

Supporting Students in Distress

D3 Series (Dean of Students Developmental Dialogue Series)

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Office of the Dean of Students and Campus Life

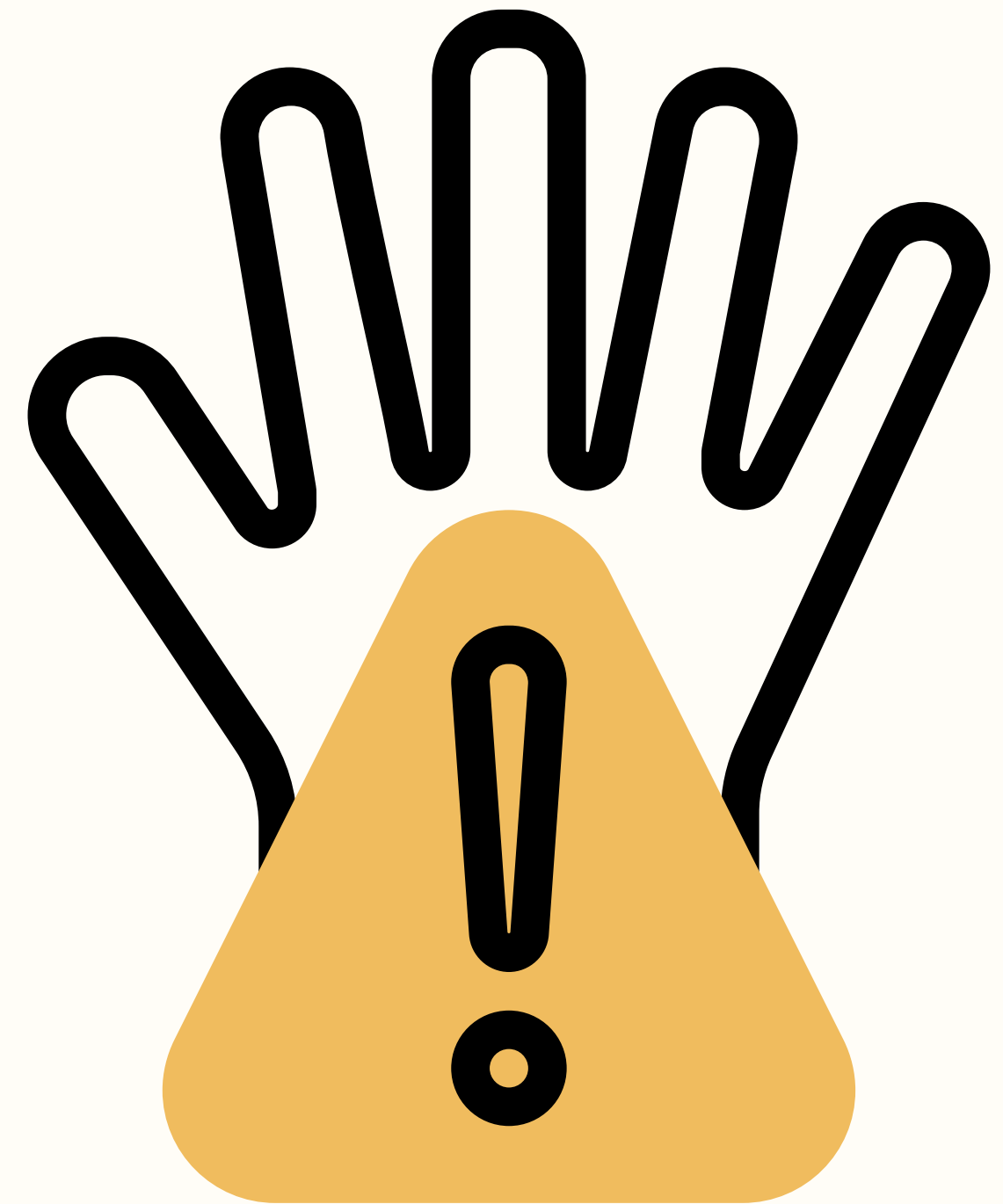


The University does not expect you to assume the role of counselor, therapist or police officer.

For those responsibilities, NJIT has trained professionals who are ready to assist you.

Know when to refer!

Student concerns may not be resolved quickly as multiple layers can exist.



BEFORE WE BEGIN!

Comment in the Chat...

