

# STUDENT HEALTH & WELLBEING

## Supporting Students as they return to Campus

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**KEY MESSAGES FOR FACULTY & STAFF** This fall we have both our first- and second-year cohorts experiencing student life at UBCO for the first time. It is difficult to predict what a return to campus will bring, but extra attention will be required with this larger group of students to ensure no one slips through the cracks. As we seek to create a healthy community, it is critical that we be aware of how to create supportive environments, understand the challenges students might be facing, and access support for students (and ourselves). The following pages will explain the various levels of support available to students both on and off-campus.

**CHALLENGES STUDENTS MAY BE EXPERIENCING** Students bring their unique selves and situations to any learning environment, whether in class or online. Some students thrived in the online learning environment, while others struggled. Early Alert is one way for faculty and staff to identify students at risk and ensure follow up.

**ACADEMICS** Students continue to express concerns about returning to class, challenges of exams, meeting graduation requirements, and other academic uncertainties while others may still report a lack of suitable workspaces or unreliable Wi-Fi. The Student Learning Hub is a great resource for students to get help with learning support and study skills.

**ACCESSIBILITY** Students with disabilities or ongoing health conditions may have additional needs that require different levels of support in this new environment. Please continue to be mindful, and reach out to the Disability Resource Center as a resource.

**GENERAL UNCERTAINTY** As we negotiated the uncertainty and fear that arose while living in a pandemic, we now negotiate the fear and uncertainty of returning to campus and resuming more “normal” operations. Students continue to worry about their families, their academic goals, their career goals and their health. Many international students have been isolated from family and friends.

**FINANCES** Financial concerns during the pandemic created additional stress for many. Incomes were significantly impacted for some members of our community. Students may have had increased difficulties with finding a job to pay their expenses or provide for their families. This has created increased concern about covering tuition fees, the cost of books and supplies, rent, and food.

**LIVING ENVIRONMENTS** Students may be living in environments and relational dynamics that are challenging, restrictive, unsafe, abusive, and/or invalidating. Some students may not have access to quiet spaces. Others may be juggling several roles at home and find it difficult to make time for their studies. All of these factors negatively affect the ability to be fully present in the learning environment.

**MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS** During the past year of the pandemic, students have not only left behind their classes and academics, but also future goals and aspirations. Many mental health concerns (depression, anxiety, substance use, suicidal ideation, etc.) continue to be significant challenges in being able to perform both academically and personally. There is a continued need to end any stigma around mental health concerns as we reach out to students who may be struggling.



## SHOW THAT YOU CARE

**Set expectations at the beginning.** Communicate with your students clearly and regularly and let them know that you care about their health and wellbeing, particularly during the strange time we are in. Highlight resources that are available to them and let them know that they can connect with you if they need to.

**Acknowledge the whole student.** Like you, students are navigating different roles and responsibilities and are adapting to the online learning environment. Convey your awareness that students are facing a variety of challenges and encourage them to practice self-care.

**Share a personal experience.** It's okay to show students that you have a life outside the classroom and students may feel more connected with you when you humanize the situation. You can share an example of how you have had to adapt; for example, how you have been spending time with your pets or kids or how you have creatively set up a workstation from your bedroom.

## HOW TO REACH OUT AND SUPPORT STUDENTS

**Acknowledge and normalize.** Take the time to acknowledge that we are all in an unusual situation and that everyone is impacted in different ways, yourself included. Everyone has had to respond to the evolving situation and this can be challenging.

**Check-in and tell them you care.** One way to check-in is to do a quick survey or poll throughout the course to take the temperature of the class.

**Connect them with resources.** Assure students that you and the UBC community are there to support their experiences as students. Share relevant resources with them throughout the course and if you suspect an individual student is struggling, use the Blue Folder and Early Alert protocols.

## USE EARLY ALERT

Always submit an Early Alert concern as part of your response, regardless of the perceived severity.

Early Alert allows faculty, staff, and TAs to identify their concerns about students sooner and in a more coordinated way.

