

# Fostering a Campus Environment Supportive of Student Mental Health

Faculty Toolkit

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**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**  
**California State University, Maritime Academy**  
**200 Maritime Academy Dr.**  
**Vallejo, CA 94590**  
**707-654-1170**  
[www.csum.edu/caps](http://www.csum.edu/caps)

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## Acknowledgements

Cal Maritime CAPS would like to acknowledge and thank the University of Michigan's Counseling and Psychological Services for creating and generously sharing the Faculty Toolkit from which this current version was adapted.

The University of Michigan CAPS would like to acknowledge and thank the **Baldwin Foundation** for their generous support for this project. We are so thankful for your support of college student mental health and your commitment to a community of caring.

Without you, this Faculty Toolkit would not be possible.

*Quotes and illustrations are from the original U-M Faculty Toolkit.*

# Introduction

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at Cal Maritime recognizes that many of the conversations around student mental health take place outside of CAPS—between students and professors. As faculty and instructors, you have an essential role in supporting student mental health on campus. A brief conversation between a student and a faculty member that encourages the student to get help can make all the difference in the world; an instructor who knows the resources on campus and shares that knowledge with a student can be the “tipping point” for that student to get the help they need; and emphasizing CAPS information on course syllabi as well as other communications with students can normalize help-seeking and help students not feel alone. These are just a few ways to help—there are countless others.

## How Do I Use This Toolkit?

Thank you for what you do every day to support students and thank you for considering the resources and suggestions contained in this toolkit. The original version of this Faculty Toolkit was developed after conducting multiple focus groups and meetings (at the University of Michigan), in which there was an expressed desire to provide faculty and other instructors with additional resources, creative ideas, and best practices for supporting student mental health on campus. We hope this resource will serve as a valuable guide in the following ways:

1. Helping you create a classroom environment that is supportive of student mental health.
2. Providing you with tips on how to identify and help a student who may be struggling with their mental health.

The strategies included in this guide are based on research, as well as ideas, techniques, and tips that faculty and students have found to be effective in supporting student mental health and well-being. However, not all strategies will be the “right fit” for everyone. Think of this resource as you would a toolkit—it provides a variety of strategies and ideas from which to pick and choose. When considering the tools, you would like to try, consider your professional role, how you typically interact with students, and other factors that might influence what is most useful for you.

## What is Counseling & Psychological Services?



*"My professor opened the first day of class with a slide on CAPS resources and it made me feel that they were genuinely invested in the student's well-being."*

*"It is helpful when professors take time on the first day of class, when going over the syllabus, to make CAPS known as a resource to students in distress, as well as the professor themselves, so students feel comfortable seeking help when needed."*

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides free and confidential services for currently enrolled Cal Maritime students. We strive to provide the following services in an atmosphere that is welcoming, comfortable, and multi-culturally sensitive for all students:

- Brief, Solution-Focused Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Couples Counseling
- Drop-in Workshops
- Consultations
- Urgent/Crisis Services
- Case Management and Referrals
- Community Engagement & Outreach

### Where is CAPS located?

*Central CAPS Location*

Student Health Center

Entrance off of the Dining Center truck service road, next to the Student Center

*Embedded*

*CAPS location*

Upper

Residence

Hall



HC – Student Health Center; UR – Upper Residence Hall

### What are the hours of operation?

*Fall and Spring Semesters*

Monday – Friday 830am-5pm  
\* 5pm appointments available

*Summer Hours*

Monday – Friday 830am-5pm  
\* 5pm appointments available

*Phone:*

707-654-1170

*Website:*

[www.csum.edu/caps](http://www.csum.edu/caps)

*Urgent/Crisis Drop-In Services:*

Monday – Friday 2pm-3pm

Available for students who are in crisis or have an urgent need to be seen.

*After Hours:*

For assistance with urgent mental health concerns and to speak with a health care professional when CAPS is closed, call 707-654-1170 (Option 1).



Know Science  
**NO STIGMA**

**CAPS 707-654-1170**

## How Do I Promote Student Mental Health & Well-Being?



*"My professor made a point of identifying and contacting students who were struggling in their class to see if they could help."*

*"It is helpful when a stressful event happens on campus and the professor acknowledges it and opens up as a safe space for students to voice their concerns."*



Creating an academic environment supportive of student mental health may include open and regular conversations about mental health, reframing what success looks like, and being intentional about course design. Incorporating these practices into your teaching can help alleviate stress for students and be particularly helpful for students experiencing mental health concerns. The instructional practices used in the classroom will vary based on several factors, including, but not limited to, the material and subject matter taught and the size of the classroom (i.e., discussion section or large lecture).

