

# QUICK GUIDE FOR RESPONDING TO DISTRESS

# IOWA

## IF THE STUDENT:

## TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Threatens to injure, harm, kill, or risk the safety of self or others
- Refuses to leave the classroom after being asked to leave
- Reports or initiates a threat or bomb scare

University of Iowa  
 Police Department (UIPD)  
 Campus Phone: 911  
 Routine Dispatch: (319) 335-5022

## IF THE STUDENT EXHIBITS:

## REPORT BEHAVIOR OF CONCERN

- Unusual communication or threat to harm others
- Desperation, hopelessness, or suicidal thoughts
- Unusual fixation on stressful events or losses
- Inappropriate interest in weapons, mass attacks, or violence
- Suggestion of violence as a solution to a problem

Threat Assessment and Care Team  
 (319) 384-2955 • [uitat@uiowa.edu](mailto:uitat@uiowa.edu) • [hr.uiowa.edu/tat](http://hr.uiowa.edu/tat)  
 Anonymous Online Report: [uiowa.me/threat-assessment](http://uiowa.me/threat-assessment)  
 UI Police 24/7 Dispatch Number: (319) 335-5022

## IF THE STUDENT:

## CONSULT FOR GUIDANCE OR ADVICE

- Appears to be out of touch with reality
- Reports suicidal thoughts or actions, depression, hopelessness, anxiety, difficulty dealing with grief

University Counseling Service (UCS)  
 (319) 335-7294  
 3223 Westlawn S.

Student Health  
 Appointments: (319) 335-8394  
 4189 Westlawn S.

CommUnity Crisis Services  
 24 Hour Support  
 1-855-325-4296 (Call or Text)  
[builtbycommunity.org/services](http://builtbycommunity.org/services)

GuideLink Center  
 24 Hour Support  
 (319) 688-8000  
 300 Southgate Avenue, Iowa City

- Reports having been a victim of a stalking
- Reports sexual misconduct or relationship violence

Office of Institutional Equity (*Title IX and Gender Equity unit*)  
 (319) 335-6200

- Indicates experiencing hate crimes, bias, or discrimination

Office of Institutional Equity  
 (*Equity Investigations and ADA Compliance unit*)

- Reports feeling overwhelmed by a personal or family emergency/concern
- Reports difficulty securing basic needs (ex. food, shelter, utilities, etc.)
- Exhibits behavior that substantially impairs, interferes, or obstructs processes and functions of the university, including instruction and office operations.
- Expresses an overall sense of struggling with difficulties of an unclear nature

Student Care and Assistance (SCA)  
 Office of the Dean of Students  
 (319) 335-1162  
 135 Iowa Memorial Union

- Is having academic difficulty due to physical, psychological, or learning disability
- Indicates a need for disability accommodations

Student Disability Services (SDS)  
 (319) 335-1462

- Is not attending class for an extended period of time
- Seems overwhelmed by a problem that could affect university attendance or persistence

Early Intervention Team (EIT)  
 Danielle Martinez, Academic Support and Retention (319) 335-1497  
 Nikki Hodous, Office of the Dean of Students (319) 335-1162

# ASSISTING STUDENTS AND PROMOTING A CULTURE OF WELL-BEING

## BECOME FAMILIAR WITH SIGNS THAT MAY INDICATE AN INDIVIDUAL NEEDS SUPPORT.

Students experience a wide variety of challenges that will produce stress. In more severe instances, stress may lead to more serious concerns of distress or crisis when it begins to impact or disrupt daily functioning.

A student in distress may present changes in their behavior, mood, cognition, physical appearance, or verbally indicate issues.

### *Students in Distress may:*

- Present as irritable, sad, unduly anxious, withdrawn, confused, lacking motivation or concentration, seeking constant attention, showing lack of hygiene, or demonstrating bizarre, erratic, or concerning behaviors including references to self-harm.

A student in crisis may present similar behaviors as a student in distress as well as other serious concerns that may raise further concern for well-being and safety. A student in crisis warrants a more immediate follow-up.

### *Students in Crisis may:*

- Exhibit similar behaviors to distressed students with escalating concerns, which may include behavior that is reckless, fixated, disorderly, aggressive, threatening, and dangerous to self or dangerous to others.
- Interfere in the University of Iowa's learning environment with behavior that is reckless, disorderly, aggressive, defiant, destructive, threatening, and dangerous to self or dangerous to others.