### EARLY ALERT:

- Provides support to all students; student participation is voluntary
- Allows for earlier support before difficulties become overwhelming
- Results in less time and fewer resources needed for students to move forward
- Collects concerns from different sources across campus, allowing for a better understanding of individual student needs and how to provide appropriate support in a coordinated way
- Protects student privacy using a secure system
- Is not connected to the student's academic record

### SUBMIT AN EARLY ALERT CONCERN

[earlyalert.ubc.ca](http://earlyalert.ubc.ca) (monitored Monday to Friday during standard office hours)

### HOW DOES EARLY ALERT WORK?

1. Faculty and staff notice a student is facing difficulties and identify their concerns using Early Alert
  2. A case manager or advisor will review all concerns submitted to ensure the student has been referred to appropriate resources.
  3. If the need for additional referral(s) is identified, an advisor will reach out and offer to connect the student to resources and supports
- **Reminder:** Early Alert is not an emergency service. For an emergency response, call Campus Security or 911

### TAKE CARE OF YOUR WELLBEING

UBC faculty and staff have access to a wide range of benefits and services [hr.ubc.ca/wellbeing-benefits](http://hr.ubc.ca/wellbeing-benefits)

# HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH A STUDENT IN DISTRESS

## 1. IF YOU'VE REACHED OUT TO THE STUDENT

- Be specific about the signs and behaviours that you've noticed  
> *"I've noticed you've missed the last two midterms"*
- Express your concern  
> *"I am concerned and wanted to check in to see how you're doing"*
- Reassure the student that reaching out to students who may be struggling is something all UBC faculty and staff do to help

## IF A STUDENT DOESN'T WANT HELP

- Respect their decision. Accepting or refusing assistance must be left up to the student, except in emergencies
- Don't force the issue or pressure them into going to a referred resource
- Try to leave room for reconsideration later on  
> *"If you change your mind you can always access the resources I've provided to you"*

## 2. RESPOND WITH EMPATHY AND NORMALIZE STRESS

- Listen actively and help the student feel heard and understood  
> *"It sounds like you're facing some difficulties in your life right now"*
- Where stress seems related to academic pressures, acknowledge that stress is a normal part of the university experience

## 3. ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS:

Giving students an opportunity to talk often has a calming effect and helps to clarify their concerns

- What have you tried so far?
- What do you think the main challenge is?
- Do you have the support that you need?

## 4. DISCUSS RESOURCE OPTIONS

- Point out that help is available; while seeking help can feel difficult at first, it is a sign of strength
- Provide the student with information about resources and supports ([see next page](#))
- Encourage the student to identify the next steps they plan to take

## 5. ENTER AN EARLY ALERT CONCERN:

- Whether or not you've had a conversation with the student, enter an Early Alert concern [earlyalert.ubc.ca](http://earlyalert.ubc.ca) (monitored Monday to Friday during standard office hours)

## IMMINENT RISK OF HARM

- Active thoughts of suicide with a plan or suicide attempt
- Behaviour that is violent, destructive, aggressive, or threatening to self or others
- Student is confused, hallucinating, or has trouble remaining conscious

## STEPS TO TAKE

### AT UBCO CAMPUS

- 1 **Call 911**  
Student to go to nearest hospital
- 2 **Call UBCO Campus Security**  
250 807 8111 (Emergency) or  
250 807 9236 (non emergency)

### IN BC (NOT ON CAMPUS)

- 1 **Call 911**  
Student to go to nearest hospital

### IN CANADA (OUTSIDE BC)

- 1 **Call 911**  
Student to go to nearest hospital

### OUTSIDE OF CANADA

- 1 **Call 911**  
Student to go to nearest hospital or **local emergency services phone number** BC emergency services may be able to assist

## HIGH LEVEL OF DISTRESS

### Examples:

- Deterioration in personal appearance and hygiene and significant impairment with daily tasks
- Expressions of severe hopelessness or references to suicide
- Self-harm behaviour such as recent cutting or hitting, severely restricted eating with weight loss/severe binge eating
- Substance use concerns
- Loss of touch with reality /severely disorganized thinking
- Physical health concerns

### AT UBCO CAMPUS

#### During office hours

**Student Wellness**  
250 807 9270 or student's family doctor or nearest medical clinic

#### After-hours or in an emergency

**24/7 Crisis Centre**  
[crisiscentre.bc.ca](http://crisiscentre.bc.ca)  
1 800 784 2433

**Kelowna General Hospital**  
250 862 4000

**Vernon Jubilee Hospital**  
250 545 2211

### IN BC (NOT ON CAMPUS)

#### During office hours

**Student Wellness**  
250 807 9270 or student's family doctor or nearest medical clinic

#### After-hours or in an emergency

**24/7 Crisis Centre**  
[crisiscentre.bc.ca](http://crisiscentre.bc.ca)  
1 800 784 2433

**Nearest hospital emergency department (24/7)**

### IN CANADA (OUTSIDE BC)

#### During office hours

**Student's family doctor or nearest medical clinic**

#### After-hours or in an emergency

**24/7 Crisis Services Canada**  
[crisisservicescanada.ca](http://crisisservicescanada.ca)  
1 833 456 4566 available in French and English

**Nearest hospital emergency department (24/7)**

### OUTSIDE OF CANADA

#### During office hours

**Student's family doctor or nearest medical clinic**

#### After-hours or in an emergency

**Nearest hospital emergency department (24/7)**

Enter an **Early Alert** concern at [earlyalert.ubc.ca](http://earlyalert.ubc.ca) (monitored Monday to Friday during standard office hours). Refer to page 2.

