

Our students present to the Counseling Center with a broad spectrum of concerns. These include, but are not limited to Anxiety Disorders, Mood Disorders, Substance Abuse Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Eating Disorders, Self Injury, Suicidal Ideation, Trauma (sexual or physical abuse – current or historical, domestic violence, relationship violence, combat violence) Relationship concerns and Academic concerns.

What to look for

Most of the problems you encounter with students will present as excessive procrastination, decreased quality of work, frequent office visits listlessness, sleeping in class, marked change in hygiene, impaired speech or disjointed thoughts, , marked changes in behavior, flat or a change in affect, inability to describe their own emotions, agitation or quick to anger, response that is disproportionate to the situation, under-responding to academic notices, absence from class, and lack of follow through. **If you encounter threats regarding self or others, or other indications of a more serious issue, make sure to contact someone right away.**

What you can do

If you notice a student who concerns you, approach them. Allow ample time to talk to the student privately about what you have *observed*, not what you suspect. Avoid accusations and be open minded versus judgmental. Listen carefully and actively to the student. Encourage the student to identify and utilize their self care skills, understanding that not all emotional disruption is a crisis warranting the use of professional help. If your intuition tells you there may be more going on, probe a bit further. If you think they might be feeling overwhelmed and hopeless, ask about their safety. Ask if they have been thinking about suicide. Express your concern. Convey your respect for the student and your interest in their well-being. Offer help in connecting them with appropriate resources, especially if they confirm suicidal thoughts.

Resources available

Counseling and Health Center	512-863-1252
Student Life	512-863-1582
Residence Life	512-863-1624
Dean of Students	512-863-1624
Center for Academic Success	512-863-1286
University Chaplain	512-863-1056
SUPD	512-863-1944

After hours or weekend emergencies – contact SUPD at 512-863-1944 or the SU operator at 512-863-6511 to be connected with the counselor on call.

Hotline Numbers

National Suicide Prevention Hotline	800-273-8255
Nationwide Addiction Hotline	800-559-9503
The Trevor Project (LGBT suicide prevention hotline)	866-488-7386
RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network)	800-656-HOPE
Crisis Text line	Text HOME to 741741
Williamson County Crisis Line	800-841-1255

Please be aware that unless a student signs a Release of Information form, the Counseling Center staff cannot inform you if the student is receiving services. We can, however, listen to any information you want to provide. We are also available for consultation.

Frequently Asked Questions

These are some frequently Asked Questions about the requirements for reporting and investigating claims of Title IX violations, including student sexual misconduct, under federal law.

Please remember that Title IX is community centric – not victim centric. This means that its focus is more on the needs of the community than the individual victim.

Q. What is required of me if I hear about a sexual assault?

A. Current guidance mandates **ALL** employees of any university who hear about a sexual assault to report it to the Police, Dean of Students or the Title IX Coordinator so an investigation can take place. 'ALL employees' is defined as faculty, staff, and student employees, including RA's. Furthermore, even rumors of an assault must be investigated.

Q. What if a student wants to talk with their academic advisor or favorite professor in confidence and tell him or her that they were assaulted or suffered some form of sexual misconduct?

A. Employees are mandatory reporters and cannot offer confidentiality. They are obligated to report it. Care will be taken to keep the student's identity confidential during the investigation, but anonymity is not assured.

Q. What if a student has been assaulted and does not want an investigation of the incident?

A. The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) dictates that an investigation must be started when the University is deemed to have knowledge of an assault.

Q. Are there any safe places on campus where a student can talk about their assault without anyone else finding out or having an investigation take place?

A. Yes - students are guaranteed confidentiality when talking to a counselor at the Counseling Center (512) 863-1252, a nurse or nurse practitioner at the Health Center (512) 863-1252, or with the University Chaplain (512) 863-1056. If it is after hours, the student can contact the SU operator 512-863-6511 or the SUPD (512) 863-1944 and request to talk to the counselor, nurse or chaplain about a confidential matter and they will be connected.

Q. What if a student does not want to talk to anyone on campus – are there other resources?

A. Yes. The University maintains a publication that provides information about resources and reporting options on and off campus. It is available for download online at bit.ly/SUYellowBook, under the heading "Southwestern Yellow Book".

Q. What if a University employee knows of an assault and does not report it?

A. The University would be in jeopardy of losing its federal funding; this includes student financial aid.

Q. If a student is assaulted, what can they do to preserve evidence even if they are not sure they want to report?

A. Please consult section II of the “Resources and Reporting Options” (bit.ly/SUYellowBook) for extensive information about what to do in the aftermath of an assault.

