



**University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
serving Oshkosh, Fox Cities, & Fond du Lac Campuses**

Counseling Center

Student Success Center, Suite 240, 750 Elmwood Ave.

Oshkosh, WI 54901

Phone: 920.424.2061

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**INFORMED CONSENT FOR COUNSELING SERVICES
CLIENT INFORMATION AND RIGHTS**

Scope of Service

The UW Oshkosh Counseling Center is committed to providing effective programs and services using a brief treatment model. This model makes efficient use of our resources and is adequate for the vast majority of student concerns. Students whose service needs exceed our scope of care will be invited to work closely with our case manager to identify appropriate resources in the community and to provide supportive follow up assistance. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to follow through on referrals that are provided.

If accepted for care, enrolled students may receive a maximum of 12 individual/couples counseling sessions per 12 month academic year. Individual/couple sessions are 45 minutes in length. Couple counseling is only provided if both parties are currently enrolled students. Group and wellness services do not have a specific session limit and duration is determined on a case by case basis.

If you no show or cancel more than two times each, this may result in termination of services and a referral to an outside provider. If you are in non-compliance with our attendance policy, you may need to speak with the Director or Associate Director to determine if you are able to continue with treatment at the Counseling Center or a case management appointment will be offered for a community provider referral.

If you think that your assigned provider is not a good match for you, we encourage you to discuss your concern directly with your assigned provider. Our providers understand that not all client/patient/provider assignments are a good fit and will help you facilitate a referral to another provider, as appropriate. You may also request a change in counselor with the front desk professional. If you have further concerns, you are welcome to contact the Director of Counseling Center, Sandy Cox.

We support all students in seeking and receiving mental health services and work to do so in a way that avoids dual role relationships and protects future training opportunities for students in mental health services at the UWO Counseling Center. Those who are seeking mental health services and who would like to be considered for future training opportunities, such as an internship, should consider if an alternate setting for services or training placement is the best option. Assistance for establishing care in the community is available by our case manager. The UW Oshkosh Counseling Center reserves the right to determine if there are any ethical issues created by any prior client/patient/provider relationships between current Counseling Center staff and former clients.

Counseling is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personality/style of the counselor, client and the particular concerns the client presents. There are a number of different approaches which may be utilized in counseling. Psychological tests may also be used to help identify client needs. If you have questions about our procedures, we will be happy to discuss them whenever they arise. The UW Oshkosh Counseling Center does not provide evaluations or documentation required by a third party. This

includes but is not limited to legal proceedings, employers, DUI assessments or treatment, the military or other governmental agencies, and vocational rehabilitation.

Alternatives to Counseling

Alternatives to counseling are also available. Examples may include self-help resources (i.e. books, handouts, and mental health websites), various campus organizations, or other community organizations, program, or support groups. Relaxation resources are available to students and may be used separate from, or in addition to, receiving counseling services. You may ask a counselor/case manager about any of these resources during your appointment(s).

Risks and Benefits of Counseling

Counseling has both risks and benefits. Risks may include experiencing uncomfortable levels of such emotions as anxiety, frustration and grief. Treatment may require recalling unpleasant aspects of your personal history. Counseling has been shown to have benefits for many who undertake it. It often leads to significant reduction of emotional distress, better relationships, and resolution of specific problems. There are, however, no guarantee of its results for any particular person. If for any reason you are not satisfied with your treatment or feel that your rights have been violated, we encourage but do not require that you discuss this first with your counselor. If your concerns are not resolved to your satisfaction, or if you would rather not discuss them with your counselor, you may request an appointment with the Director of the Counseling Center.

Client Rights

As a client of the UW Oshkosh Counseling Center you have the right to ask questions about your treatment, your treatment provider, and to file a complaint if you are dissatisfied with the services you receive. To obtain more about the grievance procedures, you can ask your counselor or contact the Counseling Center Director or Associate Director.

Confidentiality

The UW Oshkosh Counseling Center is required by state law and ethical standards to guarantee that everything a counseling client talks about with a counselor is held in strict confidence. This means that information shared by you during counseling will be kept within the confines of the Counseling Center and will not be shared with others (including parents, other family members, instructors, or other university officials) unless you give written authorization to release the information.