- **Include information about student mental health resources in your syllabus.** Consider adding the following syllabus statement and discussing it on the first day of class. You may also consider including a personal message about your support for mental health and well-being:

***Student Mental Health and Wellbeing** Cal Maritime is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students, while acknowledging that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. **Counseling does not prevent licensure.** For help, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (707) 654-1170 and [www.csum.edu/caps](http://www.csum.edu/caps) during and after hours. You may also consult University Health Service (UHS) at (707) 654-1170 or [www.csum.edu/student-health-center](http://www.csum.edu/student-health-center).*

**According to student leaders and others, the following practices have been found helpful to further support student mental health and well-being:**

- **Acknowledge mental health openly throughout the semester to destigmatize it.** For example, making an announcement such as, “We are approaching midterms, which can be a stressful time. Please make sure you take care of yourself and know that we have an array of mental health services available on campus.”
- **Check in during stressful times,** such as midterms and finals, or during national, global, or campus events that may increase students' stress.
- **Design a flexible syllabus.** Examples include allowing a certain number of absences without an impact on participation grades, granting

extensions, or providing the opportunity to drop the lowest exam grade or make corrections. Allowing for mistakes and flexibility can keep students motivated even if they fall behind or miss class due to health or personal issues.

- **Acknowledge and celebrate multiple forms of learning.** Examples include incorporating smaller discussion groups or partner sharing, including a variety of content to accommodate visual and auditory learners, allowing participation points geared toward both introverted and extroverted students, and assigning coursework that incorporates a variety of different learning styles.
- **Create community guidelines** during the first class session, deciding as a class what an inclusive classroom means to them and establishing norms for respectful dialogue, especially around challenging subjects.
- **Prioritize accessibility for all students.** Examples include putting captions on videos shown in class, image descriptions on presentations, using sharp contrasting colors, utilizing the accessibility checker on the LMS, setting up the classroom in an accessible way, etc.
- **Close each class with something positive.** Examples include having students share something they learned or something they are interested in learning more about in the next class.



End Sexual  
ASSAULT &  
HARASSMENT

WEAVE 707-724-9606

## How Do I Build a More Inclusive Classroom Community?



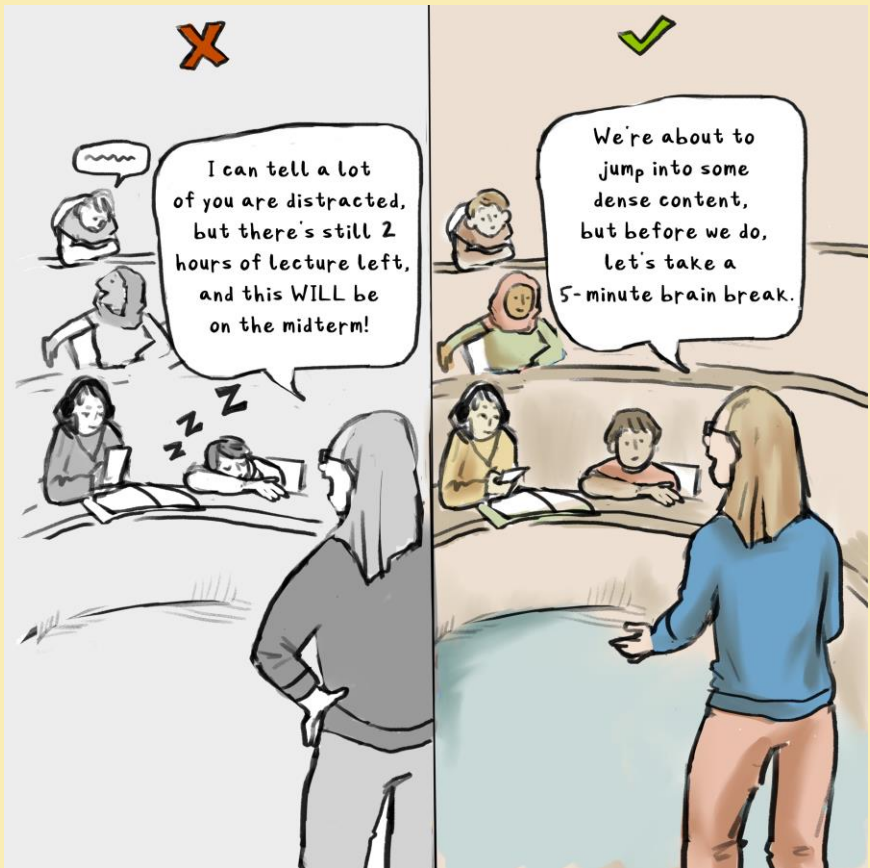
*"A few of my professors have made it clear that their office hours are open to anyone with any questions - whether class-related or not. Even though I never went for anything other than homework help, it was comforting to know that their door was open, and they care about their students."*

*"The professor for my first-year seminar made the classroom environment very safe and open for asking questions and having discussions. He was also very understanding of our other commitments and allowed extensions and flexible deadlines."*

Social support can have a direct impact on student health and well-being, with students with higher quality social support being less likely to experience mental health concerns (Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009). Social connectedness can also impact college student retention (Allen, Robbins, Casillas, & Oh, 2008), and has been shown to be positively correlated with achievement motivation (Walton, Cohen, Cwir, & Spencer, 2012). You can help your students' mental health and well-being, as well as their academic performance, by helping to foster connection, encourage inclusivity, and build community.