- 1 What issues and concerns did students present with during Fall?
- 2 What are your concerns?



What we're seeing (DOS):

- COVID-19 impact on academics
- Financial
- Mental Health & Medical Concerns
- Requesting Accommodations (DOS/OARS)
- LGBTQIA+ Concerns
- Academic Integrity
- In-Class Disruptions (masks, late, attitude)
- Navigating Policies & Procedures



Setting the scene...

Mental Health & College Students

- Prior to COVID-19, anxiety & other mental health disorders were on the rise.
- The National Alliance on Mental Illness estimates that 1 in 4 adults aged 18-24 are living with some form of a diagnosable mental health disorder.
- 1/2 of all serious adult psychiatric illnesses (including major depression, anxiety disorders, and substance abuse) start by 14 years of age. 3/4 are present by age 25.

**COMPARED TO
OLDER ADULTS,
THE 18-24 YEAR
OLD AGE GROUP
SHOWS THE
LOWEST RATE OF
HELP-SEEKING.**

Pre-Pandemic Mental Health Issues Can Be Deadly

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among college students.
- 67% of college students tell a friend they are feeling suicidal before telling anyone else.
- More than half of college students have had suicidal thoughts and 1 in 10 students seriously consider attempting suicide.
- Half of students who have suicidal thoughts never seek counseling or treatment.
- 80-90% of college students who die by suicide were not receiving help from their college counseling centers.

During the Pandemic

- 1 in 5 college students say their mental health significantly worsened under COVID-19.
- 80% of college students reported that COVID-19 negatively impacted their mental health; many reported significant academic distress (concentration, follow through, motivation).
- Most common ways COVID-19 impacted students:
 - Stress or Anxiety (91%)
 - Disappointment or Sadness (81%)
 - Loneliness or Isolation (80%)
 - Relocation (56%)
 - Financial Setbacks (48%)
- In addition - the emotional toll and psychological trauma of racial issues, violence and oppression and systemic oppression is real and impactful for many students (particularly BIPOC students).

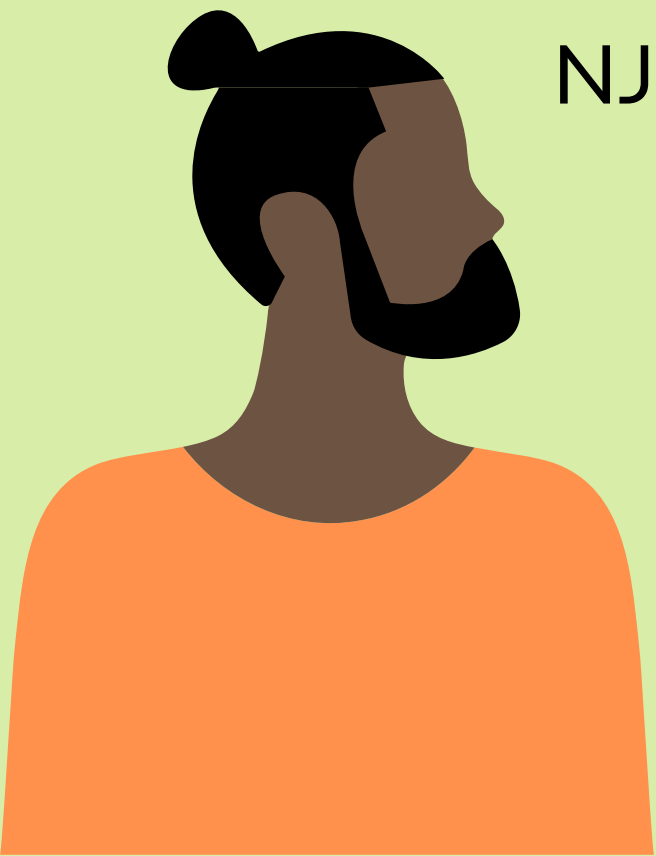
Returning to "Normal Operations"

Nationally, students rated their value of education more poorly than in previous years.

While administrations are pleased with their ability to pivot quickly, students describe challenges with an online learning modality.

NJIT students discuss feeling unprepared for higher level courses. Many use Youtube or other means to teach themselves.

