



# Promoting Student Well-Being:

## A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff

*As a faculty or staff member at Lehigh, you play a crucial role in promoting the well-being of our students — even in situations where it might not seem like student well-being is your primary responsibility or part of your immediate job responsibilities. By learning more about the challenges our students face and by identifying actions you can take to support them, you will contribute to the important work of making Lehigh a place where all of our students thrive. Thank you for taking the time to engage with this resource — it's a great way to get started.*

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### Introduction

Well-being sets a foundation for all to thrive. The interconnection of personal, academic, and social development at Lehigh provides important opportunities for faculty and staff to foster the well-being of our community and our students. The following guide provides tips and resources for supporting our students.

### Setting a Foundation of Caring

Students feel connected to those who listen with patience and curiosity, take them seriously, and provide impartial feedback. Establishing a relationship early provides a foundation for students to strive, persist, and seek help when needed. How you develop relationships with students will vary. Early conversations may include inquiring about their interests, extracurricular activities, or circumstances that may affect performance. If they share difficulties, tell them you care, express your concern, offer support, and connect them to resources.

### Create a Space for Well-Being

Providing space to recognize demands and discuss well-being can help students persist through challenges. This may include:

- ▶ giving permission to seek your support,
- ▶ talking about and modeling balance,
- ▶ limiting workload during holidays and university events,
- ▶ checking in during busy times, and
- ▶ normalizing challenges.

When students seek your assistance, clarify what they want by asking directly rather than making assumptions. A few minutes of active listening followed by validation of feelings and a suggestion often is enough. If the student resists solutions or is not interested in utilizing resources, keep open communication and let them know you are here to support them.

### Challenges Our Students Experience

The common challenges students face during college can be particularly difficult when experienced for the first time or when away from the support and caring of family and friends at home. When homesickness, anxiety, depression, relationship loss, and identity confusion overwhelm a student's existing coping strategies, you may notice changes in attendance, performance, and/or behavior. As students move to campus after the pandemic, they are likely to experience more uncertainty, sadness, grief, and financial strain than usual. Below are tips for identifying, responding to, and assisting students in distress.

### How to Recognize Student Distress

Change, transition, and adjustment often come with some level of stress. Though stress is a normal part of the human experience, there may be times in which a student's behavior appears unusual or even concerning to you. Academic indicators of distress may include increased absences or extension requests, changes in class participation or motivation, or odd or disturbing essay content. Changes in behavior can indicate distress, such as repeated illnesses, changes in hygiene or appearance, or disruptive or inappropriate behaviors (e.g., apparent substance use). Some students may make clear statements about feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, or self-destructive, and may even admit to engaging in self-injury or having thoughts of suicide.

**Contact the Dean of Students Office ([indost@lehigh.edu](mailto:indost@lehigh.edu), 610-758-4156) or University Counseling & Psychological Services ([incso@lehigh.edu](mailto:incso@lehigh.edu), 610-758-3880) with questions or consultation requests.**

## How to Respond to Student Needs

As emerging adults, students develop resilience and autonomy by navigating difficulty and persisting when challenged. Although it may sound like a simple task, it can sometimes be difficult to approach someone who appears distressed. Having transparent conversations about struggles can provide validation and relief, uncover alternative solutions, and renew hope and motivation. Responses might include listening to student perspectives and asking questions that show your interest in their experience, normalizing challenge and reframing failure as a learning opportunity, and when appropriate, finding humor in being human.

### ASK

Examples of how you might address your concerns with a student:

► **Ask the student's permission to share your concerns.**

*Example:* "I noticed (describe behavior) and have been concerned...I was wondering if we could talk now or set up a meeting?"

► **Show interest and share that you have time to talk.**

*Example:* "I have some time to talk right now. I'm wondering if you'd be willing to help me understand what you've been experiencing/dealing with lately."

► **Express curiosity and open-ended questions.**

*Example:* "How has the transition back to in-person learning been for you?"

### LISTEN

Listen carefully to gain a better understanding of the student's issue or situation. To truly help the student feel heard and cared for, it is important to be present within the conversation. Aim to limit distractions, avoid interrupting or jumping to conclusions, and be mindful of your non-verbal communication. The use of reflection and empathy can go a long way in helping others feel understood and cared for.

► *Example:* "I'm so sorry to hear that; that sounds really...Tell me more about..."

### SUPPORT

Given the complexity of the human experience, a single solution doesn't fit all situations. Developing an understanding of the student's current challenges, available resources, and your own capacity for providing continued support can be helpful in determining how to move forward with the student.

Express appreciation for the student's willingness to share with you and ask for feedback on what they experienced.

► *Example:* "I appreciate what you've shared with me and imagine that was difficult to do. I'm wondering what would be helpful to you right now?"

Sometimes just having someone to listen and acknowledge difficulty is sufficient. If not, or you sense that the student could benefit from additional support resources on campus, you can offer to connect the student to additional help.



► *Example:* "It sounds like talking could be helpful for you, and I wonder if you would allow me to connect you with others on campus who might be able to provide you with support and assistance beyond our conversation?"

