

HELPING STUDENTS GUIDE



HELPING STUDENTS

A Guide for Assisting Students in Need

Working with students on a day-to-day basis provides rewarding experiences as well as unexpected challenges. Some of those unexpected challenges arise because students struggle with issues in their personal lives that may have the potential to impact our campus community. Many students need help with a problem at some point during their college careers, and many will turn to faculty or staff members they trust for that support.

It's with those students in mind that the Division of Student Affairs and the WCU Student Concern Response Team (SCRT) is providing this resource. Getting students the help they need before they're in crisis is a goal we are always working towards. Accordingly, the following information will help you assist students with issues, situations and problems they struggle to overcome.

Western Carolina University (WCU) has a broad array of services and resources that can help students manage their problems and work through difficult situations. This publication is intended to provide you with guidance and knowledge when responding to students who might share their problems or concerns. This is not an exhaustive or comprehensive resource for making diagnoses or providing therapy, rather it is a quick guide to aid you in your work with our students.

This publication is designed as a guide to assist you with evaluating the severity of the situation and the appropriate level of response. Information in **red** is for situations that are most critical, those incidents that are life threatening emergencies. **Orange** information is situations that may be urgent and need attention, either medical or psychological concerns. **Yellow** information is provided to assist with victims of violence, but are not emergency or urgent situations.

Gray is information for assisting students with academic concerns, questions and services. Finally, **purple** information is to provide the reader with a quick reference guide for campus and community resources that can provide assistance.

When confronted with a distraught student none of us should feel alone. This is a caring, collaborative academic community and all of us are working to help our students succeed. We hope this resource will make it easier to connect with one another and all the expertise available at Western Carolina University.

We want to thank you for caring for our students and for this campus community.

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INTRODUCTION

IDENTIFYING A STUDENT CONCERN

A student concern is a situation or experience that inhibits the student's ability to function well in the university environment.

Interactions with students are a vital, essential part of being on a university campus, providing teachable moments to create an environment for learning which takes place both in and out of the classroom.

If a student's behavior becomes different from routine, normal, or expected interactions that may lead to disruption of classroom, a university activity, or cause concern of threat towards oneself and/or others, the situation elevates to a student concern.

If you believe there is an urgent situation with a student, and you are unsure what to do, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) is available to consult with you.

Faculty, staff, students or others who are concerned about a student that is potentially dangerous to self or others, or is disruptive are encouraged to report or discuss the concern with an appropriate university representative. If you have a concern about a student, confidentiality laws do not prevent you from reporting the concern.

Please complete the online report form at scrt.wcu.edu. Click the Reporting Form Link located on the right. This is an open reporting system for anyone concerned for a student's wellbeing.

Share as much information as possible to assist in appropriate outreach. If there are questions you cannot answer, simply skip those entries. If you would like to first talk to someone about your concerns, call the Office of Student Affairs.

If the incident is an emergency, immediately call University Police 828.227.8911.

Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

REPORTING A STUDENT CONCERN

Whether the student is a beginning freshman or a last semester senior, we encourage you to make a referral if you notice an issue with a student. By seeking to address students' needs early, appropriate interventions can help to empower students to make choices that have a positive impact on their academic success. Student concerns are addressed in two separate but related processes depending on whether the student concern is academic or non-academic in nature.

Reporting Systems

Academic concerns are managed via Navigate. Navigate is a web-based tool which WCU uses to coordinate, target, and report on advising, tutoring, and other student success services. Navigate can be accessed in **myWCU.wcu.edu** by clicking on the link for Advising/Tutoring.

Non-academic concerns are managed in the online platform, Maxient. Faculty, staff, students, family members, or anyone with a non-academic concern can submit their concern via Maxient. The form can be accessed via **scrt.wcu.edu**.

Issuing an Academic Alert:

1. Log on to myWCU.wcu.edu
2. Click on 'Advising/Tutoring' this will bring you to Navigate
3. Click on 'Issue an Alert' in the top, right-hand Actions section
4. Complete the required fields and click the submit button
5. An email will be sent to the individual issuing the alert to inform them the report was received. Reporting parties will also be notified about the outcome of the alert.

Please note: Students do not have access to alerts or any related comments.

Issuing a Non-Academic Alert:

1. Visit scrt.wcu.edu
2. Click on purple 'Report' button in right-hand side of page
3. Complete the fields as completely as possible and click the submit button
4. The alert will be assigned to the appropriate person or office depending on the reason for the report.
5. Due to confidentiality issues, reporting parties will not be notified about the outcome of the issue they report.

Academic Advising Center | 828.227.7753
Student Concern Response Team | 828.227.7147

RESPONSE TEAMS

Student Concern Response Team

WCU utilizes a case-management based approach to report and provide support for students demonstrating behaviors of concern. Reports may be received through both of the university's reporting systems. The Student Concern Response Team (SCRT) meets regularly to confidentially share information and discuss students who may be experiencing difficulties.

SCRT is charged with coordinating efforts and appropriate services to students in need. These services can include but are not limited to Academic Services, Counseling & Psychological Services, Dean of Students, Office of Student Affairs, Health Services, Residential Living, and University Police.

Behavioral Assessment Team

WCU seeks to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. Violence, threats, intimidation and possession of unauthorized weapons are inconsistent with this objective. It is the policy of WCU to promote civility and mutual respect and to prohibit violence in the university community.

The Behavioral Assessment Team was established under the directive of university policy 109 Campus/Workplace Violence Prevention and Management. The policy is located at: [**go.wcu.edu/policy109**](https://go.wcu.edu/policy109)

The team is comprised of a core group of multi-disciplinary professionals who will analyze potentially threatening situations and advise administrators on recommended courses of action to mitigate risk to the campus.