Sophomores as First Years



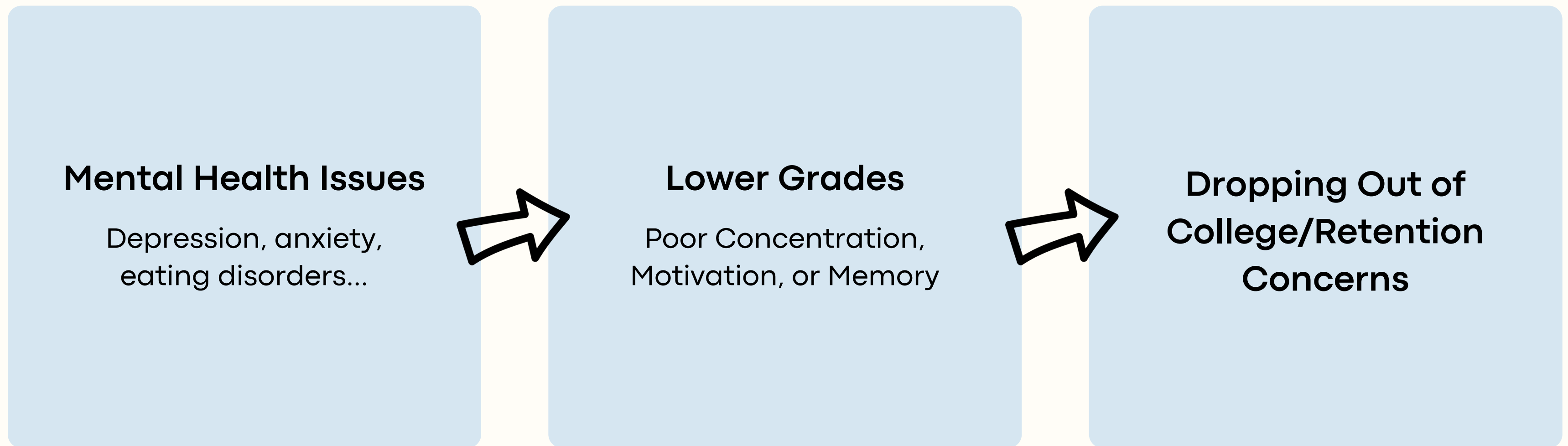
COVID-19 is an Open-Ended Crisis

Most crises have a beginning and an end.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a “rolling” crisis with the need for quick adjustments and waves of interventions and postventions.

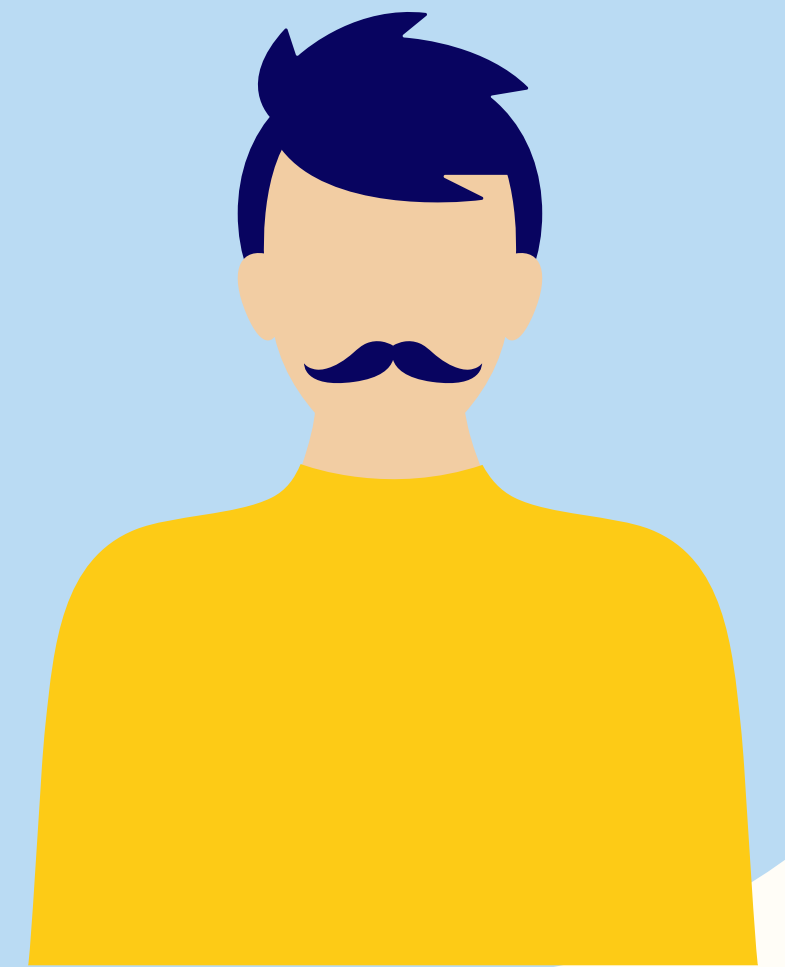


Mental Health Issues Impact on Success



Reinforces the value of referring and reporting students of concern.