*If the topic continues to feel worrisome, or you feel concerns for the student's safety, file a Student Concerns Report [go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns](https://go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns) and/or contact the Dean of Students office (610-758-4152) for assistance.*

### Take Action, Seek Assistance

Submit a **Student Concerns Report** ([go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns](https://go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns)) any time you have concerns about a student's well-being. It is the fastest and most efficient way to share your concerns with our Care Team and someone from the Dean of Students office will be in touch to follow-up and assist the student.

*For urgent or emergency situations, call LUPD for immediate assistance. Contact at 610-758-4200.*

If you are uncertain about what to do, you are welcome to consult with Dean of Students staff:

► Laurie Gray Evans, Director, Student Support & Case Management Services, contact at 610-758-4156 or [lag2@lehigh.edu](mailto:lag2@lehigh.edu)

For graduate student concerns, you are welcome to consult with Dean of Students staff or:

► Kathleen Hutnik, Associate Deputy Provost for Graduate Education, contact at 610-758-3648 or [kaha@lehigh.edu](mailto:kaha@lehigh.edu)

You also can consult with University Counseling & Psychological Services. Contact at 610-758-3880.

For concerns after hours that require a timely response, call LUPD at 610-758-4200.

Faculty are encouraged to file a Section 3 Report any time a student appears to be neglecting coursework, displays poor attendance, or is disruptive in class.

**WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK.**  
Email [inhaps@lehigh.edu](mailto:inhaps@lehigh.edu) with comments  
& suggestions about the resource guide.

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# Additional Resources

## Academic Resources

**Center for Academic Success** provides a range of tutoring and coaching services to undergraduate students. Contact at 610-758-5181 or [intutor@lehigh.edu](mailto:intutor@lehigh.edu).

**Disability Support Services (DSS)** provides an array of support services, accommodations, and programs to remove barriers to full participation in University life. Contact at 610-758-4152.

**The Writing & Math Center** assists students in building academic skills and work habits needed for success. Contact at 610-758-4525.

**For academic assistance specific to Graduate Students**, contact Kathleen Hutnik, Associate Deputy Provost for Graduate Education. Contact at 610-758-3648.

## Additional Resources

**Care Team** is an interdisciplinary group of campus professionals who monitor and provide early intervention and assistance to students whose circumstances or behaviors are concerning. The Care Team meets regularly to evaluate incoming information and create proactive intervention plans for students at risk. Contact at 610-758-4156 or submit a Student Concerns Report ([go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns](http://go.lehigh.edu/studentconcerns)).

**Center for Gender Equity (CGE)** works to create a gender equitable campus. Contact at 610-758-6484.

**Chaplain's Office** offers pastoral care and spiritual guidance. Contact at 610-758-3877.

**Gender Violence Education and Support (GVES)** offers support to students impacted by sexual assault and relationship violence, and to students looking to build caring, empowered, and consensual relationships in their lives. Contact at 610-758-1303 (or 610-758-4763 for urgent concerns 24/7).

**Headspace** is now available at no cost to students, staff, and faculty with hundreds of meditation, mindfulness, productivity, and sleep exercises. Students: [go.lehigh.edu/headspace](http://go.lehigh.edu/headspace). Staff: visit HR website.

**Health Advancement & Prevention Strategies (HAPS)** aims to enrich the social experience by providing collaborative, educational strategies and programs as they relate to priority health behaviors such as alcohol, stress, and overall well-being. Also trains Peer Health Advisors for peer-to-peer support. Contact at 610-758-0275.

**Health & Wellness Center (HWC)** is the first stop for all student medical care, including diagnosis and treatment of illness, injury, and ongoing conditions, as well as for preventive counseling and education. Contact at 610-475-3870.

**Lehigh After Dark (LAD)** facilitates a vibrant campus nightlife by sponsoring a variety of social options to the entire campus community. Contact at 610-758-0050.

**Office of First-Year Experience (OFYE)** provides support, resources, and programming to assist new students' academic and social transition to college. Contact at 610-758-1300.

**Office of Fraternity & Sorority Affairs (OFSA)** works with students, alumni, faculty, staff, and parents to enhance student development through Greek membership. Contact at 610-758-4157.

**Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS)** provides immigration advising and support services to help international students succeed. Contact at 610-758-4977.

**Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA)** cultivates an inclusive environment for students, staff, and faculty through an intercultural lens. Contact at 610-758-5973.

**Office of Student Engagement** provides opportunities for involvement, programming, and leadership education. Contact at 610-758-6670.

**Pride Center for Sexual Orientation & Gender Diversity** works to make Lehigh a place where people of all genders and sexualities can flourish. Contact at 610-758-4574.

**Student Access and Success (SAS)** expands access to the university for all underrepresented groups with a focus on first generation and lower-income students. Contact at 610-758-3262.

**University Counseling & Psychological Services (UCPS)** offers individual and group sessions, workshops, and crisis support. Contact at 610-758-3880. Students can utilize the after-hours Counseling Service by calling 610-758-3880 and pressing "0."