**Understanding and Supporting Student Veterans**

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| **BATTLE-MIND** | **HOME-MIND** |
| Buddies (Cohesion) | Withdrawal |
| Accountability | Controlling |
| Targeted Aggression | Inappropriate Aggression |
| Tactical Awareness | Hyper-vigilance |
| Lethally Armed | Locked and Loaded at Home |
| Emotional Control | Anger/Detachment |
| Mission Operational Security | Secretiveness |
| Individual Responsibility | Guilt |
| Non-Defensive Combat Driving | Aggressive Driving |
| Discipline | Conflict |

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| **Identify**  Watch for these common signs of psychological distress which warrant your attention. | | |
| **Academics** | **Behavior** | **Appearance** |
| Increased/significant tardiness | Frequent entering/exiting classroom | Noticeable weight gain/loss |
| Increased/significant absenteeism | Lack of social interaction in class/ unresponsiveness to instructor | Disheveled appearance: Poor grooming &/or hygiene, soiled clothes, body odor |
| Missed, late, incomplete assignments | Agitated, restless; hyperactivity, pacing, fidgeting | Dilated or constricted pupils |
| Dark tone /dark content in submitted writings/assignments | Dazed expression | Absence of facial expression |
| Missed appointments / office hours | Falling asleep in class | Smelling of Alcohol |
| Displays of grandiosity | Noticeably slow or rapid speech | Shaking, trembling, shivering when it is not cold |
| Inappropriately relating all assignments to his/her self | Avoidance of eye contact |  |
| Disorganized presentation of information, expansive writing, tangential thoughts, etc. | Irritable or aggressive behavior |  |
|  | Marked shifts in mood from one class to the next, or shifts which occur rapidly in the same class period |  |
|  | Expressed feelings of worthlessness, shame, humiliation, hopelessness, or despair |  |
|  | Tearfulness in class or during office hour meetings |  |
|  | Impulsive or risky behaviors, such as gambling, excessive spending, or unsafe sex/sexually provocative |  |

**Approach**

It’s good to talk to students whenever you notice multiple or extreme signs of psychological distress. If you handle these conversations with concern and respect, students will likely be appreciative of you for reaching out to them. Below are some tips for these conversations.

* Approach students in a supportive manner.
* Focus on things you have directly observed, showing curiosity and concern. “You have missed the last 4 classes. What is going on?” Refrain from making judgments or diagnoses.
* Invite students to identify what they think is preventing them from performing as well as they can, attending class, completing assignments, etc.
* Ask open-ended questions instead of yes/no questions.
* Demonstrate respect for issues students show discomfort discussing.
* Maintain appropriate boundaries, remaining mindful not to step into the role of a counselor.
* Offer a referral to the Counseling Center if and when you feel that the students’ issues warrant it.

**Refer**

The following techniques will help you make a successful referral to the Counseling Center.

* Explain that the Counseling Center is available to help and support students during difficult times.
* Explain that it has been helpful for other students with similar issues to have someone they can speak to in confidence.
* Describe MSU’s counseling services, including location and how to arrange appointments (see below).
* Know someone at the Counseling Center to whom you feel comfortable referring students, a “warm hand-off.”
* Offer to help students make appointments with the Counseling Center, or offer to walk them over.

\*\*Trust is paramount. Foster a sense of trust by letting the student know you have their best interest at heart.

**MSU Resources**

Chris Jeter

Office of Veterans Affairs: 107 Sparks Hall 270.809.3754

Alison Marshall

Veteran and Adult Student Liaison: 308 Lowery Center 270.809.5796

Counseling Center: C104 Oakley Applied Science Bldg. 270.809.6851

Office of Student Disability Services: 423 Wells Hall 270.809.2018

Racers Helping Racers (food pantry): 244 Blackburn Science Bldg. 270.809.6953

**Other Resources**

Veteran Support Services: 3999 Ft Campbell Blvd, Hopkinsville, KY 42240 270.886.7171

American Legion Post 73: 310 Bee Creek DR, Murray, KY 42071 270.761.8728

American Red Cross: 607 Poplar ST, Murray, KY 42071 270.753.1421

Murray Calloway County Need Line: 638 S 4th ST, Murray, KY 42071 270.753.6333

KY National Guard Family Assistance: Statewide; Multiple locations 502.229.3326

Veterans Affairs Regional Clinic KY: 1253 Parris RD, Mayfield, KY 42066 270.247.2455

2620 Perkins Creek DR, Paducah, KY 42001 270.444.8465

Veterans Affairs Regional Clinic TN: 1021 Spring ST, Dover, TN 37058 931.232.5329

1832 Memorial DR, Clarksville, TN 37043 931.645.3352