General Signs and Symptoms of Distress or The Need for Help



Troubling Behaviors

- Student that is constantly falling asleep in class
- A dramatic change in energy level (high or low)
- Deterioration in personal hygiene or physical appearance
- Frequent state of alcohol intoxication or suspicion
- Potential self-harm: noticeable cuts, bruises or burns on a student
- Repeated absences from class, work study, or normal activities
- Apathy/extreme change in participation levels
- Student seeking frequent extensions or exceptions for extenuating circumstances
- Student sending communication such as frequent, lengthy, “ranting” or agitated types of emails to professors, advisors, coaches, or work supervisors
- Emotional outbursts (anger or hostility, frequent crying)
- Extreme personality changes; more withdrawn or more animated than usual
- Expressed hopelessness, fear or worthlessness; themes of suicide, death and dying
- Direct statements related to distress, family issues, or other difficulties



Disruptive Behaviors

- Interferes with or disrupts the educational process and rights of other students or the normal functions of the University
- Demanding, verbally abusive, bullying or intimidating behaviors
- Displays of extreme irritability
- Irrational or impulsive behaviors

Threatening Behaviors

- Signs of physical abuse
- Physical/verbal confrontations
- Direct threats of harming self or others
- Concerns about references to access or use of a weapon or act of violence
- Threatening communication

When threatening behaviors are present, due to the safety of the student and community, one must contact NJIT Police immediately!

IT'S OKAY TO ASK

If you are concerned about the
wellbeing of a student,
it's okay to ask.



HOW TO BRING IT UP

It's often a relief to students to know that people at the university notice and care.

- Broach the subject in a caring, supportive way
- Clearly express your concerns in non disparaging non confrontational terms.
- Remind the student of their personal responsibility as a member of the community
- Respect the student's privacy but do not promise confidentiality

HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

Whether you or a student broaches the topic, it is important to have privacy and some time without interruption.

- Don't minimize the problem or solve it too quickly with advice.
- Let the student express emotion (often it has been building/bottled up)
- Ask if the student has found anything to help with the problem.
- Inquire about their support network

HOW TO REFER

- The student situation may be beyond what you can address, but your support is still critical.
- Reassure student the decisions to seek/accept help is a wise choice and they are not alone.
- Offer to meet to ensure follow through where appropriate
- **Refer to the CARE Team & DOS**

Responding to Disruptive Student Behavior

Suggestions for dealing with the most common types of disruptive behavior.