***Student Concern Response Team | scrt.wcu.edu
Behavioral Assessment Team | 828.227.7147***

LIFE THREATENING OR SERIOUS EMERGENCY

CALL 828.227.8911

Examples of emergencies in this category include:

- **Acute medical issues warranting immediate treatment**
 - Bleeding (heavy or uncontrollable)
 - Breathing problems / Chest pain
 - Drug or alcohol overdose
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Seizures / Head injury
- **Suicidal intentions**
- **Assault**
 - Physical
 - Aggravated
 - Sexual
- **Suspicious person or intruder**
- **Mental health crisis**
 - Hearing voices
 - Disoriented
 - Misperception of reality
- **Homicidal, aggressive or potentially violent intentions / actions**

WHEN YOU CALL **828.227.8911**, be prepared to answer questions for the dispatch operator:

- Name of the person calling
- Phone number which the caller can be reached at
- The location of the incident, including building, floor and room number if applicable
- Nature of the incident; “Tell me exactly what happened”
- If this is a medical request, there will be several questions asked by the Dispatcher in order to send the most appropriate response.

WCU Dispatch | 828-227-8911

URGENT MEDICAL ISSUES: ILLNESS OR INJURY

Over the course of a typical academic year, many students find themselves coping with an injury or illness, and in some situations, students are dealing with very serious problems.

Health Services in the Bird Building offers a variety of medical services for students at WCU. Medical providers can provide evaluation and management of many medical conditions and provide comprehensive health care for students.

Access to Health Services is funded by the Student Health Fee, and students do NOT have to be enrolled in the mandatory UNC System student health plan to receive care.

More serious problems may require specialist care and could result in the student choosing to seek health care at a hospital or health provider closer to home.

Students that require medical care can access Health Services through a variety of methods, including calling for an appointment, scheduling through the online patient portal or choosing walk in services. Walk-in patients are triaged by an RN in the facility to determine the urgency of the care required.

Students that need medical care after normal business hours can access Campus EMS services or may choose to visit a local Urgent Care. The closest Emergency Department is located at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva.

Campus EMS | 828.227.8911
Health Services | 828.227.7460

RECOGNIZING PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCERNS

In many cases in which a student is distressed, faculty and staff can provide important help through listening emphatically, facilitating an open discussion of problems, instilling hope, conveying acceptance, giving reassurance and offering basic advice.

Faculty and staff will become aware of a student who is in distress in various ways: direct observation of a student's behavior in the classroom, information provided by the student as part of a class assignment (e.g., a paper), communication via email explaining an absence, and/or conversations with a student.

Some students will need additional assistance to help overcome problems and to resume effective functioning. Please use this guide to help you respond to these students

While students may experience a range of psychological concerns, the most frequent ones are listed below. The signs corresponding to each concern is also listed.

- **Anxiety**
 - Excessive worry
 - Panic attacks
 - Avoidance of situations that cause distress
- **Depression:**
 - A prolonged feeling of deep sadness
 - Feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, and helplessness
 - Social withdrawal
- **Substance Use:**
 - Failure to fulfill major responsibilities at school and work
 - Restlessness or jumpiness
 - Risky behaviors
- **Suicidality:**
 - Talking about being a burden
 - Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself
 - Withdrawing from or avoiding contact with others
 - Talking about feeling hopeless
- **Eating Disorders:**
 - Preoccupation with weight, food, and dieting
 - Development of food rituals
 - Excessive, rigid exercise regimen
- **Psychotic Disorders:**
 - Extremely odd or eccentric behavior
 - Inappropriate or extreme lack of emotion
 - Inability to connect with or track normal communication

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

RESPONDING TO PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCERNS

Faculty and staff provide an essential role in assisting students to access necessary resources.

If you are concerned about a student, remember “CATS Care.”

Connect: Tolerate your own anxiety and awkwardness. Start a conversation with the student voicing your specific concerns. Acknowledge and validate that student’s distress.

Ask: Show that you care by asking questions about the student’s well-being and about potential risk. Be direct in these questions. Do not ask directly about suicide (“Have you thought about suicide?”).

Take Time: Let the student know that they are not alone. Be hopeful and be available.

Share: Share resources with the students. Share information with campus partners that will be able to assist the student. Do not be the only one to know.

Campus Resources:

CAPS provides emergency services for WCU students in addition to free counseling sessions. You may walk the student to CAPS and ask to see a counselor immediately if you believe the student is unable to wait for a regular appointment.

CAPS provides consultation services for faculty and staff. If you need assistance in approaching a student or help in deciding the best course of action in working with a student of concern, call CAPS.

CAPS provides after hours emergency services. To activate after hours emergency care, call 828.227.7469 and select “0” to speak to a crisis counselor.

Local Resources:

Appalachian Community Services (24 hour crisis services): 888.315.2880

National Hotlines:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.8255

Veterans Affairs (VA) Suicide Hotline: 1.800.273.8255
press “1” to reach VA hotline.

The Trevor Helpline: 866.488.7386

National crisis & suicide prevention hotline for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth.

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

***After Hours and Weekends Crisis Care | 828.227.7469 and select “0”**

VIOLENCE AND REPORTING

Responding to victims of violence and criminal activity is a very challenging and complex process. It is most critical that a caring intervention addresses all factors, with particular attention toward health and safety issues for all affected by the situation.

There are many resources on campus to assist you and students dealing with situations where there is a history or potential for violence.

Title IX Obligations

Western Carolina University is committed to equal opportunity in educational programs and employment for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, political affiliation and veteran status.

The University supports programs, curricular and extra-curricular activities that encourage inclusion and appreciation for all members of its community, and will not tolerate discrimination. Unlawful discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment, based on the factors noted above, such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged to report the incident to the WCU Title IX Coordinator. To find more information visit go.wcu.edu/titleix. You also may make an anonymous report online.

