

UNCERTAIN ABOUT COUNSELING

One of the most difficult steps in counseling occurs before an individual meets with a counselor for the first time. Deciding to seek counseling can be a difficult choice for a variety of reasons. It may be your idea to participate in counseling or maybe someone who cares about you recommended counseling because they notice some things about you that worry them. Some people in this situation might welcome the idea or even feel relieved; others might feel criticized or embarrassed. Feeling unsure about your first counseling experience is very common. SCS believes that it is important that an individual have the right to choose whether or not to participate in counseling. Once the decision to participate in counseling has been made, the mechanics for change have been set in motion.

When you call to request a counseling appointment, the receptionist will arrange for an intake appointment. During this session your counselor may ask you questions about your background, the situation that is troubling you and your goals for counseling. You will be given the opportunity to explore your beliefs and feelings freely. Your counselor will offer support and encouragement, new/alternative perspectives to your situation, and tips for more effective coping. By the end of your first session, you should have a clearer understanding of how your needs will best be served by continuing to engage in a counseling relationship.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN COUNSELING

In the process of counseling, students will be asked to consider trying new ways of doing things to promote changing the thoughts, feelings, or behaviors that have led them to seek out assistance. It is not uncommon, when doing things differently, to feel anxious and/or frustrated. Regularly discussing these concerns with one's counselor and learning to tolerate this discomfort within an on-going counseling relationship helps students to stretch themselves beyond their perceived limits to find new and exciting aspects of themselves that promote satisfaction, success and improved personal well-being. These changes do not occur immediately, and rarely after one counseling session, but rather with commitment and practice.

A PDF document entitled Counseling Information and Consent for Treatment can be found at: www.fredonia.edu/counseling. This document provides students with the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding their participation in counseling services.

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY

Unfortunately, events occur during a student's life that may result in a psychological emergency. SCS staff has extensive training and expertise to evaluate and intervene appropriately in the event of such an emergency. Same day and/or immediate assistance is available to address the needs of students in acute crisis. SCS staff members are on call 24 hours a day while classes are in session. In the event of a mental health emergency outside of SCS office hours, or when medical attention is required, contact University Police at (716) 673-3333.

HOURS OF OPERATION/LOCATION:

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. | LoGrasso Hall

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Phone: (716) 673-3424 | Fax: (716) 673-3140

E-mail: Counseling.Center@fredonia.edu

Web: fredonia.edu/counseling



Student Counseling Services (SCS) offers free, confidential, and individualized services by licensed mental health professionals to all registered students. All SCS staff members have a minimum of a master's degree in Counseling Psychology, are licensed by the State of New York to practice as a Mental Health Counselor, have extensive experience working with a college aged student population, and regularly participate in continuing education to stay up-to-date with the best practices within the counseling field.



Professional counselors work individually or with groups to help students understand themselves better, resolve problems, come to terms with difficult issues, and/or address important decisions. Professional counseling is different from talking to a friend or parent about what is going on in one's life and much more than "venting" about life stress or getting advice about how to deal with a problem. Counselors have been trained to facilitate change and promote developmental growth within an individual. While participating in counseling, an individual can expect:

- A safe, supportive, collaborative, and non-judgmental climate where they can openly express their thoughts and feelings with someone who is interested in listening to their concerns and who will take these concerns seriously.
- To identify their personal strengths and better utilize them to create a satisfying, meaningful and productive lifestyle.
- To gain a deepened awareness of their personal patterns of thinking and behaviors that factor into their feeling "stuck" or emotionally distressed.
- To learn, where appropriate, more effective coping skills.
- To identify and achieve goals that are important to them.

A NOTE ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY

SCS client information is strictly confidential within ethical and legal guidelines. Information can be released only with the written consent of the student, except in situations where a student poses a threat of serious harm to self or to others, in the case of abuse/neglect of a minor, or in the case of a court-ordered release of information. All records regarding a student's participation in counseling are protected by law and are kept separate from all other academic records related to attending Fredonia. Although parents are encouraged to call SCS to share important information about their child or to seek guidance about how to best support their child's needs, specific information about an individual's counseling participation cannot be shared without the student's written consent.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES

The SAVP program strives to create a campus culture in which members make informed and responsible decisions regarding their personal and community health. SAVP works to reduce the incidence, prevalence, and severity of substance abuse and interpersonal violence related problems among Fredonia students. This comprehensive program provides training, advocacy services, intervention, and educational opportunities in the following areas: alcohol and other drugs; rape and sexual assault; dating and domestic violence; stalking and harassment; and sexual health.

www.fredonia.edu/counseling

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

Under some circumstances, the symptoms and/or concerns a student brings to SCS are such that they warrant medical and/or psychiatric evaluation in addition to counseling. Psychiatric evaluation and medication monitoring services are available on site. In addition, consultation with primary care physicians or other outside health care providers is regularly conducted to provide the most effective care and coordination of treatment services. For more information about SCS, please visit www.fredonia.edu/counseling.

COUNSELING SERVICES CAN BENEFIT EVERYONE

The college years are a unique time in a student's life. As our society continues to evolve, college students are experiencing some of the most dramatic, exciting, and often distressing changes. This period is one of excitement and uncertainty, possibility and confusion, new freedoms and new fears.

The lessons learned and the obstacles overcome during these years can provide a wonderful opportunity for intellectual, social, and emotional growth. These years can be a time for exploration, a time for healing, and a time to establish healthy habits that will promote wellness.

Many individuals seek counseling only when life seems to be too difficult to manage, when negative consequences such as overwhelming stress, psychological problems or personal difficulties affect their performance as a student. Counseling services can, however, be a useful and rewarding experience for everyone who is navigating life, asking big questions, and exploring the endless options life has to offer, regardless of how much distress they may be experiencing.

