

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS

Federal and state regulations require that we explain your privacy rights and how we maintain the confidentiality of your information. All aspects of your participation in counseling at the Counseling Center, including the scheduling of appointments, content of counseling sessions, all contents of counseling records, and outcomes of counseling, are confidential as required by federal and state law.

The Counseling Center maintains a confidential record of your counseling services and you have access to your own file only. If you are participating in marriage/couples counseling or group therapy, a separate record is kept for each individual, and all confidentiality policies apply independently to each record. Each person has access to his or her own file and records only.

Counseling records consist of an electronic file and database components. All parts of your record are highly secured and are protected by the same confidentiality and privacy laws.

Counselors within the Counseling Center may share your personal health information with each other. In addition, in order to provide the most effective and comprehensive services, Counseling Center clinical staff may consult with healthcare providers in the Student Health Center when the student has been or will be referred from one center to the other.

Only professional counseling staff may access clinical progress notes, test data or other clinical information in your file. Support staff may have access only to contact and demographic information and diagnostic codes for the purposes of statistical tracking and reports. No record of counseling is made on an academic transcript. The Counseling Center retains ownership of all physical records and is responsible for establishing policies regarding the retention of counseling records. At this time, we retain counseling records for 10 years after service is terminated. We do not release your information to anyone without your written permission, except when required by law.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Call
512.245.2208

Office Hours
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday – Friday

ONLINE RESOURCES



Search for “Texas State Counseling Center”



@TXSTCounseling



youtube.com/TxStCounselingCenter



pinterest.com/TxStCounCenter

TEXAS STATE
COUNSELING CENTER

LBJ Student Center, Room 5-4.1
San Marcos, TX 78666
512.245.2208 | counselingcenter@txstate.edu

COUNSELING CENTER

Important Information for Clients



INITIAL CONSULTATION

Your first visit to the Counseling Center will be a 15-minute consultation. You and a staff counselor will decide how the Counseling Center can best meet your needs. Various services may be recommended (e.g. individual therapy, group therapy, couples counseling, workshops, etc.) or you may be referred to a more appropriate campus resource or community resource.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- » The counselor you see at the initial consultation may not be the counselor to whom you are assigned for ongoing counseling.
- » Therapy services are based on a brief treatment model in which you and your counselor will develop clear, specific treatment goals.
- » Individual therapy sessions typically last 50 minutes; group and couples sessions may be longer.
- » Because the Texas State Counseling Center is a training facility, your counselor may be a doctoral or master's graduate-level trainee. For quality assurance and supervision purposes, trainees must digitally record all counseling sessions. Digital video recordings are confidential and are erased after supervision is complete.

CANCELLATION AND NO-SHOW POLICY

Due to the heavy demand for services, we request that you call 512.245.2208 to cancel your appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments not canceled AT LEAST two hours in advance will be considered no-shows. If you are a no-show for two appointments in the same semester, you will be unable to keep any scheduled appointments or schedule another appointment for the remainder of the semester. You may request referral information. You may be eligible for counseling the next semester in which you are enrolled.

TEXAS
STATE
UNIVERSITY

The rising STAR of Texas

EXCEPTIONS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- » Texas law requires that counselors who learn of or have strong suspicions of child abuse or neglect report this information to Child Protective Services or law enforcement personnel. This pertains specifically to knowledge of abuse or neglect of a client who is younger than 18 years of age; any child younger than 18 years of age suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect; or abuse or neglect by a client toward a person who is younger than 18 years of age.
- » Texas law requires abuse or neglect of elderly or disabled persons to be reported to the proper authorities.
- » If a counselor assesses that you pose an imminent danger to yourself or others, the counselor may do what is necessary to protect life within the limits of the law. Appropriate university officials and staff (e.g. University Police, vice president for Student Affairs, residence hall director, etc.) who bear responsibility or may incur liability for the welfare of Texas State students may be notified about the student's situation. Only university officials and staff who have a "need to know" to protect the safety of students will receive this information.
- » A court-ordered subpoena can require the release of records kept at the Counseling Center or require a counselor to give testimony at a court hearing.
- » Texas law requires a counselor to report client abuse or sexual exploitation by a previous therapist to the appropriate county district attorney and licensing board. Client anonymity will be preserved if requested.
- » Nonidentifiable demographics and statistical client data may be used for research studies.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights

In addition to confidentiality, as a Counseling Center client you have certain rights, which include the right to:

- » inquire about the professional credentials and experience of your counselor

- » ask questions about any procedures used in counseling, including your counselor's usual techniques and philosophy of counseling
- » refuse a particular treatment method or psychological testing. If your counselor feels that these are essential to your counseling, the issue must be resolved to your mutual satisfaction.
- » have any psychological test results interpreted and discussed with you
- » ask your counselor to discuss your progress and future counseling plans with you during any session
- » discuss with your counselor any concerns or dissatisfactions you have about your counseling experience
- » request referral to another counselor or an outside agency if you wish to obtain an additional opinion or believe you would work better with another person. You need to discuss this with your counselor if it is an issue for you.
- » terminate counseling at any time. Termination is an important part of counseling, and it will be helpful to you to discuss with your counselor your reasons for terminating.
- » be free of discrimination on the basis of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status or other protected categories while receiving psychological services
- » be treated with respect and consideration and have your counselor convey this respect by keeping your appointments or letting you know ahead of time if a schedule change is necessary; by giving you his/her complete attention during sessions; and by providing you with the most effective counseling he/she can
- » report a complaint to the director of training and/or the director of the Counseling Center if you believe your counselor has violated your rights or has behaved unethically
- » be informed about how your health information may be used and legally disclosed outside the Counseling Center

- » receive notice of authorized or legally required disclosure of your health information outside of the Counseling Center
- » request restrictions on the use and disclosure of your health information that is used for providing services to you
- » inspect your counseling records in accordance with Texas law, and to request an amendment to your record when you believe a record to be in error
- » file a complaint if you believe your privacy, according to federal and state laws, has been violated

Student Responsibilities

- » Take an active role in the counseling process. This involves openly and honestly sharing your thoughts, feelings and concerns, including your feelings about counseling and your counselor. It may also involve outside work such as completing therapeutic assignments or reflecting upon issues discussed during your last session.
- » Keep your appointments or call at least 24 hours in advance to cancel and reschedule an appointment.
- » Maintain the confidentiality of other students who use Counseling Center services.

COUNSELOR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your counselor may exercise certain rights in the course of the counseling process. These include:

- » the right to seek consultation with other professionals regarding your case
- » the right to terminate or refer to another counselor or agency if your counselor feels his/her services may not be appropriate for you
- » the right to expect your active involvement and cooperation in the counseling process
- » the right to provide services only if you agree to disclose health information for the purpose of providing effective treatment
- » the right to deny a request for a counseling record amendment if the counselor did not originate the information or if the information is accurate and complete
- » the responsibility to uphold all student rights listed previously

