



## Responding to Distressed Students

Any member of The University of Arizona community may come into contact with a distressed student. Many students come to the attention of faculty or staff through journal entries, papers or shifts in behavior. Being aware of distress signals, methods of intervention, and sources of help for the student can help you assist the student.

The Dean of Students Office and Counseling and Psychological Services are available to students, faculty, staff, and parents for consultation and referral. Feel free to contact the Dean of Students Office at (520) 621-7057 or Counseling and Psychological Services at (520) 621-6490 to discuss any concerns or situations. Below are some of the more prevalent behavioral and academic signs that students exhibit when they are in distress.

### Depression

Changes in behavior  
Suicidal thoughts  
Substance abuse  
Changes in hygiene  
Talk of weapons  
Bizarre behavior  
Significant weight change  
Increased irritability  
Late work  
Missed assignments  
Changes in attendance  
Procrastination

### Increased anxiety

Irregular sleep patterns  
Fatigue  
Disorientation or confusion  
Expressing family problems  
Aggressive behavior  
Plans to commit suicide  
Extreme statements or written work  
Expressing feelings of helplessness  
Decline in work performance  
Inability to concentrate  
Drop in grades

### Key questions to think about in helping you identify a distressed student:

- Has the student's personality changed?
- Has the student's behavior changed?
- Is it a change that has occurred over time or is it sudden?
- What kind of support network does the student have?
- Is the student doing anything about his/her situation?

### Websites

Dean of Students Office

<http://dos.web.arizona.edu/>

Counseling and Psychological Services

<http://www.health.arizona.edu/webfiles/caps.htm>