## RESPONDING TO STUDENTS

### *Response*

- Acknowledge the parallel stressors facing students and faculty, especially during times of trauma and uncertainty.
- Emphasize the importance of well-being and self-care, and acknowledge it may be challenging to attend to personal well-being in environments that stress competition and achievement.
- Be accessible to students and let them know they can share challenges with you.
- Promote the use of university support resources on your syllabus and offer occasional reminders to access them.
- Become familiar with how and when to refer students to university resources.
- Follow up with students sometime after first contact to check in on "how they are doing," to offer further support the student, and indicate that care can be ongoing.



### Reporting Concerns

- Always report serious or persistent inappropriate behavior to the Office of the Dean of Students.
- Safeguard the student's privacy rights.
- Keep Student Care and Assistance and the Threat Assessment and Care Team informed of new concerns.

## ADDRESSING CONCERNS

### When to consult with another resource:

- Anytime you're not sure how to handle or approach the concern(s)
- Student keeps coming back and is not following through on referrals
- Increasing complexity in concerns

### When to refer students to another resource:

- You're providing more "counseling" than "advising"
- Problems or requests are outside of your scope
- Issue would benefit from additional support and staff members
- Behavior shows no improvement or worsening

# ASSISTING VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, DATING VIOLENCE, OR STALKING

## Assisting Students who Experience Sexual Harm

Sexual harm includes any conduct covered by the university's Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct, encompassing sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence or stalking.

### Clarify

- **BE UP FRONT** about your ability to maintain confidentiality. Offering confidentiality you can't keep will undermine trust, so know your reporting responsibilities.
- **COMMUNICATE** that sexual violence is never the responsibility of the survivor.

### Listen

- **WITHOUT JUDGMENT.**
- **RESPECT THEIR CHOICES.** This includes what and how much they disclose, what services are needed, and whether to report to law enforcement or university officials.
- **DON'T ASSUME** that physical contact, even a gentle touch or hug, will be comforting.

### Check

- **ASK** if they have safety concerns. Be ready to connect them with someone who can help with safety planning at the Rape Victim Advocacy Program, Domestic Violence Intervention Program, or Threat Assessment Program.

### Refer

- **INFORM** the student about confidential support and advocacy services:
  - Rape Victim Advocacy Program
  - Domestic Violence Intervention Program
  - University Counseling Service
  - Women's Resource and Action Center

### Report

- **FOLLOW THROUGH** if you have reporting responsibilities. The policy may require that you notify the Title IX and Gender Equity unit in the Office of Institutional Equity within two business days.

*Complete Operations Manual can be found at [opsmanual.uiowa.edu](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu)*

## LAWS AND CODES

### Privacy Laws and Confidentiality:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits communication about a student of concern under the following circumstances:

- UI may disclose personally identifiable information from an "educational record" to appropriate individuals in connection with a health or safety emergency. Information may be released to parents, police or others, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
- Information can be shared with university personnel when there is a specific need to know and should be limited to the essentials of university business.
- Observations of a student's conduct or statements made by a student are not "educational records" and are therefore not protected by FERPA. Such information should be shared with appropriate consideration for student privacy.
- Offices that are considered confidential according to their licensure and professional standards are denoted with an \*asterisk in the master resource list. As such, they will follow their professional standards in prioritizing privacy when working with individuals. However, they will share information when necessary in the case of an individual being at likely and imminent risk of harm to self or others.

### Code of Student Life

The Code of Student Life helps students learn and grow to become the best version of themselves, so they are better equipped to embody the IOWA Challenge, positively contributing to the Hawkeye community and beyond.

This document establishes a framework to ensure our Hawkeye community achieves and upholds the goals and values listed in the Iowa Challenge and the Code of Student Life. The university is committed to due process and fairness when applying these rules and engaging in the Student Accountability Process. When you become a Hawkeye, you agree to understand and abide by the rules listed in the code, recognizing that this document helps us maintain a safe, healthy, respectful, supportive, and flourishing community, embodying the meaning of being a Hawkeye. The code also asserts students are expected to follow all University policies.

