University Counseling Services

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University Counseling Services at Oklahoma State University strives to meet mental health needs of students.

**Mission:**

Oklahoma State University’s University Counseling Services makes every effort to ensure that every students’ environment is beneficial to the intellectual, emotional and physical development. The University Counseling Services also supports the OSU mission with its attempts to “assist students in improving the quality of life so that personal and intellectual growth can be fostered, values can be clarified, and knowledge can be interrelated,” according to the Web site.

**History:**

Jason White, Ph.D., a coordinator and counselor for the University Counseling Services is unaware of the history of the program on OSU’s campus.

**Services Offered:**

Many services are offered through the University Counseling Services for students. This division of the University Counseling Services is known as the Student Counseling Services. The most common services used are individual counseling. Couple and group counseling are also available. Other services offered include a biofeedback stress management program, self-esteem and body image counseling.

A student can use the Student Counseling Services up to 12 times per fiscal year, and sessions are extremely affordable for currently enrolled students. Intake sessions 1-4 are provided at no cost, and sessions 5-12 are $10 per session. According to White, most students can get an appointment within a couple of days.

Student Counseling Services sees somewhere between 900 and 1,000 students a year. Walk-in hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 to 5 p.m. A counselor that is on-call will take the walk-in appointments during the business hours. Crisis intervention is also available 24/7 in cases of emergency and can be accessed after business hours through OSU police, White said.

**Programs Available:**

The University Counseling Services offers many programs in order to maximize a student’s development. These programs include Academic and Career Development, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Student Conduct Education and Administration, Student Disability Services, Outreach Programming, Academic911, faculty and staff resources, and University Counseling Services strategic plans, according to the Web site.

The Academic and Career Development program offers career guidance systems that allow students to better explore the careers and majors that are offered at OSU. The program can also help students find scholarships and develop excellent study habits, according to the Web site.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Center holds events throughout the year, which include Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, Narcotics Anonymous meetings, substance abuse counseling groups and a recovery house, according to the Web site.

The Student Conduct Education and Administration oversees the Student Code of Conduct in order to ensure responsible development among students at OSU. It also ensures fairness and determines punishment in the discipline process, according to the Web site.

Student Disability Services makes certain that every student at OSU has equal opportunity for participation. They assist students with disabilities with things such as specialized testing, classroom accommodations, and any other special assistance needed as requested. Student Disability Services also keeps disabled students on campus aware of events such as wheelchair basketball and opportunities such as scholarship applications, according to the Web site.

Outreach Programming allows the counseling staff to hold presentations by request. The presentations can be shown from residence halls, sororities, classes and others as requested. The length of the presentation depends on the topic, according to the Web site.

Academic911 is an interactive Web site that can help students academically. It has common questions that deal with common academic struggles and suggestions on how to fix and avoid troublesome situations.

Faculty and Staff Resources is a handbook for those hired by OSU. It helps an OSU faculty, staff or teaching assistant recognize a student in distress by giving signs and symptoms, guidelines for interaction, and instructions for referring students to the Student Counseling Center. The handbook also gives guidelines on what the Student Counseling Center can and cannot do for a student and the privacy laws behind all of it, according to the Web site.

**Reasons to Seek Counseling:**

There are numerous reasons a person should seek counseling. Several reasons suggested by the Web site are feelings of no direction in life, feeling stressed or anxious, have difficulty studying, alcohol or drug abuse, homesickness, studying and doing homework but disappointed with the results, eating too much or too little, not being able to decide on a major, feeling like you “can’t go on,” or being friends with the wrong crowd.

**Staff:**

White was hired as a senior critical counselor about the time he was completing his Ph.D. in August 2000. He is now the coordinator of counseling and a licensed psychologist at Student Counseling Services. He sees patients and oversees coordination of programs and counseling sessions. As of right now, there are six full-time counselors besides White and six part-time graduate students in the counseling psychology program. There is also one full-time psychiatrist on staff. The names and short backgrounds of each staff member can be found on the University Counseling Services Web site.

**For More Information:**

It is important for students to know how to get in contact with the University Counseling Services. On the Web site, there are anonymous online screenings available at all times. These are available for students to see if their symptoms show signs of depression, bipolar disorder, an alcohol problem, eating disorder, anxiety disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. It can also help a student decide if they need counseling if feeling uncertain. There is always confidentiality unless a crisis intervention is necessary. Student Counseling Service holds its records separate from academic records, White says. For any more information, please visit the Web site at [www.okstate.edu/UCS](http://www.okstate.edu/UCS).

**Sources**

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University Counseling Services Web site: [www.okstate.edu/ucs](http://www.okstate.edu/ucs)

**Organizational Chart**

Suzanne Burks, Ph.D., LPC: Director of University Counseling Services

Dylan Burns, Ph.D.: Senior clinical counselor

Carol Challenger, Ph. D.: Senior clinical counselor

Joseph Dunnigan, B.A.: Senior clinical counselor

Baiba Ercum, M.D.: Board Certified in Psychiatry

Joni Hays, Ph.D., LPC: Coordinator of the Career Resource Center and senior clinical counselor

Ren Hong, M.A.: Practicum counselor

Linda Myers, M.A., LCADC: Alcohol and drug education and counseling

Andrea Nael, M. Ed.: Practicum intern

Kara Niccum, M.S.: Alcohol and substance abuse counselor

Tamara Richardson, Ph.D.: Licensed psychologist and senior critical counselor

Trevor Richardson, Ph.D.: Senior clinical counselor

Alicia Severe, M.Ed.: Outreach specialist

Stephanie Scott, B.S.: Practicum intern

Cindy Washington, M.S., LPC: Clinical counselor

Anne Weese, M.S.: Intake counselor

Jason White, Ph.D: Coordinator of counseling and licensed psychologist

Rich Zamora, B.A.: Practicum Intern