

# WJU COUNSELING CENTER

## CLIENT RIGHTS AND COUNSELING OVERVIEW

### CLIENT RIGHTS:

The right to be fully informed as to the counseling services available.

The right to be fully informed as to counseling procedures utilized.

The right to autonomy in choosing services offered by the center.

The right to active participation in the design of the services provided.

The right to request in writing that a designated person or agency receive part or all of your records.

The right to expect confidentiality except when there is imminent danger to you or someone else because of your actions, or if an exception is stipulated by law.

### THE PROCESS OF COUNSELING:

The goal of counseling is to support you towards having the highest quality of life, both now and into the future. Counseling is a process of self-discovery and personal growth. Seeking counseling is a sign of strength and courage. Often, counseling addresses learned responses to stressors that may be called maladaptive. In that sense, counseling may provide awareness of options to be tried, practiced, and internalized into your lifestyle to better serve you in all of your interpersonal relationships. Sometimes counseling involves supporting one through fear and loss. Trust will be invaluable in these most acute situations.

Wheeling Jesuit University Counseling Center provides supportive services to students designed to meet the student's individual needs at each session. There are general processes that include:

- Basic to the counseling process is that the counselor is employed by the student and works for the student. For that relationship to be successful, a durable rapport must be developed. Development of durable rapport between the student and the counselor is necessary to sustain the processing of all issues presented, especially those that are difficult or painful for the student. The reasoning is based in the fact that 'respect is given' but 'trust is earned'. To face, deal with, and move successfully through difficult issues with positive outcome, the relationship between the student and counselor must be as strong as the issues presented. Much care is used in developing rapport between the student and counselor as a natural course.
- Assessment is a process wherein the counselor and the student attempt to identify and learn the severity, intensity and frequency of the issues affecting the student's successful achievement of their life goals. Some assessments occur in conversational dialogue guided by the counselor. Some assessments are paper and pencil type of utilization of established clinical tools. The counselor will inform the student of relevant assessments that are

available to them and explain what can be expected from utilizing the tools. (With the exception of 'mandated' assessments directed by the University.) However, even in that 'mandated' situation, the counselor is, by professional nature, intrinsically the student's advocate.

- Values Clarification is a basic process to counseling and personal development. Regardless of the issue or concerns presented in counseling, the person receiving counseling will be exploring personal responses that they may choose to manage. The person receiving counseling, and humans in general, will experience negative outcomes, such as stress and anxiety, etc., if they choose to act outside their values. For that reason, values clarification is intrinsic to the counseling dialogue.
- Belief exploration, highly congruent with the core Jesuit values, is essential to the counseling process. It occurs through the identification of automatic thoughts, underlying assumptions, and core beliefs that a person has. Having accurate beliefs is essential to personal confidence, integrity and strength in dealing with the issues we face in life. It is not at all unusual for us, as humans, to automatically believe inaccurate things about ourselves, others, and the world in general. It is of primary importance in the world of social justice to be fair and just to ourselves. The best way to ensure confidence is to know that our beliefs are accurate. The process of belief exploration occurs in the counseling process through attentive dialogue, mindfulness tasks, and encouragement to question and explore ourselves in our development to ensure our behaviors are congruent with clear and accurate beliefs.
- Advocacy is intrinsic to the counseling process. The student and the counselor may strategize various forms of advocacy that would be beneficial to the student.
- Information and linkage/referral is an important part of the process to ensure that the student receives information and resources to continue their support either into the public sector locally or 'back home' which in some cases could be states or continents away. The counselor is a resource in that regard.
- Face to face closure of the counseling services serves several purposes. The student and counselor have the closure process available to review their work, success and achievements, and to identify needs that the student may prefer to work through in a variety of venues here or 'back home'. Face to face closure also affords the counselor the opportunity to encourage the student to return as needed with comfort and integrity to process other issues that may arise in the course of their academic investment at WJU. The closure process affords the counselor an opportunity to provide further professional resources to the student for their success.

### **Counselor Commitment:**

As professional social workers and counselors, we promise to provide you with the most practical, supportive and respectful services. We promise to respect your personal dignity, your rights, and your feelings as an individual in our work together.