### Examples of prohibited behavior include:

- Physical assault, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, or domestic violence
- Threats that cause a reasonable person reasonably to be fearful for one's own safety or the safety of their immediate family
- Intoxication or impairment through the use of alcohol or controlled substances to the point where one is unable to exercise care for one's safety
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures or other University activities
- Use, display, or storage of a weapon or destructive device
- Racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity/expression, and other forms of harassment
- Stalking, hazing, and disorderly behavior

*Complete details can be found at [dos.uiowa.edu/code-of-student-life](https://dos.uiowa.edu/code-of-student-life)*

# MASTER RESOURCE LIST

**EMERGENCY SITUATION 911**  
**or UI CAMPUS DISPATCH:**  
**(319) 335-5022 +~**

## THREAT ASSESSMENT AND CARE TEAM (TAT) ~

(319) 384-2955 • uitat@uiowa.edu  
hr.uiowa.edu/tat  
Anonymous Online Report: uiowa.me/threat-assessment

The goal of the Threat Assessment and Care Team is to provide an integrated and coordinated process for identifying and responding to students, faculty, staff, and other individuals who may be at risk of harming themselves or others.

## UNSAFE SITUATION

### *Campus*

**University of Iowa Police Department (UIPD) +~**  
(319) 335-5022 • police.uiowa.edu

### *Off-Campus*

**Iowa City Police Department +~**  
(319) 356-5275 • uiowa.me/iowa-city-police

## MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

**University Counseling Service \***  
(319) 335-7294 • counseling.uiowa.edu

**CommUnity Crisis Line +~**  
Call/Text: 1-855-325-4296 • builtbycommunity.org/services

**Student Health \***  
(319) 335-8394 • studenthealth.uiowa.edu

**GuideLink Center +~**  
(319) 688-8000 • guidelinkcenter.org

**Employee Assistance Program ~**  
(319) 335-2085 • uiowa.me/employee-assistance

## SEXUAL HARM, DATING VIOLENCE, AND STALKING

**Title IX and Gender Equity, Office of Institutional Equity ~**  
(319) 335-6200 • diversity.uiowa.edu/report/report-problem

**Women's Resource and Action Center \***  
(319) 335-1486 • wrac.uiowa.edu

**Rape Victim Advocacy Program \* +~**  
(319) 335-6000 • rvap.uiowa.edu

**Office of the Ombudsperson +~**  
(319) 335-3608 • ombudsperson.org/uiowa.edu

**Domestic Violence Intervention Program \* +~**  
(800) 373-1043 • dvpiowa.org

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE

**Student Legal Services \***  
(319) 335-3276 • legal.studentlife.uiowa.edu

## IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHERE TO START, **STUDENT CARE AND ASSISTANCE**

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

**(319) 335-1162**

dos-assistance@uiowa.edu



\* Confidential resources + 24 hour resources  
~ Resources that serve employees

## ILLNESS OR INJURY

**Student Health \***  
(319) 335-8394 • studenthealth.uiowa.edu

**Emergency Department, UIHC +~**  
(319) 356-2233 • uihc.org/emergency-medicine

**UI QuickCare ~**  
(319) 384-8822 • uihc.org/ui-quickcare

**Mercy Hospital Emergency Department +~**  
(319) 339-0600 • mercyiowacity.org/emergency-care

## ACADEMIC ISSUES

**Department Executive Officers (DEOs)  
and College Deans**  
provost.uiowa.edu

**Graduate College, Academic Affairs Office**  
(319) 335-2144 • grad.uiowa.edu

## RESOURCES AND SERVICES

**International Student and Scholar Services**  
(319) 353-2700 • international.uiowa.edu/iss

**Residence Education**  
(319) 335-3700 • housing.uiowa.edu

**Academic Support and Retention**  
(319) 335-1497 • uc.uiowa.edu/retention

**Student Wellness**  
(319) 335-8394 • studentwellness.uiowa.edu

**Student Disability Services**  
(319) 335-1462 • sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu

**Office of Institutional Equity ~**  
(319) 335-3555 • diversity.uiowa.edu/division/oie

**Office of the Ombudsperson \*~**  
(319) 335-3608 • uiowa.edu/ombuds

**Multicultural and International Student Support  
and Engagement (MISSE)**  
multicultural.uiowa.edu