The University Counseling Center is committed to the promotion and celebration of diversity in all of its forms. Our multicultural staff seeks to provide a safe, welcoming, and affirming environment for all students seeking our services. We provide individual, group, and couples counseling, outreach programs, and peer programs.

Who provides the services at the University Counseling Center?

The University Counseling Center staff consists of licensed psychologists and a health promotion specialist. Postdoctoral fellows and doctoral interns also provide services under the supervision of licensed psychologists.
At first it was really hard for me to fit in, I missed my family and friends back home so much. I was feeling very sad and depressed. Then, someone told me about the Counseling Center and how it could be helpful... It was so nice to be able to talk to someone... REALLY talk about how I felt. I'm still seeing a counselor, and continue to feel better every day…"

Did you know?

The opportunity to discuss concerns and challenges as well as share positive experiences can help students feel less alone. Individual counseling can help international students:

- Enhance coping skills and develop new strategies to be successful in school
- Improve relationships with fellow students, faculty, friends, and family
- Increase awareness of personal strengths and resources
- Cope with homesickness, culture shock, discrimination, and other issues

The University at Albany Counseling Center provides individual counseling and consultation, free of charge (as part of your student health fee) to students within our diverse campus community. Services are confidential; student visits and conversations do not become part of the academic record.

If you are interested or have any questions, please call the University Counseling Center at 518-442-5800, or email us at consultation@albany.edu

Please visit our website at: albany.edu/counseling_center or find us on Facebook

Risk Factors

There are a number of factors that may put students at higher risk for suicide. These include:

- **History of self-harm**
  Including prior suicide attempts and self-injury (e.g. cutting)

- **Depression**
  Low mood, sadness, especially if it includes severe self-criticism or a sense of failure

- **Hopelessness/helplessness**
  Giving up on oneself, on others, on life in general, or the the strong sense that life is pointless

- **A recent loss**
  Such as the death of a loved one, the ending of a friendship or romantic relationship, or the loss of an important goal

- **Reckless or impulsive behaviors**
  Including alcohol and other substance abuse, risky sex, or spending money excessively

- **Extreme agitation, anxiety, or restlessness**

- **Mental confusion**
  Especially if this includes hearing voices saying you should harm yourself

When an international student leaves their home, family and friends, they may feel lonely, distressed, and homesick, which may put them at risk for depression and suicide.

Helping a Friend

You can be most helpful by linking the distressed person with professionals who can evaluate and treat suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Often people may not know the resources available to them, or they may feel uncomfortable reaching out to access services. You can help a friend by suggesting resources (like coming to the University Counseling Center), and you could even offer to go with them to an initial appointment. If your friend does not want to access any services and you are still worried about them, you can seek support and advice by contacting the counseling center yourself.

When to seek *immediate* assistance

Seek immediate assistance if you or someone else:

- Has caused serious injury to themselves regardless of stated intent (e.g. pill overdose, alcohol poisoning, serious self-harm).

- Threatens or talks about wanting to commit suicide, either verbally or in writing or has somehow made it known that they want or intend to commit suicide (e.g. through email, Facebook, letters, or giving away prized belongings).

- Is making plans or seeking the means to commit suicide (e.g. obtaining weapons, pills, etc.)