Clery Act Compliance

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Crime Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 requires colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance to gather and make public information about certain crimes on or near their campuses and publish policy statements concerning campus safety and security. WCU complies with all requirements of the Clery Act, and has established designated Campus Security Authorities who are individuals obligated to report certain criminal activities that occur on the WCU campus. Those activities include:

- **Criminal Offenses**, including criminal homicide: murder, and non-negligent manslaughter, manslaughter by negligence
- **Hate Crimes** (any of the above mentioned offenses, and any incidents of) larceny-theft, simple assault, intimidation, and destruction/damage/vandalism of property
- **VAWA Offenses**, including domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking
- **Arrests and Referrals for Disciplinary Action** including weapons law violations, drug abuse violations, liquor law violations

Title IX Coordinator | 828.227.7116

Clery Coordinator | 828.227.7301

ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Abusive relationships often involve a repeating pattern of verbal, sexual, emotional, and physical abuse that increases over time.

Indications of an Abusive Relationship can include:

- Verbal abuse
- Isolation from friends and family
- Fear of abandonment
- Fear of partner's temper
- Fear of intimidation
- Acceptance of highly controlling behavior
- Assuming responsibility for partner's abusive behavior
- Feeling trapped
- Fear of leaving the relationship

In the event that the victim has identified a student or student organization as the responsible party of the victimization, please remind the student that the Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE) is a resource. Contact DSCE to document the situation.

We encourage you to:

- Have the student call University Police if they are in immediate danger or in need of emergency services.
- Consult with the Department of Student Community Ethics to document the situation and determine if student disciplinary action is necessary.
- Consult with the University Police Department for guidance and/or resources.

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469
Department of Student Community Ethics | 828.227.7234
Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147
University Police Department | 828.227.7301
University Police Department (emergencies) | 828.227.8911

ASSAULT

Assault is an action carried out by a threat of bodily harm coupled with an apparent, present ability to cause the harm.

- Aggravated assault
- Physical assault
- Sexual assault, including:
 - Completed or attempted rape
 - Threats of rape
 - Sexual coercion
 - Unwanted sexual contact with force or threat of force
 - Unwanted sexual contact without consent

Sexual assault is sexual contact initiated against a person without consent. Although most assaults are committed by men against women, men can be assaulted by women, and same-sex assaults also occur.

WCU defines consent as follows:

Consent approval and permission to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity demonstrated by clear actions, words, or writings. A determination as to whether consent has been given may include the following factors:

- It is the responsibility of each party to make certain that the other has consented before engaging in sexual activity.
- Informed consent is freely and voluntarily given and it is mutually understood by all parties involved.
- If an individual engages in sexual activity when the individual knows, or reasonably should know, that the other person is physically or mentally incapacitated, there is no consent.
- It is not an excuse that the responding party was intoxicated and therefore did not realize the incapacity of the other.
- If a person is under the age of legal consent, asleep, or incapacitated as defined in the Code, there is no consent.
- If coercion, intimidation, threats, and/or physical force are used, there is no consent.
- Consent is not to be inferred from silence, passivity, or lack of resistance. Relying on non-verbal communication alone is not sufficient to determine consent.
- Consent is not to be inferred from an existing or previous dating or sexual relationship. Even in the context of a relationship, there must be consent to engage in sexual activity.
- Consent to some form of sexual activity cannot be automatically taken as consent to any other form of sexual activity.
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time and requires an outward demonstration that clearly conveys through understandable words or actions that a party is no longer willing to engage in sexual activity.
- Once consent is withdrawn, the sexual activity must cease immediately.

We encourage you to:

- Have the student call 828.227.8911 to report the assault and to learn about additional assistance and resources. If the student does not do so, you must report the incident as obligated as a Campus Security Authority.
- Refer the student to Counseling & Psychological Services.

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

University Police Department | 828.227.7301

HATE INCIDENTS

FACTS ABOUT HATE INCIDENTS

- A hate crime is a criminal act against a person or their property because of that person's actual or perceived race, color, religion, nationality, disability, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- A bias or hate incident is an act that, while not meeting the legal definition of a crime, involves the same types of behavior and targeting of underrepresented groups. Bias or hate incidents are more common on college campuses than hate crimes.
- Be aware of the cultural resources available on campus. Your sensitivity to the unique needs of international students, LGBTQ students, students of color, nontraditionally-aged students and other underrepresented groups can be important in helping students impacted by a bias or hate incidents or hate crimes.

We encourage you to:

- Have the student report the incident to University Police if the student is in immediate danger or to access emergency services.
- Report occurrences of hate incidents through the bias reporting process at the **bias.wcu.edu**. Reports will be addressed through the Office of Student Affairs by the Dean of Students.
- Refer the student to Counseling & Psychological Services.

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

Dean of Students | 828.227.7147

Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

University Police Department | 828.227.8911

HAZING

NORTH CAROLINA'S HAZING LAW

It is unlawful for any student in attendance at any university, college, or school in this State to engage in hazing or to aid or abet any other student in the commission of this offense.

For the purposes of this section hazing is defined as follows:

“To subject another student to physical injury as part of an initiation or as a prerequisite to membership into any organized school group, including any society, athletic team, fraternity or sorority, or other similar group.” (North Carolina General Statutes § 14-35)

WCU CODE OF CONDUCT HAZING DEFINITION

Any activity by a student, student group, or RSO, related to membership in a student group or RSO, that intentionally or unintentionally endangers the mental, physical, or emotional health of a person. Consent is not a defense or excuse to participation in the activity. Any actions that demean, disgrace or embarrass a person may also be considered hazing. Hazing can occur either on or off-campus. While hazing is typically associated with membership selection and initiation into a group or organization, it is possible for hazing to occur before, during, after or separate from membership selection and initiation, and regardless of a person's status or position in the student group or RSO.

