

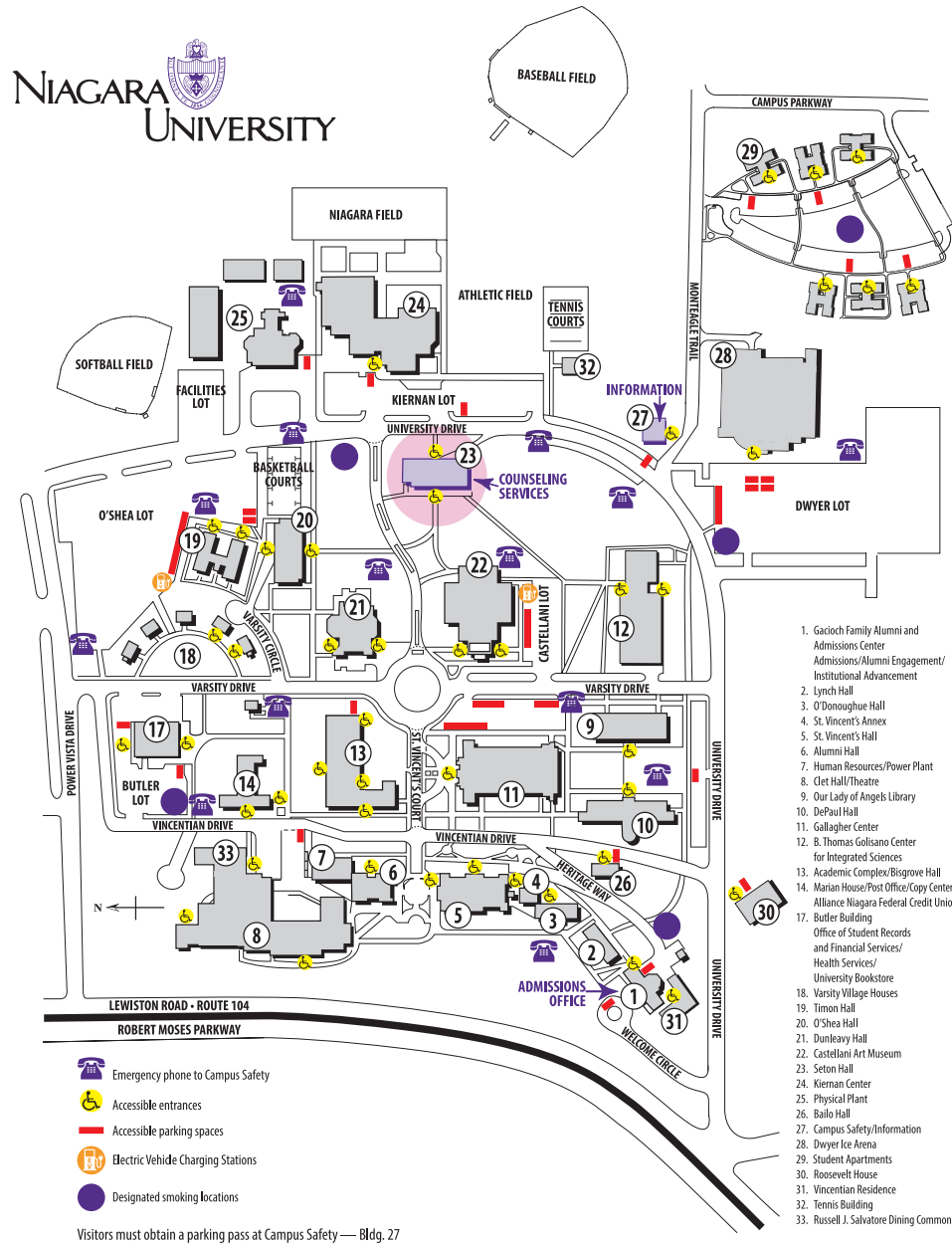
**MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

- Niagara University Counseling Services – 716.286.8536
- Niagara University Campus Safety – 716.286.8111
- Niagara County Crisis Services – 716.285.3515
- Erie County Crisis Services – 716.834.3131
- Suicide Prevention Hotline – 1.800.273.8255
- Niagara County Rape Crisis Services – 716.285.3518
- Domestic Violence Hotline – 1.800.799.7233
- LGBTQIA National Hotline – 1.888.843.4564

If you are concerned about the wellbeing of a student, you can also notify the Students of Concern team. The Students of Concern team is a cross-functional group focused on the proactive identification, assessment, and response to student matters that may impact the health and safety of the Niagara University Community or individual student wellbeing and success. The multidisciplinary team led by the Dean of Students includes representatives from Health Services, Counseling Services, Academic Support, Residence Life and Conduct, and Campus Safety. Non-emergency reports of students displaying disruptive or distressing behavior should be made to the Students of Concern Team by contacting the Dean of Students at 716.286.8405 or by making a submission through the Students of Concern link beneath the top purple banner on myNU.

