



## University Counseling Service

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Eastside Location: University Capitol Centre, Suite 1950  
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1100  
Phone 319-335-7294 Fax 319-335-7298  
<http://counseling.uiowa.edu>

*Internship Training Program Accredited  
by American Psychological Association*

### UCS Informed Consent for In-Person and Tele-Mental Health Services

The following information provides details about clinically relevant policies and procedures of the University Counseling Service (UCS). We ask you to read this material and to sign it to acknowledge that you have read and understood it. Information specific to tele-mental health services is highlighted throughout this document.

**Eligibility and Location for Services** – Our services are available to all currently enrolled University of Iowa (UI) students, who are enrolled in main campus (Iowa City) courses/programs. Withdrawal or dismissal from school will limit eligibility. Please see the UCS Clinical Eligibility FAQ on our website for more information. Minor and dependent adult students are eligible for services with signed parental/guardian consent. UCS is housed in seven offices across the UI campus: Westlawn (WL), University Capitol Centre (UCC), University Housing and Dining (UHD), Department of Athletics, College of Dentistry, Tippie College of Business, and the College of Law. All UI students are eligible to seek services at WL and UCC, whereas only students living in University Housing can access services provided in UHD. UCS at Athletics can only provide service to student athletes, only dentistry students can receive services at UCS in the College of Dentistry, only admitted business students can see the UCS staff at the College of Business, and only law students can see UCS staff at the College of Law. Your preference of where to be seen is taken into consideration if you are to receive ongoing services. There are no fees or charges associated with UCS services.

UCS services may be available in-person, via tele-mental health (e.g., over Zoom), or both. For tele-mental health services, student clients will need to utilize a computer or smart phone, and they will need to utilize a secure Internet service, rather than a free or public service. Counselors may recommend either in-person or tele-mental health appointments due to a student's particular needs or circumstances (e.g., recommending in-person services due to student's lack of sufficient technology or private space for tele-mental health services). Only enrolled students are eligible for UCS services, and only those students who have read this Informed Consent form and confirm that they have done so are to be included in the telehealth session, and only with advanced notice. All parties are prohibited from recording the sessions, with the single following exception: Clinicians in training at UCS who have secured their client's written informed consent will create recordings for purposes of supervision within UCS.

It is recommended that students who are ill and/or have contagious conditions/disease, schedule tele-mental health appointments. Because UCS is a healthcare setting, we may at times require that students and staff wear masks/face coverings when on-site.

Because mental health providers are licensed to practice only within the State of Iowa, only students who are physically located within the State of Iowa are eligible for tele-mental health services. UCS *may* be able to provide counseling services to students residing in another U.S. state *only if* legal restrictions have been lifted for that particular state, and only if this is deemed clinically appropriate for your needs. UCS clinicians are not licensed to provide counseling services to students residing in a country outside the U.S.

**Risks and Benefits** – There are potential risks and benefits associated with receiving mental health services at UCS. Counseling, consultation, and case management may involve the risk of remembering unpleasant events and may arouse strong emotional feelings. UCS services can impact relationships with significant others, as such relationships may be explored in counseling, depending on a student client's goals. The benefits from UCS services may be an improved ability to deal with everyday stress and reduction of troublesome mental health symptoms. Taking personal responsibility for working with these issues may lead to greater personal growth.

**Additional risks are associated with tele- mental health services.** These include, but are not limited to the possibility that, despite reasonable efforts on the part of the counselor, the transmission of personal information could be disrupted or distorted by technical failures; the transmission of personal information could be interrupted by unauthorized persons. When providing tele-

- College of Dentistry, Dental Science Building
- College of Law, Boyd Law Building
- Department of Athletics, Jacobson Football Building
- Tippie College of Business, Pappajohn Business Building
- University Housing & Dining – Residence Education, Catlett Hall

mental health services, some UCS providers may be located away from UCS offices, typically in their homes. Clients will be verbally informed of the location of their provider at the time of appointments. Providers will do their best to secure confidential space, but soundproofing and protection from interruption by other members of households cannot be guaranteed. Similarly, clients should be mindful of the privacy and security of their own physical and on-line environment. In most cases, remote counselors/practitioners will have access to the clinical scheduler and documentation system, but that access is not guaranteed either. When practicing in the absence of access to the clinical documentation system, practitioners may be working with limited background information. Additionally, if a practitioner is not able to access the clinical documentation system, they may keep session notes on a flash-drive or printed paper until they are able to transfer the information at a later time. Such notes will be kept in secure locations and securely destroyed after information is documented in the clinical document system.

**Counseling, Clinical Consultation, and Case Management Services** – UCS services are provided by licensed mental health professionals, professional staff working toward licensure, or by graduate students under a licensed clinician’s supervision. In all cases, staff working toward licensure and graduate students are supervised by a licensed mental health professional who will have access to your file to facilitate supervision sessions and to ensure quality care. In order to receive an initial consultation, we require that you minimally provide us with your name, student status, UI ID-number, and local address, **current telephone number, and address of current location**. Most commonly, your initial appointment will be for a consultation, wherein you and your consultant will collaboratively determine services of best fit for you. If you are offered on-going services at the UCS, you are likely to work with a counselor other than the consultant you saw for your initial appointment. We provide primarily short-term individual therapy. During a course of brief individual or brief couples therapy at the UCS, you will typically meet with your counselor on a weekly basis and sessions usually last from 45 to 50 minutes (sessions may be extended at times for couples therapy, at the discretion of the counselor). Group counseling appointments are typically 80-90 minutes once per week. Students are typically limited to one course of individual counseling per academic year (June-May). Group counseling is open-ended with no session limitations. Students can participate in only one mode (e.g., individual, couples, or group) of counseling at a time at UCS. If you and your consultant determine that your treatment needs indicate more intensive or long-term therapy, or require resources or competencies beyond what we can provide, we will assist with a referral to an appropriate mental health care provider outside of UCS. The outcome of your initial appointment might be a referral to our Clinical Case Manager who can assist with such referrals to a mental health care provider outside of UCS. You are also welcome to directly schedule with our Clinical Case Manager for a Case Management appointment.

