academic

Suddendecline in quality of work and grades
Frequently missed classes and assignments
Disturbing content in writing or presentations
Classroom disruptions
Consistently seeking personal rather than professional advice
Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations (a change from prior functioning)

Doesn’t respond to requests for contact/
meetings

Physical

Marked changes in physical appearance
(e.g. poor grooming/
hygiene or sudden weight loss/gain)

Strange or bizarre behavior
indicating loss of contact with reality
Visibly intoxicated or smelling of alcohol or marijuana
Rapidspeech or manic behavior
Depressed or lethargic mood or functioning
Observablesigns of injury

(e.g. facial bruising or cuts)

Psychological

Self-disclosure of personal distress (e.g. family problems, financial difficulties, assault, discrimination, legal difficulties)

Unusual/disproportionate
emotional response to
events
Excessivetearfulness, panicreactions
Verbalabuse (e.g. taunting,
badgering, intimidation)
Expressionof concern about
the student by peers

SafetyRisk
Verbal, written, or impliedreferences to suicide,
homicide, or assaulting
behavior
Unprovokeddanger or hostility/physical violence
(e.g. shoving, grabbing,
assaulting, use of weapon)

Academicassignments dominated by themes of extreme hopelessness,
helplessness, isolation, rage,
despair, violence
Stalkingor harassing
Communicatingthreats/
disturbing comments via email, correspondence,
texting or phone call
In addition to referring a student to resources, sexual assault or abuse requires mandated reporting. For questions regarding mandated reporting, please contact the Office of Government and Public Affairs at 410.837.4533 or T9@ubalt.edu.

Mandated Reporting 2. Respond. Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response to a distressed student.

2. RESPOND
Use these tips to determine the most appropriate response to a distressed student.
Stay Safe
Stay Safe

Call the University Baltimore Police Department (410.837.4444) or 911 if there is an imminent danger to the student, you or anyone else.

Stay Calm
Stay Calm

Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself. Use a calm voice when talking and asking questions.

Take Your time
Take Your
Time

If this is NOT an immediately dangerous situation, take time to think through what might be most helpful.

Seek Consultation
Seek
Consultation

You are not alone. Ask those around you for help. Consult with a colleague, call another office on campus for a referral or consult the Office of Student Support.

Use Active Listening
Use Active
Listening
Make eye contact, give your full attention. Restate what a student says to make sure you understand what is causing the distress and/or what they are asking for help with.

Ask Direct Questions
Ask Direct Questions

Don’t be afraid to directly ask the student if they are having thoughts of harming themselves or others (by asking, you are not instilling the thought).

Be Aware of Environment
Be Aware of Environment

Be thoughtful about limiting onlookers, sitting down and finding the most appropriate place to have a conversation.

Give Concrete Help
Give Concrete Help
Help get them to the next step (e.g. contact the academic advisor with the student to make an appointment.). Help them call OSS or the SAP to schedule an appointment.
Is the student a danger to themself or others OR does the student need immediate assistance?

Yes
The student's conduct is clearly dangerous or threatening, including self-harm or harm to others
Call 911 or University of Baltimore Police Department 410.837.4444
I am not concerned for the student’s immediate safety, but they are having significant academic and/or personal issues and could use some support.
Refer student to an appropriate campus resource.
I’m Not Sure
The student is with me currently and shows signs of distress, but it is not clear how serious it is. I feel uneasy and/or really concerned about the student.
Call the Office of Student Support. If the Office is not open call the Student Assistance Program 1.800.327.2251. Then, refer student to appropriate campus resource and submit a Compass Form.
The student is not with me currently, but I am concerned about what they said (in an email/call) OR what they did (acted bizarrely, were aggressive/disruptive) OR how they looked (unkempt, unwashed, or as if drugged/drunk).
Adapted from Penn State, University Park Red Folder
Submit a Compass Form and if you have questions or need additional support call the Office of Student Support.

Campus Pantry

• Provides food and supplies for students, staff, and faculty
• Assistance getting connected with other local resources for community members facing food insecurity  
  • 410.837.4076

• Student Center 2nd Floor, Room 202A  
  Diversity and Culture Center

• Provides support and educational services for students of underrepresented communities or cultural backgrounds  
  • 410.837.5744

• Student Center, Room 302  
  International Admission and Services

• Support for international students  
• Advice on cultural adjustment, resource awareness and Visa issues • 410.837.4756

• Academic Center, Room 110  
  Office of Student Support

• Clinical Case Manager available for triage and referral  
• Helps students facing adverse events (financial, death in family, medical/hospitalization)  
• Report a possible violation of the student code of conduct  
• Campus and policy navigation • 410.837.4755

• Academic Center, Room 111 & 112  
  Office of Disability and Access Services

• Provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities for the classroom and campus life  
• Advocacy and support for students • 410.837.4755

• Academic Center, Room 111  
  Office of Government and Public Affairs

• Report and understand reporting options for sexual or gender-based harassment or misconduct  
• Assistance in accessing resources and support services • 410.837.4533

• Academic Center Room 114  
  Care Team

• Identify and report threats of risky or concerning behavior  
• Assistance for student experiencing adverse events (financial, death in family, medical/hospitalization)  
  • 410.837.4755

3. REFER  
Follow the decision tree to determine who to contact when you are concerned about a student who is distressed and/or disruptive.
Emergency and campus resources are listed.

Emergency Services

University of Baltimore Police Department
• 410.837.4444 or 911

Student Assistance Program
• 24/7 anonymous calling
• Professional mental health support • 1.800.327.2251

Campus Resources

Academic Advising or Assistance
• Provide support in scheduling and answer general questions about academic progress
• Support in understanding academic policies or other nuances of coursescheduling

College of Arts and Sciences Advising Center
• 410.837.5351
• Academic Center. Room 209

College of Public Affairs Advising Center
• 410.837.5359
• Liberal Arts and Policy Building, Room 111

Freshman Advising
• 410.837.5915
• Academic Center, Room 209

Merrick Advising Center
• 410.837.4944
• Business Center, Suite 142

School of Law Dean’s Office
• 410.837.4458
• The John and Frances Angelos Law Center, Suite 716

Robert L. Bogomolny Library
• Academic Success Coaching
• Tutoring, math support and Writing Center
• Walk in or schedule appointments using the Appointment Tool in students MyUBPortal
• RLB Library, 2nd Floor • Academic Center, Room 111 & 112