Common Disruptive Behaviors

Noisy Students

Inattentive Students

Late Arrivers/Early Leavers

Domineering Students

Distressed Students

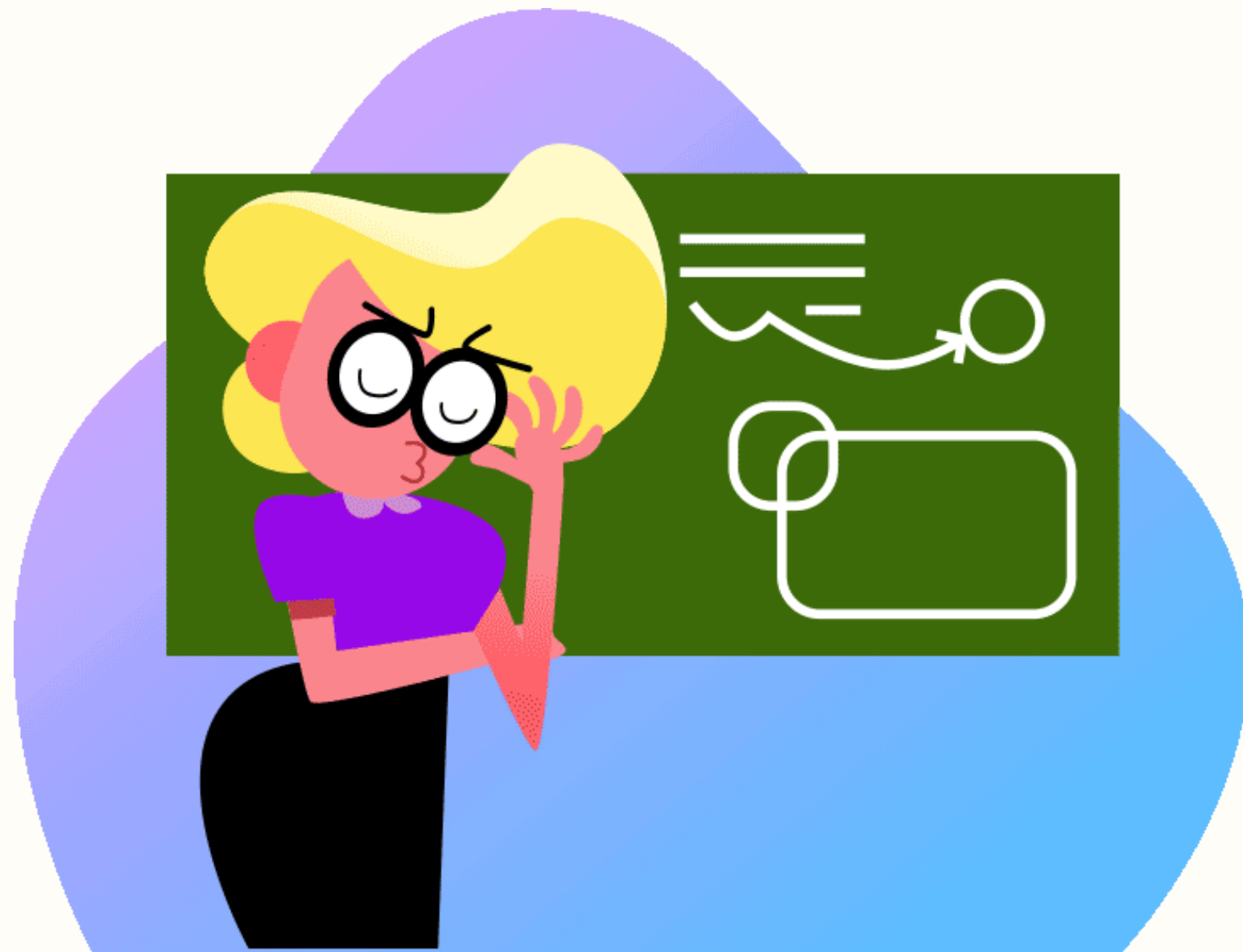
Challenging Authority

Disruptive Online

Others?



Responding to Disruptive Behaviors



*** EASIER SAID THAN DONE!**

Try Not to Take it Personally*

Remain Calm*

Identify the Best Manner to Respond

Model Civility*

Actively Listen

Gather Information (FERPA)

Make a Plan

Review the Plan

Follow Through

Document & Refer (CARE)

CARE TEAM



NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

- The NJIT CARE Team is a campus resource with a mission dedicated to assisting students who may be **in distress** or experiencing **challenging or difficult life circumstances**.
- The CARE Team also provides consultation and intervention when students exhibit **aggressive, concerning or disruptive behaviors**.
- The primary focus of the team is to take a proactive approach in identifying students who are struggling and provide early intervention, resources, and referrals, both on campus and in the community.

Academic Concerns, Family Concerns, Financial Concerns, Wellness Concerns, Housing or Food Insecurity, Safety Concerns....

When must one contact **Public Safety** instead of submitting a report?



- Physical/aggressive verbal confrontations
- Direct threats of harming self or others
- Concerns about references to access or use of a weapon or act of violence
- Threatening communication

