

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER

CONSENT TO TREATMENT FORM

The University Counseling Center (UCC) and University Health Services (UHS) together provide the medical and mental health services available to all full-time currently-enrolled Notre Dame students. Although separate departments, UCC and UHS work collaboratively to address the comprehensive health needs of our students. This means that the two departments are structured similarly and have similar policies around eligibility, treatment guidelines, and confidentiality of information. UCC and UHS may also share your health care and mental health information, including your substance use history, treatment, and current use, with each other, to the extent necessary to provide for the continuity of your care. Your consent to treatment at the UCC authorizes the UCC to share your mental health information, including substance use information, with and receive your health care information from UHS, as needed to provide for the continuity and integrated treatment of your medical and mental health concerns.

This statement provides you with important information about UCC services and policies. Please read this material carefully. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to discuss them at your meeting today. We hope that we can be of assistance to you and that your appointment today will be helpful.

SERVICES PROVIDED. The University Counseling Center (UCC) staff includes psychologists, social workers, post-doctoral psychology fellows, pre-doctoral psychology interns, social work fellows, practicum counselors, a nutritionist, and consulting psychiatrists. We offer a wide variety of services to assist students including workshops, group counseling, brief individual counseling, couples counseling, psychiatric evaluations and medication management, crisis intervention services, substance use assessments, nutritional services, and consultations. **ALL SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE UCC ARE FREE OF CHARGE.** During your meeting today, you and the counselor you meet with will work together to understand your concerns, establish goals, identify resources, and develop a plan to help you address your concerns. We will work together to determine which, if any, services at the UCC are appropriate for you. You may be referred to a workshop to develop new skills; group counseling to learn more about yourself in the context of social support; brief individual counseling to address specific goals one-on-one; or to a consulting psychiatrist who can meet with you to determine if medication might be of assistance. You may or may not continue to work with the same counselor that you see today. If your needs and/or goals would be better addressed by more intensive or specialized treatment than we are able to offer at the UCC, we will encourage you to seek such treatment off campus.

The UCC emphasizes a *brief, solution focused, treatment approach*. This means that we work with you to get from point A (the problem that leads you to seek our services) to point B (the resolution of that problem that ends your need for our services) in the most direct and efficient way possible. If you are interested in more open-ended, insight-oriented therapy, your needs will be better served in the local community and we can assist you with a referral to an off-campus provider. If your needs change, you are welcome to return to the UCC for a drop-in session to address additional concerns. The UCC is also available 24/7 to any student who is in crisis. During business hours, students in crisis are encouraged to drop-in to the UCC. After hours, students can reach our on-call counselors by calling the UCC (574-631-7336) and pressing "0" to speak with a counselor.

EFFECTS OF COUNSELING. Most students can expect to benefit from counseling, making positive changes in their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The results of counseling can be variable, and a positive outcome depends on your engagement in the counseling process. Change, even positive change, is difficult and can be painful at times. If you feel your counselor is not a good match for you, you have the right to request a different counselor. You can do this by talking to your counselor or by returning to the UCC during our drop-in times and requesting a new therapist.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF SERVICE. Information you share with the UCC will be kept in strict confidence. The UCC staff and the UHS staff operate as a team of health care professionals and we may consult with each other to provide you with the best care possible. These consultations are for professional and/or training purposes only. Information will not be disclosed to any University department or outside agency beyond the UCC and UHS without your written permission. **HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME SITUATIONS IN WHICH WE ARE LEGALLY OBLIGATED TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION OR TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOU OR OTHERS FROM HARM:** (a) if we believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being or has been abused, we may be required to file a report with the appropriate government agency; (b) if we believe that you are a danger to yourself, we are obligated to seek hospitalization or to contact others who can help provide protection; (c) if we believe that you are a threat to others, we are required to take protective actions which may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for you; (d) if a court issues an order for the release of UCC records (for example in a civil or criminal proceeding in which you introduce a mental condition as an element of your claim or defense or if you make a claim against a mental health provider for malpractice.). **PLEASE NOTE: THE EXCEPTIONS TO CONFIDENTIALITY ARE RARE.** If any of these exceptions should occur, it is the UCC's policy that, whenever possible, we will discuss any action that is being considered with you.

Please Note: If you are under the age 18, the State of Indiana requires that your parents/legal guardians' consent to any treatment you receive at the UCC. The UCC will address this with you and work with you to obtain that consent.

COUNSELING RECORDS. Counseling files are NOT PART OF YOUR ACADEMIC RECORDS and only UCC staff have access to your records. The UCC will release your record, or specific information included in your record, only when you give us written permission by signing a release of information form. Counseling records are the property of the UCC. Information in your counseling records are the property of the UCC and you, the client. Counseling files are stored either on paper in locked files or electronically on a secure server that is only accessible by our staff. When technical support is needed to service our computerized system only specific personnel are used who do not access individual records and who have been trained regarding confidentiality. Your record will be destroyed seven years after your last service contact with the Center.

PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENTS AND MEDICATIONS. The UCC has part-time consulting psychiatrists available to: (a) assess any medical basis for your current difficulties and to discuss treatment options, (b) determine whether medication may be helpful to you and provide a prescription, and (c) monitor medication(s) you are currently taking. Students can be referred to a consulting psychiatrist only after meeting with one of the counselors on our staff. The consulting psychiatrist will decide if you must also be in counseling at the UCC in order for them to continue to prescribe you medication. UCC consulting psychiatrists currently do not prescribe medication to students who are being seen in counseling outside of the UCC. If more extensive, more accessible, or more specialized psychiatric care is needed than the consulting psychiatrist can provide, the UCC will assist you with a referral to a private psychiatrist who can meet your needs. Insurance can often help cover the cost of private psychiatric care.

Psychiatric services are limited and as such we ask for your cooperation to enable us to utilize these resources for the benefit of the most students. Please be on time for your appointments with your psychiatric provider and notify the UCC if you are unable to attend your appointment. This allows us to reschedule that time for other students seeking appointments. If you miss several appointments without notifying the UCC in advance, we will no longer be able to offer you psychiatric services and you will be referred off campus for psychiatric care. It is also important that you work with your psychiatrist to obtain refills in a timely manner, especially around semester breaks. Last minute emergency requests to refill prescriptions may not be possible.

COMMUNICATION WITH YOU. Please note that email is not a confidential form of communication. If you give us permission on your initial paperwork, we may contact you by email regarding administrative, non-clinical matters such as scheduling appointments, sending you appointment reminders, or recommending community resources. If you wish to communicate with us about clinical concerns, it is best to do so by telephone to protect your privacy. We do not use email for counseling.

CHANGING APPOINTMENTS. If it is necessary to change or cancel your appointment, please contact the UCC at least 24 hours in advance. This will allow us to free that appointment time for another student in need of an appointment. To the best of our ability, we will notify you in advance if your counselor is ill or otherwise unable to meet with you. Arriving on time and regular attendance are important in order to facilitate the counseling process.

OFF CAMPUS REFERRALS: If we determine that your mental health needs would be better addressed by an off-campus provider or if you wish to see an off-campus mental health provider, the UCC will connect you with our referral database, "Thriving Campus", that can assist you in locating and connecting to mental health services in the community. This platform includes a help feature that provides useful information and tips to assist you with the referral process and accessing your insurance. The UCC does not endorse or guarantee the quality of the clinical work of any of the referrals it provides, and as with any service, you should thoroughly research your choices and make appropriate efforts to determine if the provider is the right match for you. You make the final decision in choosing a mental health provider off campus.

SUPERVISION OF STAFF. Some of our counselors and all pre-doctoral interns and practicum students in the Notre Dame Clinical Psychology Doctoral program receive regular supervision of their counseling work. These counselors/interns/practicum students are required to request to have sessions videotaped for review by their supervisors. If your counselor wishes to record your session, you will be asked to give your written permission to do this. Any information shared with supervisors will be treated confidentially and respectfully, the goal being to give you the best service we can. If you do not wish to be taped, your wish will be respected. Video recordings are deleted on a regular basis and are not part of your clinical record.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION. The UCC seeks to assess the effectiveness of its services. Prior to meeting with a counselor, all students are asked to complete a questionnaire that includes demographic information, a brief assessment of your history, and present concerns. If you continue in individual or couples counseling, you will complete a very brief questionnaire before every third session. This information allows the counselor to better assess your needs and to check on your progress on an ongoing basis. Some of your reported information may also be used for administrative and/or research purposes. The UCC participates in ongoing research projects related to college student mental health and you may be asked to consent to have some of the information you have provided included in this research. Any use of such information will be in aggregate (group) form, and you will not be personally

identifiable either directly or indirectly. Your consent to have your information included in any research is totally voluntary and will not impact the treatment you receive at the UCC.

YOUR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT. You will be asked to provide your electronic signature on a computerized form indicating that you have read this Informed Consent Statement in its entirety, that you understand the scope and limitations of services, the exceptions to confidentiality, and that you are aware that you can address any questions you may have in your meeting with the counselor today. A paper copy of this form is available upon request at the front desk.

Consent to Receive Treatment at the University Counseling Center (UCC)

Your signature below indicates that you have read the Consent to Treatment Form in its entirety, that you understand the scope and limitations of services provided at the UCC, the exceptions to confidentiality, and that you are aware that you can address any questions that you may have in your meeting with the counselor today.