Emergency notification should be made to Campus Safety at 716.286.8111 or to law enforcement by calling 9-1-1 if you, a student, or others in the community are believed to be at immediate risk.

For additional information, please visit our website at:  
[www.niagara.edu/counseling-services](http://www.niagara.edu/counseling-services)



MAKING A REFERRAL TO  
 NIAGARA UNIVERSITY  
**Counseling Services**  
 A GUIDE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF





## A GUIDE TO MAKING A REFERRAL

The college years mark an important period of personal, academic, spiritual and psychological growth that may be stressful at various times. On occasion, students may experience challenges in coping with stress. You may be one of the first to become aware of personal difficulties affecting a student's academic performance. This guide is designed to help you recognize and address potential warning signs of distress in students through collaboration with Counseling Services.

## ABOUT COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling Services is committed to providing comprehensive, quality mental health services to students who may be dealing with everyday life stressors, as well as more challenging concerns or circumstances. Counseling services are provided by licensed mental health professionals. Services offered include:

- Short-term, goal-oriented and person-centered individual counseling
- Outreach/workshops
- Consultation
- Referral

Counseling sessions are usually 45 minutes long and scheduled bi-weekly. The total number of sessions will be based on the student's need and availability of counseling resources.

Students whose needs require specialized care or fall outside of our scope of practice will be referred to community resources for treatment.

Counseling Services does not provide any mandated services or where litigation is involved. Additionally, we do not offer evaluation-only services or psychological testing services, including testing for ADHD or learning disabilities. We are not able to provide documentation for emotional support animals.



## HOURS OF SERVICE

Fall and Spring Hours

Counseling Services is open Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m.–Noon and 1–4:30 p.m. for appointments.

We are closed from June 15 through August 15.

## ELIGIBILITY

Counseling services are confidential and free to all current NU students.

## WHEN TO REFER

If you are concerned about a student and notice any of the following warning signs:

- Marked changes in a student's functioning, appearance or habits. For example, deterioration in grooming, hygiene, dramatic weight loss, marked withdrawal in a normally outgoing person, accelerated activity or speech in a normally reserved person, or marked change in academic performance.
- You're doing more "personal counseling" or "friendly talk" than "academic counseling" with a student.
- A student seems to be "perpetually" tired, anxious, depressed, irritable, angry or sad.
- Poor classroom attendance
- Indications of hopelessness or helplessness
- A student's use of alcohol or substances interferes with his/her relationships or work.
- A student's thoughts or actions appear unusual to you or others.

## WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

Urgent or emergency situations may include, but are not limited to:

- A suicidal gesture, stated intention or attempt
- Behavior posing a threat to the individual
- Behavior or stated intentions posing a threat to others
- Demonstrated inability to care for oneself

## HOW TO REFER

- Talk with student in a private setting.
- Explain your concern in a straightforward manner. Be specific regarding the behavior patterns that you observed.
- Inform student of the availability of counseling services as a voluntary, free and confidential resource on campus for support.

## TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

- Call 716.286.8536 (ext. 8536 on campus)
- Come to the office

Counseling Services is located in the lower level of Seton Hall.

Except in emergencies, the option should be left open for the student to accept or refuse a referral for counseling. Counseling is voluntary.

If a student is reluctant to come to Counseling Services, it may help if you can provide more information about counseling.

You can normalize the situation by explaining many students utilize counselors to discuss everyday concerns/stressors in their lives.

## UNDERSTANDING THE COUNSELING PROCESS

- Counseling is a "conversation with a purpose"
- Counseling is not "advice giving". The student is the expert, not the counselor
- The counselor strives to meet the student where they are. To see the world through their eyes
- Counseling is about helping the student:
  1. learn about themselves (insight, understanding),
  2. become more self-aware (self-talk, environment),
  3. use what they learn to make real and significant changes in themselves and their lives (adapted from: www.touro.com),
  4. explore feelings and solve concerns with the support of an objective listener, and
  5. develop decision making and coping skills needed to meet the challenges of living and learning.

**\*Remember outside of an emergency situation, accessing counseling is ultimately the student's choice.**

## AFTER HOURS/CRISIS

- Contact your community advisor (CA), or residence director (RD)
- Contact Campus Safety at ext. 8111 or 716.286.8111
- Contact Niagara County Crisis Services at 716.285.3515
- Contact 911

## CONFIDENTIALITY

As required by both laws and ethics of professional practice, all communication between a counselor and client is confidential. Once a student is a client at Counseling Services, we cannot discuss the particulars of his/her situation, or even acknowledge the fact that counseling is being provided, without his/her consent (with specific, rare, legally defined exceptions)

