

# THE COUNSELING CENTER

304 REIS HALL  
ALLEGHENY COLLEGE  
MEADVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

The Counseling Center is committed to helping all students gain the maximum benefit from their educational experiences and prepare for the future. A rich and rewarding experience at Allegheny College requires the ability to integrate academic learning with personal and social growth and development. Counseling is a personal and social learning experience--a way to learn more about yourself and others, a way to develop new life skills, and a way to gain insight, understanding and acceptance.

## WHAT DO COUNSELORS DO?

- Listen non-judgmentally
- Clarify options
- Provide support and understanding
- Offer suggestions
- Ask questions
- Help during a crisis
- Refer serious cases for other treatment

## WHAT DO STUDENTS DO?

- Describe their situation, including their thoughts, feelings and experiences
- Consider alternatives
- Clarify options
- Offer suggestions
- Try new ways of thinking and acting
- Choose whether or not to change
- Take responsibility for their treatment

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE FIRST VISIT?

You will be asked to take a few minutes to complete our confidential intake forms in a private waiting area, then you will meet with your counselor. Your counselor will discuss confidentiality and its limits and explain the counseling relationship. Then your counselor will help you to talk about the main concern that brought you to The Counseling Center. You and your counselor will determine whether you want or need to return for more sessions. The number of sessions is limited.

## WHO COMES FOR COUNSELING?

Many students visit The Counseling Center because they want to learn more about themselves in the new life situations they are encountering. Some students come because they want to improve their studies or are unsure about their major. Others come because they have difficult decisions to make, they are dealing with an unhappy turn of events in their lives, they have a general feeling that they could be getting more out of life, or they want to explore their relationship to the people and the world around them. Students also come for counseling because they feel something is bothering them but they do not know what it is and they do not know how to talk about it. It would be an unusual student who at some time did not experience challenges in adapting to new situations and changes taking place within he/himself.

New and returning students, men and women, ethnically/culturally diverse students, and students of differing sexual orientations, among others, use The Counseling Center.

### *Some of the concerns students often express are:*

- *I just can't seem to make the grades I want.*
- *I wish I had more confidence in myself.*
- *I feel tense a lot and I worry too much.*
- *I'm confused about what I am going to do after I graduate.*
- *I don't seem to be doing very well in my relationships with people.*
- *I'm not really sure why I'm in college.*
- *I'm experiencing difficulty with my family.*
- *I'm dealing with prejudice.*
- *I'm concerned about my weight and food.*
- *Someone close to me has died.*

## **HOW CAN COUNSELING HELP?**

The Counseling Center can help you cope with challenges regardless of whether you feel your concern is common and relatively simple to overcome or if you view your concern as uncommon and as one that leaves you feeling alone. Very often, you may be able to work out your concerns alone or with the help of a friend. Occasionally, however, because of the nature or magnitude of the concern, getting professional help with specific problem-solving may be desirable. When a solution to a problem is not clear, counseling can provide objective assistance by clarifying options, helping you to choose new ways to cope, and helping you to act on those choices.

**ISSUES WE CAN HELP WITH:** Addictions, adjusting to college, anger, anxiety (including panic and OCD), concern for a friend, depression, eating/food/body image, grief, family concerns, relationships, sexual assault, sexuality, stress, study skills, to name a few. Students with serious concerns may seek occasional or crisis help from the Counseling Center, but those visits must always be followed up with treatment by qualified mental health professionals off campus. We have referral information for mental health resources in the community and make referrals for serious concerns.

## **IS COUNSELING CONFIDENTIAL?**

Yes. We adhere to ethical and legal guidelines relevant to our professions. We provide a private setting and a confidential relationship in which students may discuss any concern. No information discussed in the counseling sessions is released from The Counseling Center without your written permission. In some cases if you would pose a clear and immediate danger to yourself or others, information could be released without your permission to ensure your safety and/or the safety of others. Consultation with other Counseling Center professionals occurs when necessary and appropriate. You will be seen by a person who sincerely cares about your personal development and who has the professional qualifications and experience to help. Your counselor will discuss confidentiality and its limits with you in the first session.

## **HOW DO YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE COUNSELING SERVICES?**

Many people know about our services, so just ask your R.A., your faculty advisor, one of your faculty members or a friend. Check Counseling Center publications for specific information each semester, look for our announcements posted on campus, or visit Allegheny's Homepage:

**<<http://www.allegheny.edu>>**

Read the *CAMPUS*, *INSIDE NEWS WEEKLY*, and listen to WARC for announcements of workshops and other activities.

## **HOW DO YOU ARRANGE TO SEE A COUNSELOR?**

***That's Easy!***

All you need to do is stop by  
**The Counseling Center in 304 Reis Hall**  
or call **332-4368**.

### **Make an appointment convenient to your schedule.**

If your concern is urgent, please contact us and we will arrange to see you as soon as possible. We maintain office hours weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Services are free of charge to all Allegheny College students. For emergency assistance after hours, contact the Allegheny College Office of Security at 332-3357.

Policy regarding e-mail: We discourage its use because of concerns about confidentiality and seek permission before using it.

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