Exemptions to confidentiality are as follows:

- Counselors within the Center routinely consult with one another about cases in order to provide the most effective service to students.
- If there is a concern for your safety or the safety of someone else, imminently or in the foreseeable future, we may be obligated to take appropriate action to protect life. This may include arranging voluntary or involuntary hospitalization, notifying law enforcement authorities, university personnel, and/or notifying the emergency contact you have designated.
- If we have reason to believe that you or someone you know is abusing or neglecting children or a vulnerable adult, we are required by law to report this to the appropriate state agency.
- If you are involved in litigation and we receive a court order requested records, we are required by law to comply.

Treatment Plan

Your provider and you will discuss services offered through the Counseling Center on your home campus and create a treatment plan that meets your needs. The expectation is that you will follow through on all treatment plan recommendations. If you do not follow through on your treatment plan recommendations, it may result in the need to referral you to an outside provider to meet your treatment needs.

Tele-Counseling

In extenuating circumstances, counseling services may be provided through Tele-counseling as an alternate to in-person counseling services. You have a right to confidentiality with Tele-counseling under the same laws that protect the confidentiality of your medical information for in-person counseling. You understand that there are risks unique and specific to Tele-counseling, including but not limited to, the possibility that therapy sessions or other communication by your counselor to others regarding your treatment could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures or could be interrupted or could be accessed by unauthorized persons. In addition, you understand that Tele-counseling is different from in-person counseling and that if your counselor believes you would be better served by another form of mental health services, such as in-person treatment, you will be referred to a counselor in your geographic area that can provide such services.

Records

Information regarding your Counseling Center visits is not part of your academic record. You will be asked to complete several forms prior to your initial intake. Your counselor will also create records regarding each contact. Electronic records are encrypted and stored on a secure server. These records are maintained for 10 years or more after the end of counseling, at which point they are destroyed. You may request information regarding your counseling to be forwarded to another health professional. In accordance with state law, you may request to review your file and/or receive a copy. This request must be in writing.

The Counseling Center compiles statistics on its services and occasionally uses this data to conduct research on how to improve counseling. With your consent to participate in the UW system study on impact of Counseling services, confidential data (including your student ID#) will be emailed in a password protected file to researchers in UW Oshkosh. The data will be stripped of personally identifying information and combined with de-identified data from other UW system schools.

Your Counseling Center record is protected by state laws and professional ethics. With your written authorization, we will provide a copy of your counseling records or a summary to another agency or individual. You have the right to inspect your counseling record with your counselor and to receive copies of your record at your own expense. The Counseling Center uses a computer data keeping system that employs a high level of security. The only people with electronic access are the Counseling Center professional staff and interns. Program assistants have restricted access to records.

Counselors in Training

We are a training site for graduate students in counseling related fields and for counselors who are pursuing state licensure. If you are assigned to a counselor-in-training you will be informed of their trainee status as well as the name of their supervisor. All counselor-trainees receive regular supervision of their work and are required to videotape their sessions for use in supervision. If your counselor wishes to record your session you will be asked to give your written permission to do this. All recordings are deleted after they are used for training purposes and are not a part of your client record. If you are uncomfortable with seeing a counselor in training you may request to be seen by a senior staff member.

Contacting Your Counselor:

Counseling Center hours are 7:45am-4:30pm Monday through Friday. Counselors are often not immediately available by phone but will try to return your call the same day it is received. There is an on-call counselor available during business hours for emergency services.

****If an emergency arises after hours, please consider the following.**

- Call Emergency Services at 911
- Call the 24 Hour Crisis Hotline: 920-233-7707
- Contact the emergency room at the nearest hospital, e.g. Mercy Medical 920-223-2000

****Please note that you are encouraged to be seen for an ON CALL appointment during office hours at the Counseling Center if you experience any of the following:**

- A recent loss
- A traumatic event
- Thoughts of harm to self
- Thoughts of harm to others

Email and Social Media:

We welcome your contact with our office; however, email is not an appropriate medium for personal counseling and we cannot guarantee that your email will be read in a timely manner or remain confidential. Please reserve more personal disclosure for face-to-face appointments, and call or come in to our office if you have a more immediate need. If you give permission to receive email contact from the Counseling Center, messages will be sent to the address you provide and will generally be limited to scheduling/appointment matters, brief responses to messages you send to us, follow up contact, and invitations to complete an online survey to provide feedback about services.