The **Student Learning Hub** is great resource for students to receive help with learning supports and study skills.

## ALL OTHER MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

### Examples:

- Low or irritable mood with change in energy, appetite, sleep, and/or concentration, which is impacting daily functioning
- Persistent worry, obsessions, agitation, irrationality, racing thoughts, panic attacks
- Flashbacks to a traumatic event, intrusive memories and thoughts
- Interpersonal conflict
- Lack of social support
- Disordered eating

## AT UBCO CAMPUS

### During office hours

#### Student Wellness

##### Counselling services

[students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness](https://students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness)  
250 807 9270

### After-hours or anytime

#### Student Assistance Plan

[students.ok.ubc.ca/sap](https://students.ok.ubc.ca/sap)

1 833 590 1328 (call toll-free within North America) or 1 604 757 9734 (call collect outside of North America)

#### Here2Talk [here2talk.ca](https://here2talk.ca)

24/7 access for students anywhere in the world, single session personal counselling by phone or online chat

#### Wellness Together Canada

[ca.portal.gs](https://ca.portal.gs)

24/7 access for Canadians anywhere in the world. Online assessment and connection to e-mental health resources, individual counselling by phone, text, video

#### Medimap [medimap.ca](https://medimap.ca)

See available walk-in clinics and wait times, and book an appointment before visiting the location

#### Mind Health BC [mindhealthbc.ca](https://mindhealthbc.ca)

Take an online mental health assessment and find resources

#### Health Link BC [healthlinkbc.ca](https://healthlinkbc.ca)

811 or check physical health symptoms online and find resources

#### First Nations and Inuit

##### Hope for Wellness Helpline

1 855 242 3310

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### During office hours

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## IN CANADA (OUTSIDE BC)

### After-hours or anytime

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#### Medimap [medimap.ca](https://medimap.ca)

See available walk-in clinics and wait times, and book an appointment before visiting the location (in some provinces)

#### First Nations and Inuit

##### Hope for Wellness Helpline

1 855 242 3310

## OUTSIDE OF CANADA

### After-hours or anytime

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The **Student Learning Hub** is great resource for students to receive help with learning supports and study skills.

## GENERAL SUPPORT

### Examples:

- Stress about exams, deadlines, grades, roommates, relationships, finances, adjustment to university
- Advice about healthy eating, sleep, or sexual health

## AT UBCO CAMPUS

### During office hours

#### Student Wellness

[students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness](mailto:students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness)  
250 807 9270  
[healthwellness.okanagan@ubc.ca](mailto:healthwellness.okanagan@ubc.ca)  
General support for students' mental and physical health.

#### Disability Resource Centre

[students.ok.ubc.ca/drc](mailto:students.ok.ubc.ca/drc)  
250 807 8053  
[drc.questions@ubc.ca](mailto:drc.questions@ubc.ca)  
Accommodations for disabilities, including chronic mental health conditions.

### After-hours or anytime

#### Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office

[svpro.ok.ubc.ca](mailto:svpro.ok.ubc.ca)  
250 807 9640  
[svpro.okanagan@ubc.ca](mailto:svpro.okanagan@ubc.ca)  
Information for those impacted by sexual or gender-based violence, harassment, or harm, on or off-campus

#### Wellness Centre: Online

[canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3](https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3)  
For up-to-date health education, tips and strategies for wellbeing and resources on Canvas - All UBC students can self-enroll

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Accommodations for disabilities, including chronic mental health conditions.

### After-hours or anytime

#### Wellness Centre: Online

[canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3](https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3)  
For up-to-date health education, tips and strategies for wellbeing and resources on Canvas - All UBC students can self-enroll

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Accommodations for disabilities, including chronic mental health conditions.

### After-hours or anytime

#### Wellness Centre: Online

[canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3](https://canvas.ubc.ca/enroll/3XXRJ3)  
For up-to-date health education, tips and strategies for wellbeing and resources on Canvas - All UBC students can self-enroll

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QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR REQUESTS FOR COPIES OF THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE DIRECTED TO:

### Student Wellness

University Centre 337  
250 807 9270 | [healthwellness.okanagan@ubc.ca](mailto:healthwellness.okanagan@ubc.ca)  
[students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness](mailto:students.ok.ubc.ca/wellness)

Thank you to all the post-secondary universities that have helped inspire UBCO's Blue Folder