FACTS ABOUT HAZING

- Hazing is prohibited at WCU.
- Rites of passage or initiation into organizations may become hazing in some situations.
- Hazing can be psychologically damaging and presents serious physical risks (including death) to students.
- Hazing has been known to occur in organizations not just limited to Fraternities and Sororities but also Marching Band, Athletic Teams, Intramural Teams, Club Sports, Service organizations, etc.

We encourage you and/or the student to:

- Report the incident to University Police. Call 828.227.8911 if the student is in immediate danger or to access emergency services.
- Report occurrences of hate incidents through the bias reporting process at the **Student Affairs Reporting Form**. Reports will be addressed through the Office of Student Affairs by the Dean of Students.
- Refer the student to Counseling & Psychological Services.

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

Dean of Students | 828.227.7147

Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

STALKING

FACTS ABOUT STALKING

- Stalking is repeated following or harassment of an individual that is designed to instill a sense of fear or danger.
- Stalkers often have an irrational obsession with the victim and try to gain power and omnipotence through control and intimidation.
- Stalking behavior includes following the victim, harassment via phone, text, social networks, mail, FAX, letters, unwanted gifts and unwanted attention.
- Stalkers can be any gender and targets can be of the same or different gender

We encourage you to:

- Have the student call University Police if they are in immediate danger or in need of emergency services.
- Consult with the Department of Student Community Ethics to document the situation and determine if student disciplinary action is necessary.
- Refer the student to Counseling & Psychological Services

Counseling & Psychological Services | 828.227.7469

Dean of Students | 828.227.7147

Department of Student Community Ethics | 828.227.7234

Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

University Police Department | 828.227.7301

CHOOSING A MAJOR

Professional advisors can assist students with matters beyond course selection and registration. They help guide social and academic experiences in ways that will give students the skills to succeed beyond college. Students are encouraged to check in with their advisor often during the semester to discuss progress and questions.

Professional advisors are located in the Advising Center, 1st floor Killian Annex, and assist students who are undecided or changing their major. Students who wish to change or declare a major must meet with a professional advisor in the Advising Center for this change to take effect. Once a major is declared, a faculty advisor will be assigned to the student's record.

The Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD) provides WCU students with the training and resources they need to prepare for a fulfilling career after college.

The CCPD assists students with career counseling, job searches, advice and assistance with choosing a major.

Students undecided about a major:

- The majority of the student population is undecided about choice of major.
- It's estimated that 60-75% of students change their major at least once in college for a variety of reasons.
- Students change majors for a variety of reasons: they realize they didn't like the subject matter as much as they enjoyed the way it was taught, a major is different from what they assumed, they realize their skills are not a good fit for the major, there are majors they never knew existed that are a better fit for their interests, etc.

Self-exploration is the course of action for students choosing to identify a potential major.

Encourage the student to:

- Make an appointment with CCPD staff via myWCU's Advising/Tutoring link or emailing our office at careers@wcu.edu.
- Utilize Focus2 for self-assessments that recommend careers and majors based on their results. Students can find access information on our web site.
- Research career options through Vault Guidebooks, accessed via our web site.
- Explore their interest through volunteer opportunities or on-campus jobs.

Center for Career and Professional Development | 828.227.7133

CONCERNED ABOUT A CAREER

Students undecided about a career path:

- Many students will choose a major but need assistance with understanding traditional and nontraditional career paths.
- Students often associate the more well-known professions with their course of study and need assistance with career exploration to understand professions they did not know existed.
- Students will often need assistance in realizing that the path to a particular career is not necessarily linear. A major in “X” does not limit you to a profession in “Y.”

Students interested in gaining experience or employment:

- Students may want to clarify their career goals and utilize experiential learning opportunities to confirm their choices of major and occupational interests.
- Students may need assistance with developing a comprehensive job search utilizing various methods and resources.

Center for Career and Professional Development Tools

- Assessments: Available to assist students with identifying their interests, personality, values, abilities and relating that information to a major or career.
- The Center for Career and Professional Development website (careers.wcu.edu) is interactive and full of information and services available to students. The “Careers by Major” is one feature from the site that has information about WCU majors including a direct link to the appropriate academic department.

In the Spring of 2020, Non-Work Student On-Campus Student Employment transitioned to Human Resources. However, students can still use JobCat (jobcat.wcu.edu) to search for on- and off- campus jobs and internships.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS AND EVENTS:

The Center for Career and Professional Development offers career-related programs and events. Topics include: developing job search skills, resume, cover letter and reference preparation; preparing for the interview; mock interviewing through the online program, the Big Interview; etiquette events, career fairs, and on-campus interviewing. Students should visit the CCPD organization page in Engage for event details.

- Career Fairs: Several recruitment events are held annually on- campus giving students multiple opportunities to connect with potential employers.
- Internships/Co-ops: Information and instruction is available to students on the importance of gaining an internship.
- The Center for Career and Professional Development also has resources available online to identify potential opportunities.

Center for Career and Professional Development | 828.227.7133

FACING ACADEMIC CHALLENGES

Mathematics Tutoring Center (MTC)

The Mathematics Tutoring Center offers Online Drop-in Tutoring and Online Appointment Tutoring for all math classes. Students can find the Drop-in schedule and instructions on how to use this service by going [HERE](#) and clicking on “Get Drop-in Help.” The Drop-in service is available from **9am-9pm Mondays through Thursdays, and from 9am-5pm on Fridays**, while classes are in session and the university is open. Online Appointments are just a few clicks away for some 100- and 200-level math courses by following [THESE INSTRUCTIONS](#). Students, faculty, and staff can learn more about our services through our [WEBSITE](#), and by watching this [VIDEO](#). The MTC Director, Sibley Bryan, can be reached at 828-227.3830 and fsbryan@wcu.edu.

Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC)

The WaLC offers a variety of FREE services to help students achieve success in all of their classes. Students can make appointments for any of the following services in Navigate <http://navigate.wcu.edu>. Students who need help to schedule an appointment should call 828-227-2274 or review the “How to Make an Online Appointment” guide at <https://tutoring.wcu.edu>.

- Course tutors are available for more than 130 courses across a range of disciplines.
- Writing tutors can help with any type of writing assignment and at any phase of the writing process, from brainstorming to putting the finishing touches on a final draft. Additionally, the WaLC’s online writing resources can help students with a variety of writing concerns, including how to avoid plagiarism, cite sources in APA, and avoid common grammatical errors.
- Lab report tutors are writing tutors who specialize in science writing and can assist students with the formatting and language in their lab reports.
- Academic skills consultants (ASCs) meet one-on-one with students to help them develop good habits for note-taking, time management, study skills, test-taking, and reading. Students also can access the WaLC’s Tools for Academic Success to help them get organized, take better notes, and practice a growth mindset.

Math Tutoring Center | 828.227.3830

Writing and Learning Commons | 828.227.2274

GUIDING MILITARY VETERAN STUDENTS

In general, veteran students are mature women and men who possess a global perspective and a realistic view of the world.

They bring relevant real-life experience to the classroom and to the overall university experience. Their leadership skills have been honed to an instinctive level, and they are accustomed to being responsible for the welfare and safety of many. They have undergone intense and prolonged training, and they possess skills that are highly-technical and widely-applicable.

While some veteran students strongly identify with their military past and readily share their experiences with new acquaintances, others wish to establish a new identity for themselves once they arrive on the college campus. Veterans often shun recognition and avoid the spotlight.

Many veteran students are virtually the same age as many of their college classmates, but their experiences are vastly different. For this reason, veterans often feel a lack of connection on campus. They can also become frustrated with students and professors whom, in their view, are living sheltered lives. This impedes the ability of veterans to become fully engaged in their college experience.

The understanding of faculty, staff, and other students can go a long way towards helping veteran students make a successful transition from the military to college life.

Western Carolina has an active Student Veteran Association that organizes activities and provides peer support to veteran students. In addition, Military Student Services connects students with veteran counseling services and maintains a Veterans Resource Center to provide military students a place to meet and find education and career information

Our Veterans Resource Center, located on the second floor of the A.K. Hines University Center (UC), is a space dedicated to military affiliated students. Open the same hours as the UC, students are encouraged to use this space to study, connect with other military affiliated students, get information, and learn about resources.

Military Student Services | 828.227.7397

SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the mission of the Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR) to remove barriers and ensure equal access for all qualified students with disabilities, in keeping with WCU's core values and guiding principles of cultural diversity and equal opportunity.

There are two legal mandates that protect students with disabilities from discrimination and ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. Those laws include Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and its amendments.

Under these laws, Western Carolina University may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of a disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are to receive approved modifications to programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

It is the student's responsibility to self-identify, provide documentation of a disability, and to request accommodations. All accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis after review of the documentation and a discussion and analysis of a student's individual needs.

Students must complete a Registration and Request for Services Form available at the OAR office and website go.wcu.edu/accessibilityservices.

The student will then:

1. Provide documentation of his or her disability. Documentation should be typed on letterhead stationary or be in a report format and should include the following:
 - A clearly stated diagnosis;
 - A description of the diagnostic methodology used;
 - A description of the student's current functional limitations in an academic environment;
 - The signature, printed name, title, professional credentials, and contact information of the evaluator; and
 - The date of the most recent evaluation.
2. Meet with an OAR representative for an intake interview and analysis of needs.
3. Work collaboratively with OAR to generate Accommodations Letters.
4. Bring the Accommodation Letter to the faculty member.
5. Make an appointment with the faculty member to confidentially discuss his or her needs.
6. Obtain faculty signatures and return signature page to OAR.

Office of Accessibility Resources | 828.227.3886

REQUESTING ABSENCE NOTIFICATION

As per the University General Attendance Policy all students are expected to attend all meetings of the courses in which they are enrolled. However, students may miss classes due to unforeseen circumstances. The Student Absence Notification process is designed to serve as a resource and central point of contact for students who, in a crisis situation, request that their instructors be notified of their absence.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES DOES NOT EXCUSE STUDENTS FROM CLASSES and/or COURSE REQUIREMENTS. IN ALL CASES, INSTRUCTORS' ABSENCE POLICIES PREVAIL.

Only when appropriate documentation is submitted to the Office of Student Affairs regarding a student's extended absence, such as, serious illness, hospitalization, death or serious illness of immediate family member, or a crisis situation which threaten the student's academic progress, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs-Health & Wellness will review documentation. If the documentation supports the request, the student's instructors will be notified.

Both Health Services and Counseling & Psychological Services can provide a proof of visit or attendance verification upon request by students. This is not intended to be used as an absence request or absence notification, only proof of the visit.

Instructors will **NOT** be notified if an absence is less than four consecutive days or when an absence is for a non-crisis situation, such as minor illness, doctor's visit, dentist appointments, prearranged trips, court, etc. **Students are responsible for communicating directly** with their instructor (s) when they have been, or anticipate being, absent from class, and to arrange for completion of required work, including missed assignments and exams.

Should a student's illness or concern lead to a student or parental request for consultation, the student should schedule a meeting with the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs-Health & Wellness in the Office of Student Affairs to discuss options and a plan of action.

Additional consultation should be with Academic Advising to ensure Student Academic Status, as well as, Financial Aid if student obtains aid or awards.

