

Cornell University has developed a very helpful set of indicators of student distress that you may wish to use in evaluating behavior that you feel may qualify as disturbed or disturbing. Please note that the presence of any single indicator from the list does not necessarily indicate a high level of concern, but an apparent combination of several may provide you guidance in deciding whether to bring an individual to the attention of the CARE Team at 478-445-RISK (7475).

Indicators of Student Distress Excerpted from Cornell University's *Recognizing and Responding to Students in Distress — Faculty Handbook*

ACADEMIC INDICATORS

- Repeated absences from class, section, or lab
- Missed assignments, exams, or appointments
- Deterioration in quality or quantity of work
- Extreme disorganization or erratic performance
- Written or artistic expression of unusual violence, morbidity, social isolation, despair, or confusion; essays or papers that focus on suicide or death
- Continual seeking of special provisions (extensions on papers, make-up exams)
- Patterns of perfectionism: e.g., can't accept themselves if they don't get an A+
- Overblown or disproportionate response to grades or other evaluations

BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL INDICATORS

- Direct statements indicating distress, family problems, or loss
- Angry or hostile outbursts, yelling, or aggressive comments
- More withdrawn or more animated than usual
- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness; crying or tearfulness
- Expressions of severe anxiety or irritability
- Excessively demanding or dependent behavior
- Lack of response to outreach from course staff
- Shakiness, tremors, fidgeting, or pacing

PHYSICAL INDICATORS

- Deterioration in physical appearance or personal hygiene
- Excessive fatigue, exhaustion; falling asleep in class repeatedly
- Visible changes in weight; statements about change in appetite or sleep
- Noticeable cuts, bruises, or burns • Frequent or chronic illness
- Disorganized speech, rapid or slurred speech, confusion
- Unusual inability to make eye contact
- Coming to class bleary-eyed or smelling of alcohol

OTHER FACTORS

- Concern about a student by his/her peers or teaching assistant
- A hunch or gut-level reaction that something is wrong