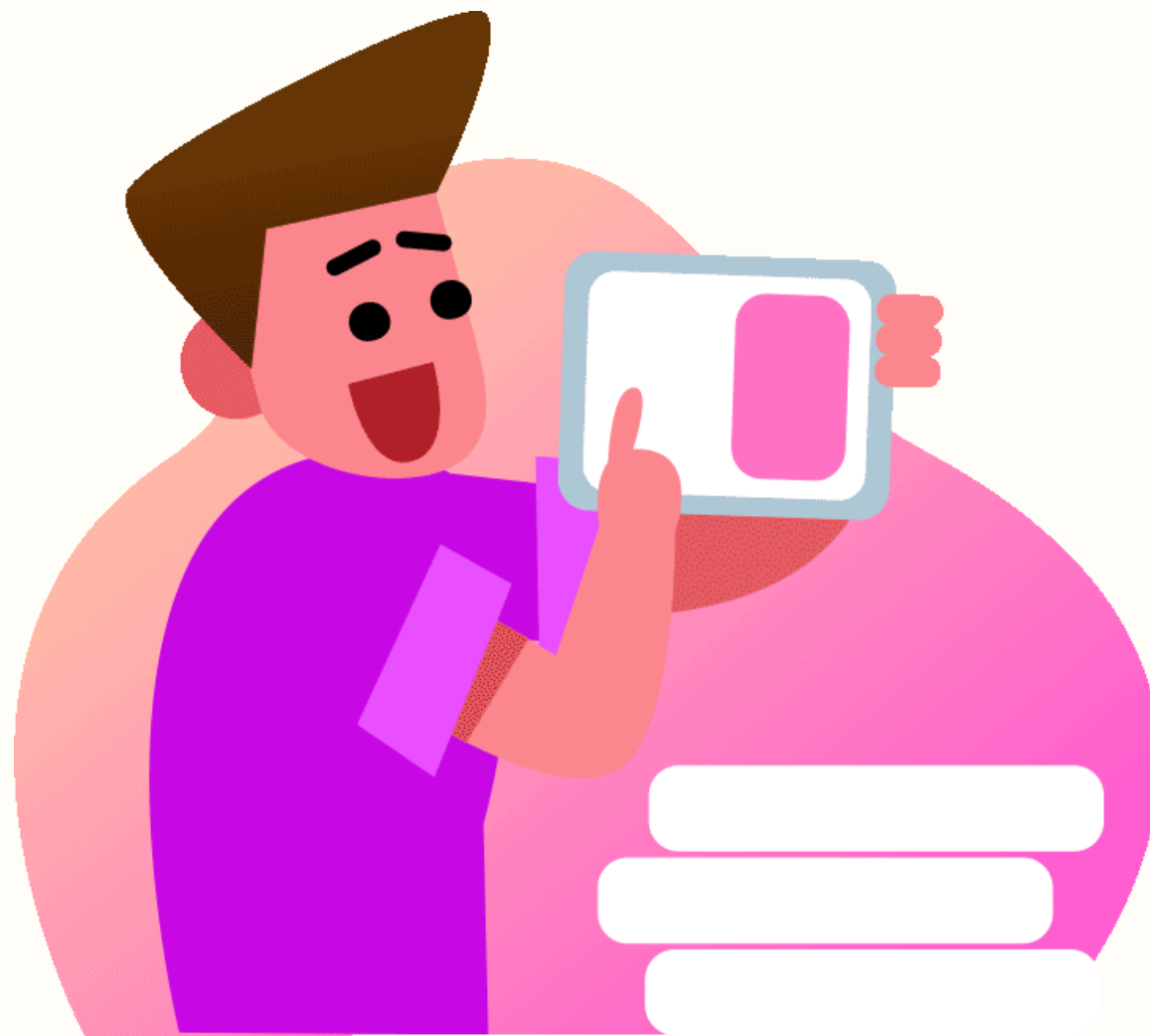
Submitting a CARE REPORT



Any member of the NJIT community can submit an online CARE report if they are concerned for a student's wellbeing.

www.njit.edu/care

Possible CARE Actions



- C-CAPS including Drop-In & Therapy Groups
- Academic Resources
- Faculty Outreach
- Case Management
- Navigation Support
- Review of Reporting Options
- Referrals (FSL, RESLIFE, FOOD PANTRY, OARS, D&I)
- Expression of CARE which goes far!

D3 SERIES: DEAN OF STUDENTS DEVELOPMENTAL DIALOGUE SERIES

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ROADMAP-FROM
PREVENTION TO PROCESS**

**UNDERSTANDING TITLE IX AND PREVENTING
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

D3 Dates:

Jan. 28, 3-4pm

Feb. 11, 2-3pm

Feb. 24, 10-11:15am

*March 2, 2-3pm

*April 1, 11:30am-12:45pm

*April 20, 3-4pm



Contact the Office of the Dean of
Students for consultation
regarding a student of concern,
or for general questions.

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