REACTIVE TO PROACTIVE: WORKING WITH STUDENTS IN CRISIS

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Overview of Presentation

- Introductions and welcome
- What do we mean by crisis?
- Student behaviors
- Why respond?
- FERPA – What can I share? And with who?
- Case studies
- Things to remember
What Does Crisis on a College Campus Look Like?

What Does a Student in Crisis Look Like?
**Individual Crisis**

- Change
  - Death
  - Divorce
  - Relationships
  - Academic Failure/Problem
  - Financial
- Health
  - Physical
  - Emotional
- Victims of Violence

**Community Crisis**

- Death
- Natural Disaster
- Major Facilities Issue
- Fire
- Campus Riots
- School Shootings/Large Scale Violence
- Acts of Vandalism/Bias Related
- Health Outbreak
- Incidents that Draw Media Attention
Crisis Defined

“An event/situation, which is often sudden or unexpected, that disrupts the normal operations of the institution or its education mission and threatens the well-being or its personnel, property, financial resource and/or reputation of the institution.” (Harper, Paterson, and Zdziarski, 2006)

Question – How Often is it Truly Unexpected?
Student May…

- Be odd
- Be creepy
- Have a psychological condition
- Have a disability (disclosed/not disclosed)
- Have different opinion than you
- Have a criminal history
- Be entitled or self-centered
- Have differently cultural expectations
Students may not...

• Significantly disrupt the educational environment
• Engage in (or threaten) violence
• Steal, cheat, or harass
• Fail to comply with directions of college official
• Violate the standards of the college/university
Small Group Discussions

Can you identify any student situations or student behaviors that you have found concerning?
Student Behavior

- Threatening/Concerning
- Disruptive
- Annoying/Causing Discomfort

Bennet & Vasquez-Barrios (2013) Association for Student Conduct Administration
Behaviors That May Cause Discomfort or Annoyance

- Staring
- Not picking up on social cues
- Interrupting
- Talking loudly
- Asking a lot of questions
- Talking about things that don’t relate to class/topic
- Not respecting personal space
- Need to speak to supervisors
- Disrespectful/rude behavior
- Monopolizing your time
- Threatening to sue
- Not engaging in class
- Answering the phone in class
- Incessant emails/over communication
- Not listening
- Crying
Disruptive Behaviors and Indicators

- Disruptions of the Educational/Campus Process
  - Yelling or being excessively loud
  - Distracting other students
  - Excessive hygiene concerns
  - Under the influence of substances
  - Refusing to leave or cooperate
  - Destrucutions of property
  - Not complying with instructors
  - The escalation of low-level behaviors
Threatening and Concerning Behavior

- Acts of physical aggression
- Threats of violence
- Articulation of depression, hopelessness, or self harm
- Mention of weapons or violence as a way to solve problems
- Expressions of anger/agitation/inability to cope with stress
- Reports of abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault
Group Discussion

• What is your responsibility when these behaviors surface with students you work with/teach?

• Do you feel prepared/trained to address the behaviors listed via the pyramid?
  • Do you know your university’s protocol for:
    • Addressing behavior?
    • Reporting Behavior?
Common Reactions to Negative Student Behavior

• Ignore them, pretend it isn’t happening
• Hand it off to someone else
• Remove the student from the situation
• Do nothing so we don’t upset the student
• FERPA prevents me from sharing so I won’t (or I’ll share coded information)

Instead we encourage you to:
• Give yourself permission to feel uncomfortable
• Manage/address what you can
• Gather information, document, report, and get assistance for the rest
• You too can be impacted, seek support!
FERPA Is Not A Roadblock!

- FERPA is a law that governs student records. You should never feel concerned about sharing information about a possible threat or concern with other campus officials that have a legitimate educational interest in the information.

Information might include:

- Student demographic information
- Student coursework (essays, papers, projects, tests, etc.)
- Emails and other written communications from the student
- Facebook, Twitter, Youtub, etc.
- Written information from other staff members, faculty, or students regarding the situation.
Reasons to Act

• Get behavior to stop
• Serve as an educator to assist students in personal growth
• Uphold university standards to others can learn in a safe and comfortable environment
• Role model life skills for student
• Prevent escalation or additional behaviors.
How are Campuses Responding?

- Behavioral Intervention Teams
- Case Management
- Threat Assessment Teams
- Revised Code of Conducts
- Crisis response folders/training materials
- Training for faculty, staff, and students
  - Bias related
  - Gender violence
  - Clery reporting
  - Community of Care Campaign
Case Studies

- Case Study 1 – Dominic
- Case Study 2 – Tressa

- What behaviors were present?
- How would you have followed up?
- What information would you have collected?
- Who would you have consulted with/reported to?
Things to Remember

- Know the behaviors/early warning signs
- Asking the students for clarifying information (Be direct)
- What are the resources?
- Communicate with all campus partners (in the right order)
- Share **ALL** relevant information
  - Name
  - Contact information
  - Description of behaviors
    - Share emails, papers, etc.
- Share information in a timely manner
  - Campus response functions better during business hours
  - Don’t sit on information
- Do appropriate follow-up with student(s)
Who should I notify First?

- It depends on the situation!
- If your instinct says immediate threat (within hours), please call emergency services first.
  - Police/911
  - Fire
  - EMT
- If you think it can wait, contact other campus resources:
  - Your supervisor
  - Dean of Students Office
  - Campus Counseling Center
  - Residence Hall Staff
  - Ombuds Office
THANK YOU!

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Other Resources