- **Send an email or survey to students before the first day of class** to get to know them. Ask about their backgrounds, interests, strengths, needs, etc., and adjust the classroom and course content accordingly.
- **Learn the names of students** and encourage them to get to know each other by using name tags and/or an icebreaker to begin class sessions.
- **Incorporate “Welcoming Rituals” at the start of class.** Examples include playing music, light check ins with students to ask how they are doing or asking students to share something (if they choose) that happened to them that week.
- **Encourage social connections.** Examples include hosting study sessions and planning outside events to encourage students to make connections with each other and the instructor.
- **Share personal anecdotes and personal connections** to course content, including areas where you've struggled, concepts you were surprised to learn, etc. to help students better relate to the course material and make real-world connections to the course material.
- **Promote small group work** throughout the semester and encourage students to share contact information (if they wish) on the first day to build a supportive network throughout the semester.
- **Reduce power dynamics.** Examples include sitting at the same level as your students, arranging desks or chairs in a circle (class size permitting), and/or encouraging students to lead class discussions.
- **Connect or refer students to Accessibility and Disability Services** as needed to ensure that you are meeting the needs of all students and providing support and accommodations: visit <https://www.csum.edu/disability-services/index.html> or call at (707) 654-1561.

## How Do I Incorporate Mindfulness & Stress Reduction?

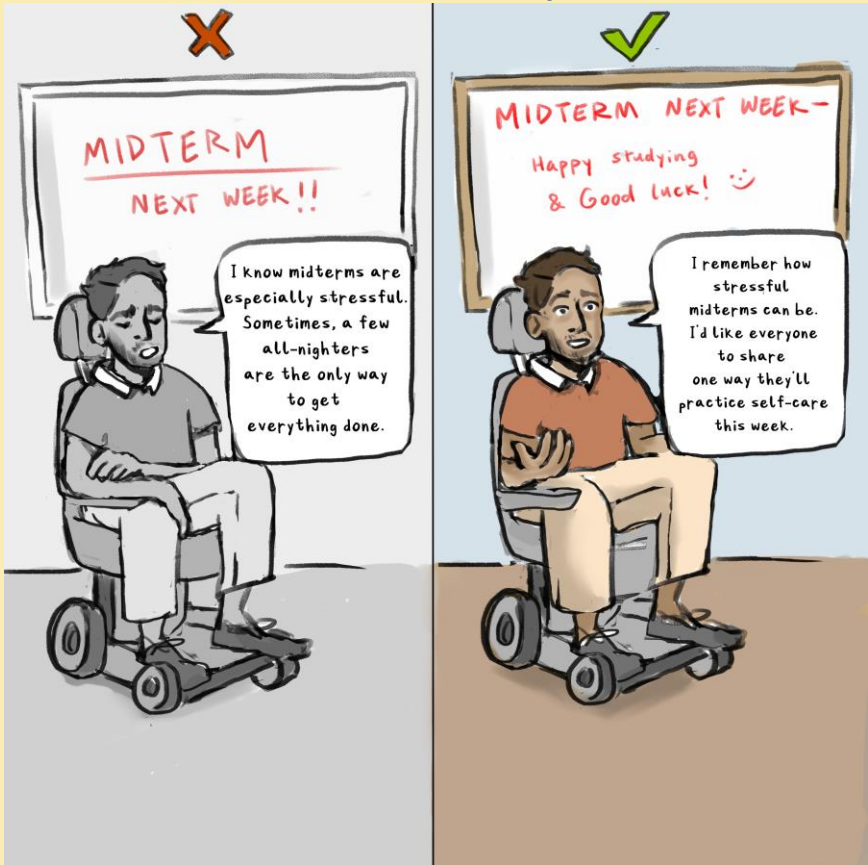


*"I had a professor who would allow us to upload funny, lighthearted videos to Brightspace and she would play one or two during our break halfway through class. This really eased the room during dense material and offered a time for students to collect themselves."*

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and attentive to one's inner thoughts and surroundings in an open, non-judgmental way (Kabat-Zinn, 2015). Mindfulness has been linked to many aspects of well-being, from improving memory and testing performance, reducing stress, and encouraging better physical health (Bonamo, Legerski, & Thomas, 2015; Kerrigan et al., 2017). Mindfulness practices have also been shown to assist in the adjustment and reduction of physiological stress levels in first-year college students (Ramler, Tennison, Lynch, & Murphy, 2016) and to be associated with greater psychological health and self-compassion among college students (Bergen-Cico, Possemato, & Cheon, 2013).