Academic Advising | 828.227.7753
Financial Aid | 828.227.7290
Office of Student Affairs | 828.227.7147

PURSuing A WITHDRAWAL

Students may find through the semester that circumstances are such that a withdrawal from a course or from the term/semester is necessary.

Withdrawing from the University after the start of the semester will result in a W in all ungraded courses. W's resulting from a University Withdrawal do not count toward the state-mandated limit for course withdrawals.

Withdrawing from all classes:

- Must be done before the Withdrawal Deadline published by the Registrar's Office.
- May result in a partial refund (see Refund Policy).
- Will affect satisfactory academic progress as related to academic standing and financial aid.
- May not be used to avoid penalty as the result of academic misconduct.

Failure to withdraw (abandonment) will result in a grade of F, and affect both GPA and academic standing.

Course Withdrawal

After consultation with the Office of Student Retention and the instructor of the course, a student may withdraw from any course prior to the expiration of 60% of the term. Course withdrawals must be completed in MyWCU. Students are not permitted to withdraw from courses after 60% of the term, any exceptions must be approved by the Dean's Office of the College in which the course is located. Course withdrawals affect satisfactory academic progress which also affects academic standing. (See academic standing.) Course withdrawals do not count toward the twelve hours required for full-time enrollment and no refund is given.

University Term Withdrawal

During the fall and spring semesters, a student may withdraw from the University through the last withdrawal date, as indicated by the Registrar's Office. During summer sessions, a University withdrawal occurs only if the student withdraws from all summer sessions. University withdrawals will affect satisfactory academic progress and course completion rates but will not count towards the student's 16-hour course withdrawal limit.

Three exceptions to the University withdrawal policy that will allow a student to withdraw from all courses. The exceptions are medical withdrawals, withdrawals for deployment or other military contingency, and withdrawals for extenuating circumstances.

Medical Letter of Support

Students seeking a withdrawal for medical reasons must provide sufficient documentation to either Health Services or Counseling & Psychological Services to demonstrate an ongoing health issue that has interfered with the completion of the semester. After review of medical records and documentation, the student will be notified, along with the Office of Student Retention if conditions are such that a Letter of Support can be provided to the student in support of the withdrawal request. The letter of support is not the actual withdrawal, final determination will be made in the Office of Student Retention.

Students will need to complete a University Withdrawal Form with the Office of Student Retention once documentation is approved.

REPRESENTING WCU WHILE TRAVELING

TYPES OF TRAVEL

- Student government officers are often involved in official meetings coordinated by the WCU Board of Trustees, the University of North Carolina General Administration, or the Associated Student Government of North Carolina.
- NCAA student athletes represent WCU in the Southern Conference and travel under the supervision of the Athletics Department.
- Students participating in Campus Recreation Club Sports are not NCAA athletes, but represent WCU in many sports.
- Students majoring in music or performing arts, and/or students participating in various bands or choral groups travel as cultural ambassadors of WCU.
- Some students travel as part of research projects and/or attend conferences to present research and papers.
- Intern/externships in some academic programs require students to travel as part of their degree requirements.
- Students travel throughout the state and region on behalf of the university on recruiting trips for the Office of Admission.

Are student representatives allowed to miss classes and assignments due to their role as WCU representatives?

Students in these leadership roles and participating in these experiences are still held to the same academic standards and policies as any other student. However, these students are encouraged to meet with their professors and instructors before missing any classes or assignments to discuss their travel obligations and make appropriate arrangements. It's ultimately up to the individual faculty member as to whether any absence is excused or not.

How are student representatives able to balance their academic responsibilities with these activities?

Most students in these situations have a variety of additional support systems that help them stay focused and successful. But some students struggle to balance all these demands on their time and may need assistance. If a student discloses they are struggling, please refer the student to campus resources.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

1st Floor Killian Annex
828.227.7753 | advising.wcu.edu

The Advising Center offers comprehensive academic advising to undeclared and declared undergraduate students at WCU. The Center provides a holistic approach to advising by addressing students' academic and social potential. Advisors help students to select proper courses, to choose careers and appropriate majors, to understand university academic policies and procedures, and to cope with the transition to college.

BOOKSTORE

311 Memorial Drive
828.227.7346 | books.wcu.edu

The role of the Bookstore is to provide necessary books, supplies, and other merchandise to students, faculty, and staff as efficiently and economically as possible. The Bookstore includes the Book Rental Department for undergraduates at Western Carolina University. The Book Rental Department provides the main texts for undergraduate courses at a low rental price, and gives the students the option of purchasing textbooks if desired.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

210 A.K. Hinds University Center
828.227.7206 | dca.wcu.edu

Life on campus goes far beyond the classroom. Located in the center of campus, the Department of Campus Activities is the place for students to study or hang out with friends, attend movies and events and explore new ideas and activities. The Campus Activities team plans concerts, trips, arts and cultural events, and more, all of which are offered to students at low or no cost.

CAMPUS RECREATION & WELLNESS

Campus Recreation Center
828.227.7069 | reccenter.wcu.edu

The Department of Campus Recreation & Wellness works to shape the collegiate recreation experience by building a university culture that recognizes, appreciates, and invests resources toward the long-term sustainability of programs, services, and facilities. Our mission is to foster a campus-wide culture of recreation and wellness through a comprehensive array of programs and services that educate, empower, and engage individuals to pursue and sustain healthy, balanced lifestyles. We offer quality facilities and programs that support the university community in achieving a balanced quality of life.

CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

150 Reid Building
828.227.7133 | careers.wcu.edu

WCU's Center for Career and Professional Development connects on and off-campus employers with student talent. Our services and partnerships set out to prepare our students not only to meet the workforce needs of our region and state but to become leaders in their field.

