Recognize signs of distress
Respond appropriately
Refer the student
### RECOGNIZE
Indicators of Distressed Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Psychological</th>
<th>Safety Risk</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| - Decline in performance  
- Missing class/assignments  
- Resists reasonable limits and/or constructive feedback  
- Classroom disruptions  
- Seeking personal vs. professional advice  
- Multiple requests for extensions/special considerations  
- Does not respond to repeated requests to meet | - Drastic changes in appearance  
- Strange behavior indicating loss of contact with reality  
- Visibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol  
- Rapid speech/impulsive behavior  
- Depressed/lethargic mood  
- Observable signs of injury | - Self-disclosure of distress  
- Unusual emotional response to events  
- Excessive panic reactions  
- Verbal abuse  
- Expressions of concern about the student by peers  
- Withdrawal from others and previously enjoyed activities  
- Loss of an important relationship | - Verbal, written, or implied references to suicide, homicide, assault, or self-harm behaviors  
- Unprovoked anger or hostility/physical violence  
- Academic assignments contain disturbing content (possible exception for creative writing)  
- Stalking or harassing  
- Communicating threats/disturbing comments via communication outlets |
**RESPOND**
To Distressed Students

- **Stay Safe**
  - Call JMU Police (EXT. 86911) or 911 if there is immediate danger to you, the student, or anyone else.

- **Stay Calm**
  - Take a few deep breaths to stay calm and use a calm voice when talking/asking questions.

- **Take Your Time**
  - If it is NOT an immediately dangerous situation, think about what is the best next step.

**Seek Consultation**
- Ask people around you for help! You can turn to consult with a colleague or call an office on campus.

**Use Active Listening**
- Give your full attention to the situation and maintain eye contact. Restate what they say to show you are listening.

**Ask Direct Questions**
- Don't be afraid to ask directly if the student intends to harm themselves or others.

**Give Concrete Help**
- Help them get to the next step by getting in contact with the appropriate resource.
When in doubt, the Counseling Center is here to consult and provide referrals/recommendations. Call 540-568-6552.