- **Take a “Brain Break”** during class sessions and encourage students to take a break from the class content, interact with classmates, stretch, engage in movement, or practice a breathing exercise. Having a consistent break time each class session helps students be aware there is a break coming and focus more intently during class.
- **Provide a “Mindful Minute”** at the beginning of class or before exams in which you allow students to optionally engage in deep breathing techniques or a short meditation.
- **Encourage quick periods of movement** for students to stretch, move around, or take a brief walk outside before resuming the material.
- **Incorporate mindfulness activities during highly stressful times**, such as before an exam or during midterms or final exams, for example with a CAPS mindfulness consultation, or by encouraging students to visit a quiet or peaceful space.
- **Give students advance notice** about which assignments may be more challenging or take longer to complete in order to reduce last-minute stress and help students plan ahead. Using a calendar or other time management tools can reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Consider granting an extension on an assignment** to the entire class if one or more students have asked for one. If one student is overwhelmed and asks for an extension, it is likely that others feel the same way but might not feel comfortable asking for one.
- **Encourage student self-care when discussing sensitive topics.** Let students know ahead of time if you will address areas that may be challenging or traumatic. Encourage students to take classroom breaks as needed to take care of themselves.

## How Do I Foster Resilience & Self-Compassion?



*“It is helpful when instructors find a balance of attention between the professionalism of goals (academic benchmarks) and personal progress and nourishment. Also being open and reflective of one’s own struggles as a person and academic.”*

Resilience is the ability to recover from stress, despite challenging life events that would otherwise overwhelm one's coping ability (Smith et al., 2008). More resilient students tend to have better mental health, wellness, and academic outcomes (Johnson, Taasobshirazi, Kestler, & Cordova, 2015). Self-Compassion is the practice of treating yourself as you would a friend, by accepting your personal shortcomings, but also holding oneself accountable to grow and learn from failure (Neff, 2003). Research suggests that individuals who practice self-compassion may be better able to consider failure as a learning opportunity (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005).

- **Talk about times you have failed**, and how you worked through those failures. Help your students see how they can use mistakes and failures as learning opportunities for growth and resilience.
- **Use exams and other assignments as teaching tools (formative assessment)**, rather than the “end” of learning. For example, instead of handing out grades to students, go over the exam or assignment and discuss areas of common struggle so students can learn from them.
- **Consider allowing students to correct mistakes** and/or re-do assignments or assessments to demonstrate continued learning and mastery of course content.
- **Model how you practice compassion for yourself and others**, for example sharing the strategies you use to show compassion towards yourself and colleagues (e.g., engaging with self-kindness as opposed to self-judgment).
- **Share common experiences with your students.** For example, if a student is struggling, share about a time when you had a similar experience and learned from it.
- **Be flexible**, taking into consideration students' lives outside of class and academics, including their families, children, jobs and internships, health, financial situation, other classes, etc.
- **Share ways that you practice self-care** in your daily life, and have students regularly share how they practice it as well. Encourage practices in the classroom for self-care, including allowing students to take care of their needs during class (e.g., drinking water, going to the restroom, taking regular breaks).



- **Remind students that they deserve to be here at Cal Maritime.**  
Students may be experiencing impostor syndrome and/or self-doubt due to pressure from classes and competitive academic programs. Hearing this from a faculty member or instructor can help students remember that they do belong and are able to succeed.



**CAMPUS**

**CAL  
MARITIME**

**CAPS 707-654-1170**

## How Do I Encourage a Growth Mindset?

X

The average midterm grade was much lower than expected. Review your incorrect answers and study harder for the exam.



✓

The average midterm grade was much lower than expected. Maybe I didn't cover some of the material clearly, so I eliminated the questions that most of you answered incorrectly.



*"In lecture, the professor acknowledged that they made a mistake in the previous lecture and asked us to notify them of any future mistakes."*

*"One of my instructors encouraged students to talk to her with concerns, granted extensions, and verbally acknowledged stressful times in the semester."*

A “growth mindset” is the belief that talent and intellectual ability can be developed through working hard, trying new strategies, and receiving input from others—rather than being inherent or fixed characteristics (Dweck, 2016). Individuals with a growth mindset tend to achieve more than those with a “fixed mindset,” as they typically put more energy into learning (Dweck, 2016). Having a growth mindset has been shown to be positively correlated with student achievement scores (Bostwick, Collie, Martin, & Durksen, 2017) and their ability to bounce back after academic setbacks (Aditomo, 2015).

- **Normalize failure** by letting your students see that you make mistakes too, and modeling how they can use those mistakes to learn and grow.
- **Provide space for students to struggle with concepts as a class** and encourage them to work collaboratively through the process.
- **Focus more on learning and mastery of material, as opposed to competition and performance.** Examples include: explaining what the grading curve means; being mindful that students’ perceptions of the curve can increase a sense of competition; explaining to students why we are doing what we are doing; consider allowing students to retake exams or parts of exams to learn from mistakes; having students take exams both individually and in groups; and giving students choices in how they demonstrate knowledge/mastery of content.
- **Consider building in multiple ways for students to demonstrate that they have learned the course content.** Examples include assigning a variety of assignment types—exams, papers, presentations, videos, etc.; allowing students to choose how they demonstrate their learning within individual assignments (e.g., multimedia/video, writing a paper, giving a presentation); allowing students to choose whether they work on assignments individually, in groups, or with partners.