There are multiple Facebook pages or Twitter feeds that the Counseling Center manages and you are encouraged to view. You are also welcome to “like” our pages or follow us on Twitter; however, if you do so, please be aware that some people may infer that you are in counseling at the Counseling Center. For reasons of professional ethics, it is our policy that staff members do not interact with, accept friend or contact requests, or follow clients on any social networking site or blog.

Health and Wellness

If you believe that you have a contagious condition (e.g. flu, pink eye, strep throat, etc.), and do NOT have a counseling emergency, please reschedule your appointment until you are no longer contagious. This supports our staff in maintaining their personal health and wellness so that we can provide consistent care to our students.

Mandated AODA Clients

UW Oshkosh provides services at all campuses to students who are mandated for AODA treatment through the University only. This requires that the Counseling Center obtain a release of information for the referral source, and communicate completion and attendance to the referral source. This will be explained in the initial appointment with the Counselor. If a student refuses service, the Counselor will review the potential consequences of refusing counseling services with the student.

Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)

UW Oshkosh provides AAT as an alternative or ancillary treatment upon request to students. The therapy dog is often in the Center. Please notify the front desk of any allergies and/or fears. If any student engages in this treatment, it is understood that the student has fully understood the information about AAT and has had an opportunity to ask questions. The student understands that this program is designed as a therapeutic intervention that is goal-directed and understand: 1) All animals participating in this program have been screened and have the appropriate vaccinations, 2) The student does not have allergies to dogs, 3) The student acknowledges that there is a possibility of incidents with dealing with animals, although there have been no reported incidents where animals have injured patients, and 4) It is designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotions, and/or cognitive functioning. The risks, benefits, and alternatives to participate in AAT have been explained and discussed. These include 1) The benefits of Animal-Assisted Therapy participation include; help in engaging in treatment, decreased feelings of anxiety, aid in developing empathy, nurturance and responsibility and to focus on tasks at hand, 2) The risks of Animal-Assisted Therapy participation are outlined above and are regarding the potential for allergic reactions and injuries, 3) At any time a student become uncomfortable with this treatment the student can return to more traditional therapy such as individual, family, couple's or group treatment. Students release UW – Oshkosh Counseling Center and its employees and the animal's owner from any liability due to ill effects or injury resulting from participation in the AAT Program.

Case Management

Students at UW – Oshkosh may request case management from the Counseling Center for many reasons. If a student chooses to utilize this service, they are understanding that case management services may include an arrangement for coverage of services not otherwise provided by the Counseling Center, or if a referral to an outside agency is best for the student. Students are aware that the case management program is voluntary, and I may withdraw from the program at any time. Also that the consent to case management is allowing a staff member at the Counseling Center to contact outside providers with a release of information on my behalf. Case management services will be explained in the first appointment along with securing releases for the appropriate agencies.

Student Success Coaching

Students at UW-Oshkosh may participate in Student Success Coaching. Student Success Coaching is a 3 session program that utilizes a positive psychology and strengths-based approach to promote and reinforce student success and achievement. If a student engages in this treatment, it is understood that the student has understood the program and has had the opportunity to ask questions. Student Success Coaching will be explained in the first appointment. If it is determined that a referral to another UWO resources is appropriate, the release of information will be secured.

I understand that a copy of the Informed Consent is available upon request.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

Persons under 18 years of age will need parent/guardian to sign “Consent to Treat a Minor” form.

I understand these policies and that I have the right to discuss them to my satisfaction with my counselor.

I am consenting to the following program(s):

- Mental Health Counseling
- AODA Sanctioning Program
- Case Management
- Animal-Assisted Therapy
- Student Success

Signature: _____ Student ID#:_____

Date: _____