

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER PRIVACY PRACTICES

CONFIDENTIALITY:

- Our counselors strive to make the SCC a place where you can feel safe talking about personal matters.
- **Information gathered during a session is confidential and is shared among staff at the Center only for purposes of clinical consultation, supervision and training. Similarly, videotape, audiotape and direct observations of client-therapist interactions are used only for these purposes.**
- For some high security (i.e., government/Peace Corp/law enforcement/transportation) employment positions, you may be required to release medical records as part of a background check. We will only respond to such requests with your written authorization specific to release of mental health records.
- There are, however, some **EXCEPTIONS** to confidentiality. Therapists may release certain information without your consent. While these types of events are rare, you should know that these possibilities exist.
 - 1...When you communicate intent to cause serious physical harm or injury to another person,
 - 2...In the event we have a serious concern that you intend to kill yourself, and we assess that the risk is imminent.
 - 3...In cases of abuse or neglect of a vulnerable child or vulnerable adult,
 - 4...In cases of intent to maliciously kill or intentionally torture an animal,
 - 5...As a result of a court order,
 - 6...When you claim mental illness as a defense in a criminal or civil action.
 - 7...We may be required to disclose your health information to authorized federal officials who are conducting national security and intelligence activities or providing protective services to the President or other important officials. In this case alone, by law we cannot reveal to you when we have disclosed such information to the government (Homeland Security Act).
 - 8...In the event of your death, the personal representative of your estate (whom you have appointed) will have a legal right to access your treatment records. If you have not appointed a personal representative, your relatives or others may gain access to your records.
 - 9...Oregon Professional Licensing Boards (Psychology, Social Work, Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists) may subpoena relevant records from our agency should our staff become the subject of a complaint. If a client files a complaint or lawsuit against the Pacific Student Counseling Center, we may disclose relevant information regarding that client – so that we may provide our side of the circumstances in dispute.
 - 10...Additional limitations on confidentiality apply to students under the age of 18. If you are under 18, your counselor will discuss these limitations with you.
- At the SCC we do NOT use e-mail to initiate therapeutic conversations, as e-mail is not considered confidential. If you provide us with your e-mail address, it will be used for scheduling, confidential survey purposes, and providing clinical referral sources.
- You have the right to complain or make inquiries if you believe your rights to privacy have been violated. In such an instance, please direct your complaint or inquiry to: Director, Pacific University Student Counseling Center, 2043 College Way, Forest Grove, OR 97116, 503-352-2191.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS:

- Electronic and written records of contact with the SCC are kept secure according to legal and ethical standards set by state and federal law, and by the American Psychological Association. The Student Counseling Center utilizes electronic health records which are housed on a secure centralized server and can be accessed only by current authorized SCC staff. These records are separate from all other university records.
- Students may request to review their records with their counselor.
- Relevant information from records will be forwarded to appropriate professionals only when you sign an SCC authorization to release medical records form.
- In compliance with state law, records are maintained for 7 years following the date of last contact, and are then destroyed. At no time is the confidentiality of records compromised.

ABOUT YOUR CONTACT WITH THE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY STUDENT COUNSELING CENTER

The mission of the SCC is to provide time-effective assistance with problems in living that interfere with your academic success. This may include decision-making, crisis intervention, problem solving, adjustment to new environments/situations, or other matters of personal concern. If you have questions after reading this statement, please discuss them with the therapist you meet with for your initial visit.

During your first contact at the SCC, the consulting therapist will gather some history and talk with you to clarify your concerns and determine the options available to you. By the end of the consultation session, you may expect to gain at least two things: 1) some idea of the goals you and the consulting counselor believe are reasonable to work toward; 2) a general plan for working toward those goals.

Many students find that 1-4 sessions are sufficient to meet their needs, and other students may benefit from additional sessions. It is common for a counselor to meet with you weekly for 2-4 sessions to establish a basis for your treatment, and then to begin meeting with less frequency (e.g. every 2-3 weeks or monthly) for subsequent sessions.

When more intensive or specialized service is likely to better meet your needs, the counselor will discuss whether extended care can be provided at the SCC or if referral to a community provider would be more appropriate.

Typically, clients seeking ongoing counseling services are assigned to a counselor after the initial consultation. This assignment is based on matching schedules and therapeutic needs to available therapists. In some situations, the choice of a particular counselor may depend on certain preferences or areas of specialization. **If you have a special request regarding who you meet with for counseling, please make that request known. Attempts will be made to accommodate your requests or to discuss the options available.** You are encouraged to discuss any questions you may have regarding therapist credentials, experience, or theoretical orientation.

ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES:

- All enrolled Pacific University students are eligible for services at the SCC.
- Due to significant schedule reductions during **SUMMER term, SCC services are then limited to urgent academic concerns, crisis management, brief interventions, and maintenance of ongoing therapy. We are happy to assist with referrals to off campus agencies if you prefer to receive more frequent services.**
- Some client concerns are beyond the scope of care provided by the SCC. In these cases, students may be referred to other mental health providers in the community. Note that the university does not subsidize services obtained from off campus providers, and in this case you may benefit from meeting with a mental health provider who is covered by your medical insurance.