## How Do I Identify a Student in Distress?



*"I had both professors and counselors check in on me and how I was adjusting to workloads after expressing my academic distress. My professors and counselors validated how our program is challenging."*

How you go about helping a student will depend on several factors:

- their level of distress,
- the nature of your relationship,
- the type of setting you are in, and
- your comfort level.

The following includes the continuum of distress, warning signs, and suggestions on how to help. **For after hours health care support call (707) 654-1170, option 1.**

**Mild Distress:** Students may exhibit behaviors that do not disrupt others but may indicate something is wrong and that assistance is needed. Behaviors may include:

- Serious grade problems or a change from consistently passing grades to unaccountable poor performance.
- Excessive absences, especially if the student has previously demonstrated consistent attendance.
- Unusual or markedly changed patterns of interaction (e.g., avoidance of participation, excessive anxiety when called upon, domination of discussions, etc.)
- Other characteristics that suggest the student is having trouble managing stress successfully (e.g., a depressed, lethargic mood; very rapid speech; swollen, red eyes; marked change in personal dress and hygiene; falling asleep during class).

**Moderate Distress:** Students may exhibit behaviors that indicate increased emotional distress. They may be reluctant or unable to acknowledge a need for personal help. Behaviors may include:

- Repeated requests for special consideration, such as deadline extensions, especially if the student appears uncomfortable or highly emotional while disclosing the circumstances prompting the request.
- New or repeated behavior which pushes the limits of decorum, and which interferes with effective management of the immediate environment.
- Unusual or exaggerated emotional response that is inappropriate to the situation.

**How to help students experiencing mild/moderate distress:**

- Address the behavior/problem directly according to classroom protocol.
- Allow the student to speak freely about their current situation and the variables that may be affecting their distress.

- Consult with a colleague, department head, professional from the Division of Cadet Leadership and Development, or a campus counseling professional.
- Refer the student to one of the university resources.

### **Guidelines for talking with a student with any level of distress:**

- Accept and respect what is said.
- Try to focus on an aspect of the problem that is manageable.
- Avoid easy answers such as "Everything will be alright."
- Help identify resources needed to improve things.
- Help the student recall constructive methods used in the past to cope; get the person to agree to do something constructive to change things.
- Trust your insight and reactions.
- Let others know your concerns.
- Attempt to address the student's needs and seek appropriate resources.
- Do not promise secrecy or offer confidentiality.
- Encourage the student to seek help.
- Respect the student's value system, even if you don't agree.

### **Severe Distress**

Students may exhibit behaviors that signify an obvious crisis and that necessitate emergency care. Examples include:

- Highly disruptive behavior (e.g., hostility, aggression, violence, etc.).
- Inability to communicate clearly (garbled, slurred speech; unconnected, disjointed, or rambling thoughts).
- Loss of contact with reality (seeing or hearing things which others cannot see or hear; beliefs or actions greatly at odds with reality or probability).
- Stalking behaviors.
- Inappropriate communications (including threatening letters, e-mail messages, harassment).
- Overtly suicidal thoughts (including referring to suicide as a current option or in a written assignment).
- Threatens to harm others.

### **How to help students in severe distress:**

- Remain calm and know whom to call for help, if necessary. Find someone to stay with the student while calls to the appropriate resources are made. **See referral information in next section.**

- Remember that it is NOT your responsibility to provide the professional help needed for a severely troubled/disruptive student. You need only to make the necessary call and request assistance.
- When a student expresses a direct threat to themselves or others, or acts in a bizarre, highly irrational, or disruptive way, call 911 or the Cal Maritime Police Department (non-emergency): 707-654-1176.

**If you are worried about a student's safety:**

- When called for, let the person know you are worried about their safety and describe the behavior or situation that is worrisome to you.
- If you are concerned the student may be feeling hopeless and thinking about ending their life, ask if they are contemplating suicide. It is important to remember that talking about suicide should be taken seriously and not ignored.
- Offer yourself as a caring person until professional assistance has been obtained.
- After the student leaves your office, make some notes documenting your interactions.
- Consult with others on your experience while being mindful of sharing identifying and sensitive information related to student privacy.

**Warning signs for when to refer a student for further assistance:**

- Manifests a change in personality (goes from being actively involved to quiet and withdrawn or goes from being quiet to more agitated or demanding).
- Begins to display aggressive or abusive behavior to self or others; exhibits excessive risk-taking.
- Shows signs of memory loss.
- Shows loose or incoherent thought patterns, has difficulty focusing thoughts, or displays nonsensical conversation patterns.
- Exhibits behaviors or emotions that are inappropriate to the situation.
- Displays extreme suspiciousness or irrational fears of persecution; withdraws, does not allow others to be close; believes they are being watched, followed, etc.
- Exhibits signs of hyperactivity (unable to sit still, difficulty maintaining focus, gives the impression of going "too fast," appears agitated).
- Shows signs of depression (no visible emotions or feelings, appears lethargic, weight loss, looks exhausted and complains of sleeping poorly, displays feelings of worthlessness or self-hatred, or is apathetic about previous interests).
- Talks about unusual patterns of eating, not eating, or excessively eating.