CENTER FOR SERVICE LEARNING

273 Belk Building
828.227.7184 | servicelearning.wcu.edu

Focus is on the development, promotion, and measurement of programs and initiatives that engage all partners in the mutually reciprocal process of community development, with the intention of fostering a sustainable campus culture and the personal habit of community engagement in our students.

COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)

225 Bird Building
828.227.7469 | caps.wcu.edu

CAPS provides free and confidential counseling to students. Services include individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, and outreach programming. CAPS' staff are available for consultations for faculty and staff who are concerned about a student. CAPS also offers after-hours on-campus emergency coverage for trauma and life-threatening situations such as suicide and sexual assault. To activate this service, call 828.227.7469 and select "0" for the crisis counselor.

DEAN OF STUDENTS

227 H.F. Robinson Administration Building
828.227.7147 | dos.wcu.edu

A resource for all students with the goal of cultivating a supportive campus community for everyone. The office also serves as a primary contact for parents and families of WCU students. The ultimate goal of the Dean of Students is to promote and enhance a supportive campus community that is based upon community principles and values student advocacy.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY ETHICS

224 Brown
828.227.7234 | dsce.wcu.edu

The Department of Student Community Ethics (DSCE) works with the University community to educate students about their rights and responsibilities as stated in the Western Carolina University Community Creed and the Code of Student Conduct. Please consult with the DSCE to determine if student disciplinary action is necessary.

DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENTIAL LIVING

224 Brown
828.227.7303 | housing.wcu.edu

Department of Residential Living staff is knowledgeable about campus services and often serve as the front line for getting students assistance. In addition to a full staff of residential assistants and professional staff that oversee each residential hall, case managers work to provide a personal touch for each new student to connect with the university both academically and socially.

DINING SERVICES

Courtyard Dining (224 Brown office location)
828.508.7146 | westerncarolina.campusdish.com

Campus dining fosters a fun and social environment with convenience and variety for all tastes. Students use food to create lasting experiences and memories in their time at WCU.

EMERGENCY SERVICES AND INFORMATION

1st Floor HFR Administration Building
828.227.7327 | emergency.wcu.edu

Western Carolina University is committed to creating and maintaining a culture of safety. We strive to foster a supportive and secure environment, where individuals can feel safe to visit, learn, work and live. Emergency preparedness is the responsibility of every individual in the Western Carolina University community. Together we can plan and prepare, stay informed and continue to foster a safe and secure campus environment.

FINANCIAL AID

105 Cordelia Camp
828.227.7290 | finaid.wcu.edu

Western Carolina University is committed to making higher education accessible to deserving students, and WCU has earned numerous accolades for providing a quality education at an incredible value. In addition to striving to keep tuition costs low, our Office of Financial Aid works closely with students to build grant and loan packages that will meet the student's need.

HEALTH SERVICES

100 Bird Building
828.227.7640 | healthservices.wcu.edu

Health Services provides medical care for the WCU campus community, through a hybrid clinical model of primary care and urgent care. Medical illnesses and injuries will be managed within the scope of practice for Health Services and may require other services at another facility. Injuries related to criminal acts will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency as required by North Carolina statutes.

HUNTER LIBRARY

176 Central Drive
828.227.7485 | library.wcu.edu

Hunter Library provides high-quality intellectual content to support the teaching, research and lifelong learning activities of the Western Carolina University community. Free and open access to the library's physical and electronic collections is available to WCU students, faculty and staff members.

INTERCULTURAL AFFAIRS

227 A.K. Hinds University Center
828.227.2276 | intercultural.wcu.edu

ICA works with all members of the University to provide a campus environment where students from different backgrounds and culture groups feel appreciated, respected, and valued. Through educational, social, and leadership programs, ICA promotes inclusive values of social justice and human dignity, while preparing students to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world. Our goal is to Engage, Entertain, and Educate our campus community.

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

109 Cordelia Camp
828.227.7494 | wcu.edu/9237.asp

International Programs assists with coordination of international students interested in studies at WCU, with students going abroad for programs, as well as assisting faculty with teaching opportunities.

MATH TUTORING CENTER

455 Stillwell
828.227.3830 | walc.wcu.edu

The primary purpose of the Mathematics Tutoring Center (MTC) is to provide academic assistance to students enrolled in mathematics courses and courses with mathematical content. This is accomplished by offering a drop-in tutoring program, individual tutoring, and workshops on study skills related to learning mathematics. The Center offers students who work as tutors a way to develop and refine their mathematical knowledge and their teaching skills.

MILITARY STUDENT SERVICES

138 Cordelia Camp Building
828.227.7397 | military.wcu.edu

Western Carolina University is committed to providing exemplary support to members of the military and veterans, their spouses, and their college-aged children. We provide one-on-one admissions and financial aid counseling to ensure our military students are able to maximize their benefits and receive a high-quality, affordable education.

OFFICE OF ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES

135 Killian Annex
828.227.3886 | disability.wcu.edu

The Office of Accessibility Resources at WCU is a voluntary program for students with documented disabilities designed to ensure the receipt of necessary accommodations and equal treatment in all areas of campus life. Students are encouraged to be active in the determination of accommodations.

OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

560 HFR Administration
828.227.7495 | wcu.edu/discover/diversity/

At WCU, we believe that embracing and encouraging diversity in an all-inclusive form enriches our academic community and provides our students with the kind of culturally responsive education that will make them better people, better citizens and better leaders.

