

## About the American College Counseling Association

*ACCA is an Association for those persons in higher education to include colleges, universities, community and technical college settings, whose professional identity is counseling and whose purpose is fostering students' development. ACCA strives to support and enhance the practice of college counseling, to promote ethical and responsible professional practice, to promote communication and exchange among college counselors across service areas and institutional settings, to encourage cooperation with other organizations related to higher education and college student development, and to provide leadership and advocacy for the profession of counseling in higher education. ACCA is a division of the American Counseling Association.*



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College Counseling  
Association

“Supporting and enhancing the practice  
of college counseling.”

[www.collegecounseling.org](http://www.collegecounseling.org)



## How To Use Your College Counseling Center



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Developed by the ACCA  
Public Awareness and Professional  
Advocacy Committee  
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## How to Use Your College Counseling Center

### The Nature of College Counseling

Like everyone, college students face difficult life transitions and circumstances, experience painful emotions, and need assistance in developing clear and meaningful goals. College counselors are professionally trained to help students cope with a wide variety of educational, adjustment, and mental health issues. College counselors also facilitate academic progress and help students successfully achieve their career goals. A counseling relationship allows students to confidentially discuss their personal thoughts and feelings. Some of the skills counselors employ include listening, informing, empathizing, collaborating, brainstorming, problem solving, co-constructing goals, and modeling appropriate behaviors.

**PRESENTING CONCERNS:** Counselors are glad to talk with you about any issue causing you concern or distress. Some common concerns include: *anxiety, depression, loneliness, eating disorders, alcohol and other drugs, rape and incest issues, self-assertiveness, relationship issues, communication skills, anger management, shyness, academic problems, time management, test taking, choosing a major, writing a resume, and career goals.*

**LENGTH OF COUNSELING:** Depending on the nature of the concern, counseling may be one session, short-term, or long-term. In some cases, a referral to a specialist may be required.



### Services Often Provided

#### INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING:

Confidential individual counseling is available for a variety of personal issues including emotional problems, adjustment to college life, and interpersonal relationship issues.

#### GROUP COUNSELING:

Confidential counseling groups are designed and offered to address mental health issues (e.g., substance abuse, eating disorders, rape or sexual assault) or growth objectives (e.g., self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, assertiveness training).

#### MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING DAYS:

Many college counseling centers participate in Screening for Mental Health, Inc.'s National Screening Days:

- National Depression Screening Day. Screening and Education for Anxiety and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are also provided on NDSD. (October)
- National Eating Disorders Screening Program. (February)
- National Alcohol Screening Day. (April)

#### CAREER COUNSELING:

Career counseling appointments can be made to assist students in understanding career options, choosing or changing a major, or developing the skills necessary for career advancement.

#### WORKSHOPS AND OUTREACH PROGRAMMING:

Counseling centers offer programming related to a wide variety of personal growth and mental health issues. College counselors present programs to classes, residence halls, campus departments, and student and community groups.

#### ACADEMIC COUNSELING AND ADVISING:

Most college counselors assist students with course selection, time management skills, and study and test taking skills.

#### LEARNING DISABILITY ASSESSMENT:

Some counseling centers provide learning disability evaluations including assessments for accommodations.

#### TESTING SERVICES:

Commonly offered testing services include the Millers Analogies Test (MAT), the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), and the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), which allows students to get credit for subjects they already know.

### Who are College Counselors

College counselors are uniquely trained professionals who work with college students to promote emotional health and wellness during their college years. They range from master's degree level counselors and social workers to doctoral degree level counselors, social workers and psychologists. Many are certified and licensed in their respective fields.

### How to Obtain Services

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call your college counseling center. If you need to be seen quickly, your counseling center may also have staff available for "walk-in" clients. Many counseling centers offer Crisis Lines or Emergency Phone Numbers for after hours emergencies.

#### Related Websites

<http://www.collegecounseling.org>

<http://www.mentalhealthscreening.org>

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/index.cfm>

<http://substanceabuse.about.com/mbody.htm>



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