- Shows signs of injury to self, cuts, bruises, or sprains.
- Experiences deteriorating academic performance (extended absences from class, incapacitating test anxiety, sporadic class attendance).
- Begins or increases alcohol or other drug use.
- Makes statements regarding suicide, homicide, feelings of hopelessness, or helplessness.

For more information on understanding and supporting students in distress, see the [CAPS Faculty Guide to Assisting Emotionally Distress Students](#) and the [Cal Maritime Red Folder](#).



**STOP THE STIGMA**

#MENTALHEALTHAWARENESS

**CAPS 707-654-1170**



## How Do I Make a Referral or Schedule a Consultation with CAPS?



*"My advisor recommended I schedule an appointment with CAPS during a pretty tough time in my life. I probably would not have gone without him. Because he told me to go face-to-face and I had a strong relationship and lots of respect for him, I took his advice."*

*"When I was in a bad place mentally, my professor set up a system where I had to go say hi to her before class every day. Our class met daily, so this helped me stay accountable to my own health until I could get professional help. It made me feel like someone cared about me and would notice if I didn't show up."*

## **Are You Concerned about a Student?**

Often, you will be one of the first to find out that a student is having personal problems that are interfering with their academic success or daily life. The student may come to you for academic advising, visit during office hours, send you an email, and/or share personal concerns with you.

In these situations, CAPS is available for assistance in several ways. If you would like to consult with one of our professional staff to help you figure out what steps might be taken to help the student, please call 707-654-1170 and ask to speak to a CAPS counselor.

## **How Do You Refer a Student to CAPS?**

While many students seek help on their own, your exposure to students increases the likelihood you will identify signs or behaviors of distress in a student, or that a student will ask you for help. If this occurs, you can make a referral to CAPS or other resources using the following tips:

- Actively listen and validate your student's experiences.
- In addition to CAPS, know about other campus resources and encourage your student to seek them out (e.g., Dean of Students, Office of the Commandant, the Accessibility and Disability Services Office).
- Encourage a recommendation to CAPS if they are experiencing mental health distress and reassure them that it is an act of strength to seek help.
- Remind them that campus counseling resources are free and confidential.
- Mental health stigma can be a factor and your student may be ambivalent about seeking help. Exploring the CAPS website together can be helpful, especially the [“Meet the Staff” page](#).
- Sometimes students need extra support in making the next step. Ask your student if it would be helpful to walk with them to The Student Health Center to make an appointment or for the CAPS daily drop-in hour from 2-3pm.

## **What to Expect After Your Student Arrives at CAPS**

Whether you accompany a student to CAPS or they visit on their own, a front desk receptionist will greet them. Students will be asked to fill out brief paperwork and will be scheduled for the first available appointment. If the student is in crisis and needs to see someone on the same day, encourage them to ask about the daily drop-in hour or same day appointments.

### **What Happens at an Initial Appointment?**

The CAPS counselor will learn more about what is troubling the student and will work together to determine the best next steps (e.g., brief, solution-focused individual or group therapy at CAPS or a referral to a resource on campus or in the community).

It is important for members of the campus community to understand that the meetings conducted with students at CAPS are confidential. Information or content of those sessions cannot be released or discussed without the student's written permission. CAPS staff adheres very strictly to ethical and legal parameters of confidentiality. ***Read more about student confidentiality in the next section.***

### **How Do You Follow Up with a Student?**

Depending on your role and the nature of your relationship with your student, it can be helpful to check in with them after making a referral to CAPS.

- Check in with your student to find out how they are doing through a follow up email, or by speaking with them after class.
- Be supportive and compassionate while remembering to maintain healthy boundaries with your student.
- If your student decided not to pursue help at this time, remind them that there are resources available to them in the future and encourage them to seek them out.
- Depending on your role, you may want to consider flexible arrangements that may be supportive to your student (e.g., extensions on assignments or exams).



\* See USDHS USCG [Form CG-719K](#), [Medical and Physical Evaluation Guidelines for Merchant Mariner Credentials, NVIC 04-08](#), and [Merchant Mariner Medical Manual \(ch. 23\)](#)

# What Do I Need to Know About Confidentiality?



*"One of my professors checked in with me repeatedly while I was in the process of getting help, listened, and asked how she could support me."*



**COUNSELING**  
IS **CONFIDENTIAL**

**CAPS 707-654-1170**

As someone who cares about students and their well-being, it is completely understandable that you may want to know specifics regarding the services that a student might be participating in at CAPS. However, as licensed mental health-care providers, CAPS counselors are legally and ethically required to uphold standards of confidentiality and privacy laws as defined by client-therapist privilege.

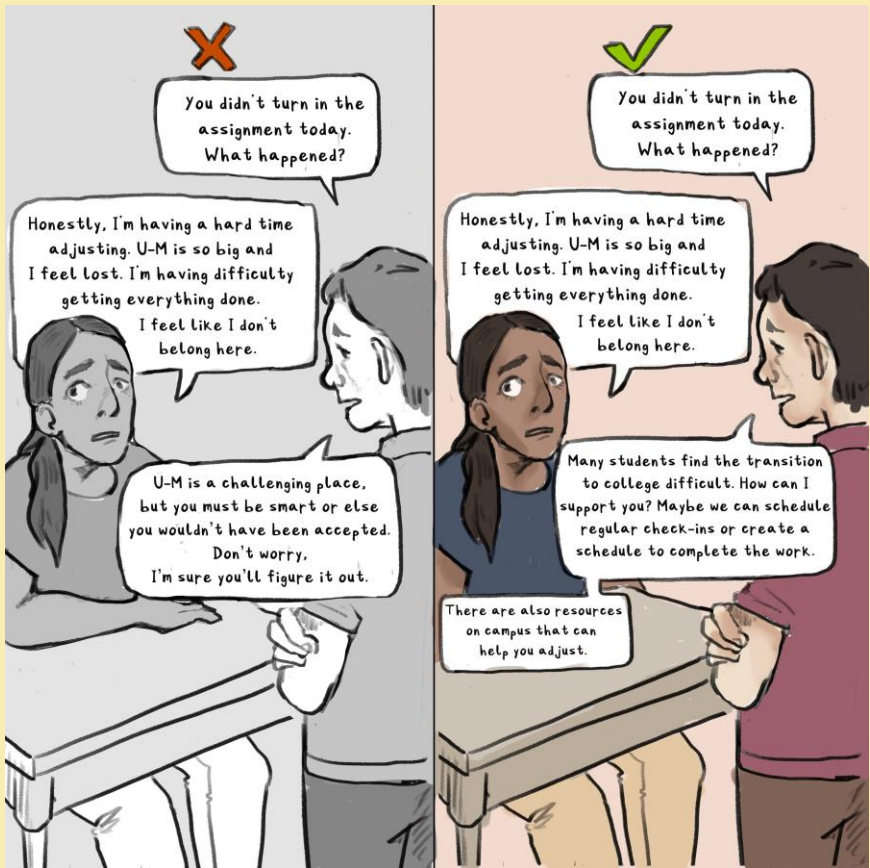
Treating information confidentially means that CAPS cannot release any protected and privileged information to professors, advisers, parents, or concerned friends without the student's consent. Confidentiality also prohibits CAPS staff from confirming that a student has made an appointment or attended sessions at CAPS without the student's explicit permission.

Our staff recognizes that this may be difficult for those concerned about a student; however, our duty is first and foremost to our student clients, and we at CAPS must maintain confidentiality consistent with our professional guidelines and mental health laws. The practices and operations regarding confidentiality utilized by the CAPS staff are informed and guided by law (California laws and regulations), by our ethical standards within psychology and social work, and our professional standards (via our accrediting bodies).

Without confidentiality the therapeutic process has little chance of being effective. There are narrow exceptions to when confidentiality must be "broken" including when we consider the student-client to be a threat to self or others; in order to protect children or minors from current potential abuse; or if court ordered by a judge in a current proceeding.

- **Check in with the student.** If you have concerns about a student's health, well-being, and/or participation in therapy, one of the ways to communicate your concern is to follow up with them. Most students consider this helpful, supportive, and caring. A simple "check in" (e.g., how is it going, did you ever have a chance to connect with someone at CAPS?") can be very supportive.
- **Be aware of other campus resources,** such as connecting with the Dean of Students to express your concerns about a student with them.
- For information on the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** and how it applies to you, please consult with your department or go to: <https://www.csum.edu/registrar/ferpa/access-to-records.html>.

## What Else Should I Consider?



*“One of my professors understands that people might have unseen disabilities, cancels class during difficult weather conditions, still teaches a challenging course, but maintains mindfulness of student issues, and displays knowledge that students have individual problems.”*

Understanding a student's background (e.g., culture, family, academic track, multiple social identities) and developmental stage in their academic career can help bolster awareness of what students may be experiencing in the classroom, increase empathy, and help build community. Students' comfort level in terms of disclosing may vary, which may impact their access to resources. As some students may be more or less comfortable sharing, let them know that you are supportive of them getting the help they need. While each student is unique, below are some examples of what students may be experiencing.

- **First-Year Student:** New geographic location, roommate relationships, transition to college, navigating independence, living on their own for the first time.
- **High-Unit/Workload Student:** Additional responsibilities, financial considerations, impostor syndrome, licensing exam stress.
- **Non-Traditional Student:** Readjustment to academic setting, finances, worry about succeeding, developing a Cal Maritime community.
- **Transfer Student:** Adjusting to rigor of Cal Maritime, transition to a new setting, building community, feelings of belonging.
- **Student Veteran/Military-Connected:** Adjustment to civilian life, experiences of trauma, stigma around help-seeking.
- **First-Generation Student:** Culture shock, possible lack of support or understanding from family, pressure to succeed.
- **International Student:** Cost of tuition, uncertainty around jobs and visa situation, culture shock, language barriers, homesickness, or inability to return home for the holidays.
- **Low- or Under-Resourced Student:** Lack of fallback option or safety net, financial considerations, guilt associated with attending school, travel costs during breaks/holidays.
- **Students of Color; Female and Non-Binary Students:** Lack of representation and diversity on campus. Feeling like the "only one" in the classroom which may increase pressure to represent an entire group and be the group's spokesperson. Impact of micro-aggressions and macro-aggressions.
- **Students with Diverse Religious/Spiritual Beliefs:** Navigating the academic calendar with religious holidays, lack of representation, micro-aggressions, macro-aggressions, not knowing if there are safe spaces to practice/express beliefs.
- **Gender Non-Conforming, Non-Binary, Transgender Students:** Navigating use of pronouns and names, self-expression, establishing community and support, micro-aggressions, and macro-aggressions.
- **Students with Diverse Sexual Orientations:** Development of identity while navigating academic and life demands, self-expression,

