



Tips for Referring a Student to Counseling

- If you have time to prepare in advance, speak with a clinician in the Counseling Center to develop a specific strategy for approaching the student.
- Consider an appropriate time and place to approach the student to minimize distractions. The student will be more likely to be open with you if they do not have to rush off or are in the presence of others.
- Begin your conversation with general questions about how they are doing and enjoying their time at Bentley. This may be a good way to begin expressing your concerns.
- Speak directly and calmly and let them know you are coming from a place of care and concern.
- "I wanted to speak with you one-on-one as I've been concerned about you and I want to make sure you are ok."
- Describe specific and objective behaviors you have witnessed that have led you to feel concerned about the student.
- "I have noticed that you have missed quite a few classes this semester."
- "You have seemed particularly distracted the past week."
- "You left the class crying the other day. Is everything ok?"
- If based on the conversation it appears that the student could benefit from some support, make a referral to the Counseling Center.
- "Sounds like you are going through a lot right now. I'd like to help you get connected with someone at the Counseling Center who can give you the support you need."



- Be understanding, yet firm. The student may initially resist the idea, but they will at least give the idea some thought if you are persistent.
- Some students have such concerns about mental health stigma, they are unwilling to consider going to the Counseling Center. In these cases, try referring to the Health Center at (781) 891-2222 instead. The practitioners there are highly trained in issues of mental health and are skilled having conversations that will allay student concerns.
- Let the student know that services at the Counseling Center are part of the cost of attendance and that their conversations with a clinician are confidential.
- Show the student our website. This can make students feel more comfortable about who we are and what we have to offer. They can even request to meet with a particular clinician.
- Consider having the student call the Counseling Center to set up an appointment while you are still meeting them. Sometimes making the appointment is the most difficult part and it can be really helpful to have someone help.