OFFICE OF MENTORING AND PERSISTENCE TO SUCCESS (MAPS)

205 Killian Annex
828.227.7127 | maps.wcu.edu

MAPS provide students who are first generation, low income, and/or students with disabilities with:

- Academic advising
- Mentoring
- One-on-one tutorial support
- Workshops focused on career, financial aid, and graduate school preparation

OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

227 H.F. Robinson Administration Building
828.227.7147 | studentaffairs.wcu.edu

The Office of Student Affairs assists students with academic and personal concerns that may arise. Staff in student affairs help guide students to other campus services. Counseling, support and referrals are also provided to students who need various kinds of academic or personal help

OFFICE OF STUDENT TRANSITIONS

1st Floor Killian Annex, Suite 107
828.227.3017 | transition.wcu.edu

The Office of Student Transitions aims to foster opportunities that will empower students to thrive in transition, as they become co-creators of their college experience. We are proud to serve freshman students as well as sophomore and transfer students in transition.

OFFICE OF STUDENT RETENTION

1ST Floor Killian Annex

828.227.7171 | retention@wcu.edu | retention.wcu.edu

The Office of Student Retention provides supplemental advising to students needing additional support to be successful. Through collaboration with cross-campus partners, the office identifies these students and provides academic case management, advising students and connecting them with campus resources. Faculty and staff can refer a student to our office by email or phone, above. The office also collaborates across campus to coordinate initiatives to support student retention and persistence.

PARKING SERVICES

Camp Building | 828.227.7275 | parking.wcu.edu

WCU's Office of Parking and Transportation strives to provide safe, convenient access to Western Carolina University and its many resources and events. The primary role of the Parking and Transportation Department is to administer the parking permit process and to enforce the parking regulations of the University. In addition to overseeing all on-campus parking, the office operates CAT-TRAN, WCU's on-campus bus service.

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

206 Killian Annex | 828.227.7216 | registrar.wcu.edu

The Registrar's Office fosters student success through the management of the University's student information system. In close partnership with other academic units the Registrar's Offices owns or oversees:

- Publication of the academic calendar and university catalog,
- Schedule of classes, classroom scheduling room reservations & final exams scheduling,
- Registration, grading, and academic standing, graduation and student records.
- Degree audit process, transfer equivalencies and transfer articulation.
- Transcript services, enrollment certifications and enrollment verifications.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Office of Student Involvement and Leadership

3rd floor University Center | 828.227.7450

Opportunities exist for students to become involved in over 150 different clubs and organizations across campus.

- Academic Interest & Professional
- Advocacy & Awareness
- Affiliated Groups
- Club Sports
- Community Service & Engagement
- Governing Bodies
- Honorary
- Intercultural
- Political
- Programming & Performing
- Public Media & Communication
- Recreational & Sports
- Religious/Spiritual
- Special Interest

TITLE IX OFFICE

WCU Title IX Coordinator
520 HFR Administration | 828.227.7116

WCU is committed to providing a higher education environment that is free from discrimination based on sex. WCU Policies 10 and 53 prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in WCU's education programs and activities, while WCU Policy 129 specifically addresses Title IX Sexual Harassment. If you believe that you or someone else who is part of the WCU community has been discriminated against based on sex or if you have questions about Title IX, please contact the WCU Title IX Coordinator.

WCU POLICE

Cordelia Camp Annex | 828.227.7301 | police.wcu.edu

The University Police Department provides a full range of law enforcement services for the university. All of our police officers are certified by the North Carolina Attorney General's Office and meet the Attorney General's standards for law enforcement officers. The Department works towards building partnerships with the university community to provide a safe environment to achieve our academic mission.

Students, faculty, and staff may provide anonymous information regarding non-critical incidents by calling WCU Police TIPS line at 828.227.8477.

WRITING AND LEARNING COMMONS

828.227.3830 | walc.wcu.edu
Writing/LC: 207 Belk | 828.227.2274 | walc.wcu.edu

The Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC) provides students with the support, skills, and confidence they need to achieve academic excellence and become independent learners. All WaLC services are free to enrolled students and include the following:

- One-on-one writing tutoring
- Small-group course tutoring
- Individual academic skills consultations
- Online, open-access writing, research, and learning resources
- Writing, research, and academic skills workshops

WEATHER RELATED INFORMATION

weather.wcu.edu

Adverse weather can occur in the area and may effect university operations. The Provost will evaluate the effect of weather conditions and determine whether those conditions require modifications to the regular class schedule. Should the decision be reached to modify daily operations, the Office of Communications and Public Relations will announce modifications to the university schedule via the university website and media outlets, and that information also will be distributed via email. In addition, students, faculty and staff are encouraged to check the university website when the possibility of adverse weather arises. Updates about the status of university operations will be posted on a continuing basis.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Jackson County Sheriff's Office

828.586.1911

Sylva Police Department

828.586.2916

Cherokee Police Department

828.497.4131

Biltmore Park Security

828.450.699

VICTIM'S ADVOCACY

REACH of Macon County and the Center for Domestic Peace of Jackson County | 828.369.5544

REACH (Resources, Education, Assistance, Counseling and Housing) of Macon County and the Center for Domestic Peace of Jackson County provides emergency shelter and counseling services to victims of domestic violence. The program has a 24-hour, 365-day-per-year hotline. There is no pressure to report or take legal action and confidentiality is maintained.

Appalachian Mobile Crisis

828.315.2880

24 hours a day, 7 days a week

30th Judicial District Alliance, Inc.

828.452.2122 | www.30thalliance.org

NC Victim's Assistance Network

800.348.5068

VETERAN'S RESOURCES

Veterans Administration Community Based Outpatient Clinic

Franklin, NC 28734 | 828.369.1781

Veterans Administration Medical Center

Asheville, NC 28805 | 828.298.7911

National Hotlines:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1.800.273.TALK (8255)

Veterans Affairs (VA) Suicide Hotline

1.800.273.TALK (8255)

press "1" to reach VA hotline.

The Trevor Helpline

866.488.7386

only national crisis & suicide prevention hotline for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth