

First-Year Faculty Experience Workshop V: The First-Year Faculty Experience of Addressing Student Concerns at UVM

Friday, January 23, 2026
12:00 – 1:30pm

Upcoming FYFE Session (on Teams):

- First-Year Faculty Experience of Preparing for the First Reappointment Review Process at UVM. Friday, February 27, Noon-1:30pm (in collaboration with the Demystifying RPT Process Program)

For information on FYFE workshops, please click on:

<https://www.uvm.edu/dofa/first-year-faculty-experience-fyfe-program>

Addressing Student Concerns

New Faculty Professional Development Series
January 23, 2026

Presented By:

Deanna Garrett-Ostermiller, Assistant Director, Center for Student Conduct

Jennifer Papillo, Associate General Counsel

Heather Pena, Assistant Dean of Students

Moderated By:

Lisa Holmes, Associate Professor of Political Science, College of Arts and Science; Kroepsch-Maurice Provost's Fellow for Faculty Affairs

AGENDA

- **Supporting Students of Concern**
 - **CARE Team**
 - **Threat Assessment Team**
- **Working with the Center for Student Conduct**
 - **Academic Integrity**
 - **Community Standards**
- **Legal Issues in Classroom Management**
 - **Reasonable Accommodations**
 - **Free Expression**

Addressing and Supporting Students of Concern

The CARE Team

CARE Team and Case Management



Heather Pena, Assistant Dean of Students / Chair, CARE team



Kaitlyn Root, CARE Team Outreach Coordinator (Case Manager)



Bety Mayani, CARE Team Outreach Coordinator (Case Manager)

CARE Team Membership

- Dean of Students Office
- CARE Team Outreach Coordinators
- CAPS
- University Housing and Dining Services (UHDS)
- UVM Police Services
- Student Conduct
- Office of Equal Opportunity
- Student Health Services (SHS)
- Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
- Academic Units

Identifying Students of Concerns

Who are Students of Concern?

- Adjustment concerns
- Prolonged absenteeism
- Not thriving or coping poorly
- Basic needs insecurity
- Financial stress
- Substance use problems
- Mental Health (not utilizing supports)
- Physical Health (not utilizing supports)
- Experienced critical or traumatic event

Behavior Check-Points

- Imbalance in emotional response
- Tired, lethargic, sleeping during class/work
- Change in behavior/performance
(absenteeism, appearance, attitude)
- Disconnected from reality / unusual statements
- Disruption, distraction, and/or disrespect showing up in classroom, work, events, public setting.

Trends

- **Increased mental health concerns** (anxiety, depression, loneliness, emotional distress)
- **Adjustment and transition challenges**, particularly among first-year and transfer students
- **Academic distress and burnout**, including disengagement and fear of academic failure
- **Interpersonal and roommate conflict** impacting emotional wellbeing and housing satisfaction
- **Substance use as a coping strategy**, especially during high-stress periods
- **Basic needs and financial stressors** affecting mental health and academic engagement
- **Delayed help-seeking behaviors**, with students often disclosing to RAs before accessing formal supports

2019 - Present

Total CARE Referrals	
2019-2020	921
2020-2021	881
2021-2022	1130
2022-2023	1284
2023-2024	1273
2024-2025	1434
8/1/25 - 11/19/25	842

Submit CARE referral

Overview of the CARE Process

What Can Students of Concern Expect?



Assessment



Outreach
&
Conversation



Coordination
of Services
&
Advocacy



Follow-up
Services
(checking-in)



Documentation



- Creating an individualized plan for students that is proactive and collaborative
- Help students get back to feeling healthy, engaged, and successful

Guided by NABITA Risk Rubric: Enhancing Interventions

- **Consistent Risk Assessment:** Ensures all team members evaluate cases using the same criteria, reducing bias and subjectivity.
- **Informed Decision Making:** Guides appropriate interventions based on the severity and urgency of the risk (e.g., monitoring, outreach, hospitalization, PD involvement)
- **Prioritization of Cases:** Helps team triage and allocate resources effectively (e.g., wellness checks)



Addressing and Supporting Students of Concern

The Threat Assessment Team

Threat Recognition

- ✓ **Be mindful that each of us has a role in campus safety.**
- ✓ **See something – say something.** Reports are not viewed as a means to “get someone in trouble.” Rather, they provide an opportunity to help someone – and the broader campus community – before trouble occurs. Early recognition and intervention are the best options.

Threat Reporting

- If you are aware of an emergency or immediate safety concerns, **call 911** and report the danger or concern to law enforcement.
- If you are concerned about threatening behavior, a disturbing situation, or other issue that is NOT an emergency, **contact the University Police** at [\(802\) 656-3473](tel:8026563473) or message them with the [CATSafe App](#).
- The Threat Assessment Team (TAT) will gather more information about the situation and implement a plan to enhance the safety of the campus community.

Working with the Center for Student Conduct

Our Approach

The Center for Student Conduct seeks to foster student accountability and skill development in the areas of conflict resolution, dialogue, identity development, and restorative practices.

Making a Report

Visit UVM's Unified Reporting Page:

www.uvm.edu/report

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity concerns can coincide with:

- CARE/students needing additional support
- Disruptive behavior
- Faculty navigating conflict or difficult conversations with students

Academic Integrity Process:

Centralized – all reports go to Center for Student Conduct (CSC)

Faculty submits
online report

CSC meets with
student to
discuss process
and options

Students can choose to:

Accept responsibility and agree to instructor's recommended consequence

- If student agrees, process ends with informal resolution

Go forward to Academic Integrity Council meeting to determine final outcome

- If student goes to council meeting, instructor is invited to participate

Setting Expectations



Outline specific expectations on syllabus & assignment directions



Discuss expectations and policies in class



Include examples and consequences



Document violations and discuss with student(s)



A note about Generative AI

- Have clear syllabus & assignment policy
 - Always, Never, Sometimes
 - Explain rationale for policy
 - Note expectations for documenting/citing use
 - Provide examples of acceptable/unacceptable use
- Talk with students about Gen AI
 - Benefits & limitations
 - Cognitive, ethical, and social implications

Generative AI



Code of Academic Integrity:

Students may not claim as their own work any portion of academic work that was not created by the student.

Work generated by artificial intelligence is not considered to be created by the student and is not permitted unless expressly stated by the instructor.

Community Standards

Student Behavioral Expectations

[Code of Student Conduct](#)

[Alcohol, Cannabis, Tobacco and Other Drugs](#)

[Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#)

[Hazing Policy](#)

Public Order/University Order Offenses 3: Classroom Disruption Offenses

Students who disrupt a classroom, laboratory, or other environment in which educational or research activity takes place may be subject to action under this Code. Disruptive classroom conduct means engaging in behavior that **substantially or repeatedly interrupts** either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. For purposes of this provision, the classroom extends to any setting where a student is involved in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.



Legal Issues in Classroom Management

- Reasonable Accommodations
- Free Expression / Academic Freedom; Due Process

Student Accommodations

- Title III of Americans with Disabilities Act and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require universities to make reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability who is otherwise qualified in order to permit the student equal access to programs and services.
- The First Amendment and the Equal Rights Act of 1964 require that individuals be able to practice the religion of their choosing and not face discrimination. Reasonable accommodations ensure compliance.
- Accommodations cannot:
 - Pose an undue hardship on the University
 - Pose a threat to the safety of others
 - Fundamentally alter academic standards

Processing Accommodation Requests

- At UVM, the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is the only office that can determine eligibility for and parameters of reasonable accommodations based on disability.
- Faculty must refer students to OAS and should not accommodate on an ad hoc basis.
- Faculty are encouraged to consult the [Interfaith Calendar](#) when planning key course deadlines to avoid major religious observances.
- It is not our job to question sincerely held religious beliefs when asked for accommodation.

Free Expression

“Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech”

- **UVM must:**
 - uphold and defend the right to free expression, including the freedom to express dissent, within the context of the law and personal responsibility.
 - not suppress expression because the ideas put forth are thought by some, or even by most members of the University community to be offensive, repugnant, or hurtful
 - enforce rules that restrict and sanction those who seek to disrupt the expression of others or otherwise engage in unprotected speech

Location, Location, Location

- Public (Open) Forum
 - Examples: public parks, sidewalks
 - Strongest First Amendment Protection
 - UVM cannot discriminate based on speaker's viewpoint
 - UVM can restrict time, place and manner of speech, but must leave open ample alternatives for expression
- Designated Public Forum
 - Not traditionally public forums, but affirmative decision has been made by property owner to allow for free expression. Take on the protection of Public (open) forums.
 - Examples: Andrew Harris Commons, Davis Center Meeting Rooms
 - Once open, cannot close the forum to a particular viewpoint

What about the classroom?

- Classrooms are **not** public forums.
 - Expression is limited by the instructor's directions and learning objectives, but still may not engage in viewpoint discrimination.
 - Instructor has authority to limit irrelevant and unreasonable disruption
 - Focus on impact of expression/behavior. Is it severe, pervasive, or objectively unreasonable.
 - Avoid focusing on content of expression/behavior, EXCEPT to focus on germaneness to course learning objective

What does this mean for imposing discipline related to classroom behavior?

- In the Classroom
 - No constitutional property or liberty right implicated
 - Include important behavioral expectations in syllabus
 - Develop a progression that includes a clear warning
- University discipline requires more formal procedures
 - Prior to permanent removal from class or separation from UVM, there must be a meaningful opportunity for the student to respond
 - Student Conduct Procedures prescribe the amount of process
 - Few exceptions enable action prior to process (imminent threat of safety)

Suggested Progression for Faculty

- **Re-direct** - “We are well off course for today, let’s bring it back to the original question . . .” “We are a little far afield, let’s move on to . . .”
- **Reiterate (Warn)** – “Ok, Trent, that is enough on that issue for today. You are interrupting in a way that is not acceptable. Please stop or I must ask you to leave for today.”
- **Remove** – “You are being disruptive. Please leave so we may continue our discussion.” (Schedule office hour appointment to discuss re-entry and set clear expectation)
- **Recess** – “I have asked you to stop and then to leave. You continue to persist. We will pick it up here next time. Class is dismissed for today.” (Schedule office hour appointment to discuss with the student)

You have help!

Faculty response – address behavior in a timely manner. Document appropriately (email follow-up to student, Care Form?). Consult and seek support as needed.

Escalate issue to **Student Services** staff – reinforce behavioral expectations. Document appropriately. Consult and seek support as needed.

Escalate issue to **Academic Dean** – reinforce behavioral expectations and consequences if not met. Consider appropriate actions/interventions to support the student's success and the classroom environment.

Escalate to **VPDOS** – in consultation with all parties involved, coordinate a larger response/intervention plan. Determine if/when CSC should be involved.

Resource Links and Contact Information

Dean of Students Office: <https://www.uvm.edu/deanofstudents>

- **CARE Team:** <https://www.uvm.edu/deanofstudents/uvm-care-team>
- **Center for Student Conduct:** <https://www.uvm.edu/sconduct>

Police Services: <https://www.uvm.edu/police>

- **Threat Recognition and Reporting:** <https://www.uvm.edu/dsc/threat-recognition-and-reporting>

General Counsel's Office: <https://www.uvm.edu/generalcounsel>

Office of Accessibility Services: <https://www.uvm.edu/accessibility-services>

Unified Reporting Page: <https://www.uvm.edu/report>



Questions/ Discussion

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