Alternatively, your initial appointment may be a 30-60 minute problem-solving or crisis management appointment, called a Quick Access appointment. **Quick Access appointments offered virtually (via tele-mental health) are scheduled for 60 minutes..** These appointments address either a specific problem or question you may have or to provide initial assistance if you are in crisis. The problem-solving appointments are often just a single session with no further follow up necessary. Both types of appointments can result in a referral to a consultation appointment at UCS, or to our Clinical Case Manager. **If you are residing in a state or country in which UCS clinicians are not licensed to practice, you may have the option for a brief Case Management appointment. This is not an assessment or treatment appointment, but rather can provide you with brief support or guidance in navigating your options for mental health services in the location in which you are residing.**

UCS services are available Monday through Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM. For urgent or emergency mental health needs outside of UCS hours, please contact local CommUnity crisis services at 1-855-325-4296 (24/7 phone line), 24/7 chat option via [IowaCrisisChat.org](http://IowaCrisisChat.org), text to 1-855-325-4296 (text available 9am-2am CST), or phone 911 for help. For more information regarding crisis and emergency services, please visit our website and choose the [CRISIS link](#).

**Changing or Missing Appointments** – If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please do so at least 24 hours in advance by calling the UCS at (319) 335-7294 or by emailing your counselor. **If you need to change the mode of your appointment (from in-person to tele-mental health, or from tele-mental health to in-person), you must provide 24 hours notice to UCS and/or to your assigned counselor.** If you either (a) miss or cancel a scheduled appointment and do not re-contact the UCS to reschedule within three business days, or (b) no show for your first scheduled appointment, we will assume you are no longer interested in our services and your file may be closed. You may, of course, reapply for service at any time, although your reassignment to counseling may be delayed.

**Confidentiality** – All communications between you and your counselor will be held in confidence and will not, except under the circumstances explained below, be disclosed to anyone unless you give written authorization. A copy of our release form is available from our receptionist or from one of our counselors. In situations involving danger and/or risk of imminent harm to yourself or specifically identified others, child abuse, or dependent adult abuse, your counselor is required to disclose certain information in order to protect you and/or others. In certain legal situations (for example, lawful court order of your counseling

records or your use of mental condition as a legal defense), your counselor is required to disclose information as necessary to comply with the law in that situation. If at all possible, your counselor will discuss the procedures for doing this with you and enlist your assistance in resolution of the situation that has necessitated such disclosure.

**Electronic Communication** – Email is not a secure mode of communication and should not be used to communicate private information. Please use session time or the telephone to speak directly with your counselor. The UCS may use email for the purpose of scheduling appointments, **sending Zoom links for tele-mental health appointments**, providing instructions regarding client paperwork, or in scenarios in which other forms of communication are not available. Additionally, UCS counselors neither accept nor seek out friend/contact/message invitations from current or former clients on any electronic social network/media.

**Emotional Support Animals (ESA)** – Many people enjoy and take comfort in a relationship with an animal. It is UCS policy that a formal disability assessment is required to authorize an animal as an ESA. Disability assessments are not within the scope of practice for the UCS. Potential ethical and legal implications are noted. The scope of service offered at the UCS regarding ESAs is consistent with the recommendations outlined by Younggren et.al. (2016) in “Examining Emotional Support Animals and Role Conflicts in Professional Psychology.”

**Counseling Records** – You will be asked to provide us with information about yourself prior to your first meeting with a counselor. This information will help us better understand you, your situation, and to plan service. All requests for information comply with the Iowa Fair Information Practices Act. Counseling files are NOT part of academic records, and no one has access to them except UCS staff except in the conditions noted above in the Confidentiality section of this form. Complete client records are maintained for seven years beyond the last clinical contact with UCS. Upon written request, we will provide a copy of your records, most typically your treatment summary and/or other pertinent portions of your record to another licensed mental health care provider or other type of healthcare provider of your choice. If you request release of information to these or any other individuals, we require a signed release and may request personal contact with you. You may review records of your treatment at the UCS. This review follows established UCS procedures as well as University, state, and federal laws pertaining to confidentiality and release of healthcare information.

**Research and Evaluation** – The UCS seeks to evaluate and improve its services to students by conducting research and evaluation projects throughout the year. You may be asked to participate in research projects currently underway or future research. Staff members conducting research and evaluation projects may also take selected information from your UCS file as a part of a project. This would always be on an anonymous and confidential basis and restricted to information relevant to the project only.

**Staff Consultation** – In working with you, your counselor may consult with or receive supervision from another member of our professional staff concerning the service we provide you. Your counselor may request your permission to record counseling sessions with you for review and/or supervision purposes. Such recordings are never made without your knowledge and written permission to do so. Declining electronic recording in no way affects your eligibility for services, but it could affect the range of counselors with whom you could work, and therefore, the timeliness of the services.

If you have any questions or need clarification about any of these policies or procedures, please feel free to discuss it with your counselor, the UCS Clinical Director, or UCS Director.

I have read and understood this UCS Informed Consent form that outlines policies and procedures regarding clinical services at University Counseling Service.

Yes  No

I hereby request clinical services from the University Counseling Service and understand that I may withdraw this request and terminate services at any time, for any reason.

Yes  No

Please print name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date