Bystander Intervention:

Bystander intervention is recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could prevent or reduce the harm. At Southwestern, community members are encouraged to be active bystanders by holding themselves and others accountable for their language and actions in order to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment. Bystander intervention can be used to address a wide variety of harmful situations, including high-risk drinking, mental health concerns, sexual misconduct, hazing, and harassment. Many of these behaviors can be expressions of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and other forms of systemic oppression.

Mosaic provides student-led workshops throughout the academic year to empower students to take an active role in creating a culture of care at Southwestern. We ask that all Southwestern community members learn and practice bystander intervention techniques to decrease harm on our campus.

Violence Against Women and Sexual Misconduct Information

The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act's Campus Sexual Violence Act (SaVE Act) provision imposes the following reporting requirements:

A. The Clery Act requires annual reporting of statistics for various criminal offenses, including forcible and non-forcible sex offenses and aggravated assault. 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(1)(F)(i). VAWA's SaVE Act provision adds domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking to the categories that, if the incident was reported to a campus security authority or local police agency, must be reported under Clery. § 04(a)(1)(B)(iii)(to be codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(1)(F)(iii)). Parsed for clarity, these offenses are thusly defined:

1. "Domestic violence" includes assorted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse, current or former cohabitant, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law.
2. "Dating violence" means violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction.
3. "Stalking" means a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for her, his, or others' safety, or to suffer substantial emotional distress.

B. The provision adds "national origin" and "gender identity" to the hate crime categories, involving intentional selection of a victim based on actual or perceived characteristics that must be reported under the Clery Act. § 304(a)(1)(B)(ii)(I) (to be codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f)(1)(F)(ii)).

Southwestern's Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment in any manner or form, including sexual harassment based on sexual orientation, is expressly prohibited. It is the policy of Southwestern University (the University) to maintain both an academic and a working environment free from all forms of sexual harassment of any employee or applicant for employment, student, donor, former student, volunteer, or any other constituent of the University. Two reasons for this policy are to reaffirm the University's commitment of respect for the person and to enhance the University community's level of consciousness regarding gender issues. Sexual harassment violates University policy, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Q: What is the definition of sexual harassment?

A: The legal definition says that sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a person's employment or education; or

2. submission or rejection of such conduct by a person is used or threatened as the basis for academic or employment decisions, or evaluations affecting that person; or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of a) unreasonably interfering with the person's academics or professional performance, or b) of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment, educational or campus environment for any person or group of persons.

Please refer to <https://www.southwestern.edu/policy/sexual-harassment-policy/> for more information about SU's sexual harassment policies and procedures.

Southwestern's Sexual Misconduct Policy

Southwestern University affirms the rights of its students to live, work, and learn in an atmosphere of mutual respect, free from the threat of sexual misconduct. Accordingly, any form of sexual misconduct will not be tolerated. Southwestern University values the rights and dignity of all members of its community. Sexual misconduct (whether on or off campus) affects the emotional, physical, and psychological well-being of the Complainant and Respondent.

Definition of Consent

Consent is a voluntary, non-impaired, verbal expression of agreement. The absence of “no” does not mean “yes.” Participation in social activities, sexual history, previous sexual involvement, or a lack of response does not itself create consent. Consent to a sexual act does not create consent to other sexual acts. Moreover, consent to a sexual act at any given encounter does not create consent for a future encounter. Consent may be withdrawn at any time by any party.

Consent cannot be given or obtained when there is any form of intimidation, coercion, including but not limited to, the application or threat of physical force or threats of social disparagement to the victim, or threats to withhold benefits to which the victim may be entitled.

A person is incapacitated and cannot consent if that person lacks control of his or her motor skills; is unable to understand what is happening; is intoxicated to the point of a potential black out; or is asleep, or unconscious for any reason, including voluntary or involuntary use of alcohol or drugs.

So, the three principles that are critical in understanding the University's position in regards to sexual misconduct are:

1. Consent of all parties is mandatory.
2. Consent may be withdrawn by either party at any time via verbal or non-verbal communication.
3. Alcohol and other drugs impair judgment and undermine the possibility for consent.

Please refer to SU's complete sexual misconduct policy at <https://www.southwestern.edu/life-at-southwestern/title-ix/university-sexual-misconduct-policy/>.