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE:

- Call or see <https://www.pacificu.edu/support-safety/counseling-center> for current hours and office locations.
- The SCC closes during Winter Break and Spring Break, based on the College of Arts and Sciences calendar.
- We operate on a scheduled appointment basis, with the exception of walk-in hours (noon-1:00pm weekdays when the clinic is in operation). No services are available on weekends or outside of scheduled clinic hours.
- **Students requiring emergency services when the SCC is closed are advised to do one of the following:**
 - **Contact the Washington County Crisis Line at (503) 291-9111,**
 - **Go to the Hawthorn Walk-in Center (5240 NE Elam Young Pkwy, Suite 100, Hillsboro OR, open daily 9:00 am – 8:30 pm), or**
 - **Go to a local hospital emergency room.**

FEES:

- Registered students may receive up to 10 sessions each academic year at no additional charge (July 1 – June 30). **The length of service and frequency of appointments are based on clinical considerations, and the average number of sessions used by students is 6.**
- Extended services (beyond 10 sessions) will be provided as clinically appropriate for a fee of \$15.00 per session.
- There is no fee for group therapy, regardless of number of sessions attended.
- Couples therapy fee is applied when each member of the couple have attended more than 10 sessions in the academic year (when both are enrolled students). The fee applied at that time remains at \$15.00 per session.

PSYCHIATRIC REFERRAL:

- In some cases, medication(s) to reduce interference from mental health symptoms can be prescribed and monitored by providers at the Pacific Student Health Center.
- Psychiatric referrals may also be made to psychiatrists or psychiatric mental health practitioners off campus.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE SCC:

- Providers of psychological and counseling services are available in the community.
- Some mental health conditions are especially responsive to medical intervention or specialized treatment that is not available through Pacific Counseling or Health Services.
- We will assist you by providing information on these alternatives if you wish, or we may suggest these resources if we believe alternative services will best meet your needs.

CLIENT RIGHTS:

- You are encouraged to ask questions about counseling, any risks it might involve, and possible alternative treatments.
- You may request or refuse any particular technique or withdraw from treatment at any time.
- You should expect to receive considerate and respectful services.
- You have the right to receive service regardless of sex, gender, disability, sexual identity, race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, size, age, or national origin as long as we have staff who are competent to provide the services indicated for your care. If we feel your needs fall outside the scope of our practice, a specific referral will be made to assist you.
- You can expect confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and ethical codes.
- You are encouraged to ask for information regarding counselor credentials, qualifications, and therapy approaches.

SUPERVISED CLINICAL STAFF:

- Some services at the SCC are provided by advanced graduate student counselors in training to become psychologists. These students are enrolled in Pacific’s School of Graduate Psychology and George Fox University’s Clinical Psychology programs. Licensed psychologists on staff at the SCC supervise these therapists. Trainees have a minimum of one year of experience providing therapy prior to starting at the SCC.
- Your counselor will provide information regarding their credentials during your initial appointment, and you will be told who is supervising that therapist if they are in training
- Occasionally SCC staff includes a Psychologist Resident, who has completed a doctoral degree (PhD or PsyD in psychology) and is completing post-doctoral supervised hours required to complete their license as a psychologist.

AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING:

- SCC wishes to provide the best services possible to our clients. We are continually working to enhance our own skills as counselors. Toward that end, and only with your written permission, advanced graduate student counselors in training at the SCC to become psychologists routinely audio-tape and/or video-tape sessions with their clients to improve the effectiveness of supervised clinical training.
- These tapes are used only in professional supervision with a licensed supervisor. Recordings are confidential and are routinely erased. Not all taped sessions will be reviewed. Those that are reviewed provide the licensed supervisor and counselor-in-training a chance to consult and enhance your care.
- If you do not want sessions taped, you are under no obligation to consent to this request. We will not record your sessions without your written consent. Your counselor will provide additional information during your first meeting.

**I have read the “Audio and Video Recording” section above,
and my initials below indicate my consent for recording of sessions:**

_____ I agree to **audio-taping** of my counseling sessions.

_____ I agree to **video-taping** of my counseling sessions.

IF YOU ARE DISSATISFIED:

- Although it is not possible to guarantee outcomes, the SCC is committed to providing high quality services.
- If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the services provided, you are strongly urged to speak with your counselor about these concerns.
- If you feel unable to speak with your counselor, or the difficulty cannot be resolved by working with your therapist, please contact the Director of the SCC. The Director can be reached at 503-352-2191 or email counselingcenter@pacificu.edu (note in the subject line that the message is for the Director Only).
- Copies of the ethics codes, relevant laws, and administrative rules of the professional licensing boards are available on request.

My signature indicates that I understand, authorize, and request counseling services involving mental health consultation, treatment and/or referral:

Signature: _____ Date: _____