



## MEMORANDUM

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### Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)

**To:** Faculty Members  
**From:** Laeeque Daneshmend, Deputy Provost  
Ann Tierney, Vice-Provost and Dean of Student Affairs  
Mike Condra, Director, Health, Counselling and Disability Services  
**Date:** September 9, 2014  
**Subject:** **Principal's Commission on Mental Health - Classroom Slides**

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Health and wellness is essential to our students' academic and personal success. The university remains committed to strengthening the supportive aspects of our living and learning environments.

Recommendation 3.3 of the Principal's Commission on Mental Health, focusing on "encouraging help-seeking and helping behavior", suggests that "referral information" slides be distributed to instructors and Teaching Assistants (TAs), "which could be shown before classes on a regular basis. These slides would list the resources available and remind students, faculty members and TAs that help is there when it is needed." ([PCMH Report, 2012](#), p. 39-40.)

The attached slides have been developed by HCDS staff and are designed to promote awareness of healthy behaviors and provide information about on-campus resources. These slides are posted on the [faculty and staff resource page](#) of the Division of Student Affairs website. Questions you may receive as a result, and suggested responses to them, follow on the next page of this memo.

We encourage you to rotate these slides regularly on the front-of-room screen at the beginning of each class throughout the academic year. This will provide students with an opportunity to read the slides as they wait for class to begin. Speaking notes are included on the "notes" section of each slide, as well as the months when you may wish to promote each slide.

Please share these slides and Qs and As with the TAs and Teaching Fellows for whom you are the employment supervisor so that they are able to use them in the same way.

If you have any questions about the slides, or if you are ever concerned about a student, please contact Counselling Services at ext. 78264 and ask to speak to a counsellor. In addition, we currently have outreach counsellors in the Faculties of Education, Engineering and Applied Science, as well as the School of Graduate Studies and Queen's School of Business. Faculty members and TAs in those faculties/schools are welcome to contact the outreach counsellor directly for advice. You may also refer to the "[green folder](#)" resource that was developed to help identify and respond to students in distress.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your ongoing support of students.

**Qs and As for Faculty members, TAs and TFs re mental health classroom slides  
September 2014**

**1. What do I do if a student comes to me in distress or I notice something “off” about a student?**

As noted on the ‘classroom health and wellness slides’ (and in the [green folder](#)), we would suggest the following:

**Approach:** It is ok to ask questions and to express concern. Focus on what you have observed and express concern and caring. ("I've noticed you have been absent from class lately and I'm concerned about you.")

**Listen:** Listen non-judgmentally, give the student your full attention, be patient. ("What can I do to help you?")

**Support:** Acknowledge their thoughts and feelings with compassion, offer hope and reassure them you are concerned and want to help. ("It sounds like you are feeling out of place", "I'm glad you've talked to me about this", "I want to help".)

**Refer:** Provide student with resources (see [green folder](#)), and offer to make the call with the student. ("If you'd like, I can call and book the appointment for you while you are here with me.")

These four steps may seem trivial, but by showing the student your interest and concern you will already be of enormous help to them.

**2. How do I make an effective referral?**

If you are considering approaching a student or are worried about a student and want advice, **call** an HCDS counsellor at Ext.78264 for a recommendation or contact your faculty-based counsellor if there is one in your area (FEAS, QSB, Education, SGS).

When you are with the student:

- Point out that help is available;
- Let them know that seeking help is a sign of strength and courage, not weakness;
- Review resources listed on the green folder, give student numbers and locations, and offer to sit with them while they make a call;
- Tell them that you will follow up with them.

**3. What if the student says 'no' to a referral?**

- Respect the decision (unless you deem it is an emergency. See green folder for examples of when to call the university's 24 hour Emergency Line at Ext. 36111 or 911);
- If it is not an emergency, but you are concerned about the student or have questions about what to do next, call Counselling Services at Ext. 78264;
- Don't force the issue or trick them into going;
- Try to leave the door open for later reconsideration. ("I hope you will keep these options in mind. My door is always open.")

**If you have any questions, please contact Counselling Services at Ext. 78264**