establishing community and support, micro-aggressions and macro-aggressions.

- **Undocumented Students:** Stress over immigration status and impact of political events and decisions.
- **Students with Visible and Invisible Disabilities:** Navigating campus and classroom environments that may not accommodate neurodiversity (e.g., ADHD, autism spectrum, learning disabilities, etc.); sensory, psychological/emotional challenges; physical disabilities; chronic health conditions.

**Cultural differences** around mental health and help-seeking behaviors may impact your interactions with students experiencing a mental health issue. Some students may not feel comfortable discussing mental health due to stigma, language, family messages or cultural barriers, or other factors, whereas other students may feel very comfortable doing so.

**Classroom size** will also impact the ways in which faculty and other instructors are able to address student mental health concerns, as it is likely easier to build community and get to know students in small discussion sections or classes as compared to larger lectures. Additionally, it is important to remember that each unit/Department on campus is different, and will have a different culture, expectations of success, resources, etc.

Additionally, your **professional role** impacts your interactions with students and your ability to address their concerns. Reflecting on your own experiences and how your background and multiple social identities affect interactions with students can be helpful. Acknowledge your role in student interactions and reflect on how it may impact your relationship with the student and your ability to help.

For more information on understanding and supporting students in distress, see the [CAPS Faculty Guide to Assisting Emotionally Distress Students](#) and the [Cal Maritime Red Folder](#).





## Additional Cal Maritime & Community Resources

For additional campus resources, please visit Academic Support services at <https://www.csum.edu/academics/academic-support.html> and Campus Life services at <https://www.csum.edu/campus-life/index.html>

If you have questions or are unsure about a student, please call one of the resources listed below. Each of these agencies serves as a consultant and provide resources to faculty and staff:

***In case of emergency or if you feel unsafe, please call 911.***

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

707-654-1170

[www.csum.edu/caps](http://www.csum.edu/caps)

**CAPS After Hours** support is available when CAPS is closed.

Call 707-654-1170 (Press 1) to speak with a health care professional

### **Dean of Cadets Office**

707-654-1470

<https://www.csum.edu/cadet-leadership-and-development/dean-of-cadets/index.html>

### **Office of the Commandant**

707-654-1180

<https://www.csum.edu/office-of-the-commandant/index.html>

### **Student Health Services**

707-654-1170

<https://www.csum.edu/student-health-center/>

### **Confidential Campus Advocate**

707-724-9606; 916-920-2952 (24 support and information)

<https://www.csum.edu/title-ix/get-title-ix-help-now.html>

### **Cal Maritime Police department**

707-654-1176 (non-emergency) or 911

<https://www.csum.edu/police-department/index.html>

### **Faculty Development**

734-764-0505

facultydevelopment@csum.edu

<https://www.csum.edu/faculty-development/>

## **Accessibility and Disability Services**

707-654-1561

<https://www.csum.edu/disability-services/index.html>

## **Career Services**

707-654-1071

<https://www.csum.edu/career-center/index.html>

## **Cal Maritime Community Referrals (information for local mental health services):**

<https://www.csum.edu/student-health-center/services/counseling-services/self-help/referral-information.html>

## **Mental Health Topics, Resources, and Mobile Applications**

<https://www.csum.edu/student-health-center/services/counseling-services/self-help/mental-health-topics-and-resources.html>

## **Basic Needs Resources**

- **Cadet Emergency Grants**  
<https://www.csum.edu/campus-life/basic-needs/cadet-emergency-grant.html>
- **Food Insecurity**  
<https://www.csum.edu/campus-life/basic-needs/index.html>

## **Faculty Mental Health**

As faculty you may also experience your own challenges with mental health and well-being. Taking care of yourself and receiving the assistance you need is an essential component of being able to be there for your students. Please visit <https://www.csum.edu/hr/eap.html> for more information on what mental health services are available for you.

For more information on faculty self-care see lists of resources from [Stanford's Cardinal At Work](#) and [CTA's You, Yourself, and Self-Care](#), as well as [WestEd's Strategies During the Coronavirus Crisis](#). For information on faculty rights see the [California Faculty Association Web site](#) and the [AAUP Guidebooks](#). For CSU faculty resources see [CSU Resources and Programs for Faculty](#).

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