

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COUNSELING SERVICES</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Niagara University</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Confidentiality</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Review History</p> <p>Data Initiated: 2007</p> <p>Last Revision: June 2012</p> <p>Date(s) Reviewed/Revised:</p>
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**Purpose:**

To describe the reason for upholding a student’s counseling session as confidential, as well as to describe the times when confidentiality must be violated.

**Rationale:**

As required by both laws and ethics of professional practice, conversations that are held between counselor and student are confidential. Information may not be released to any party, including parents, faculty, administration, or staff, without the student’s written consent, except in the rare case of potential danger to self or others, or if court ordered by a judge.

**Policy:**

A student’s private confidential counseling experience should not be made part of meetings where the student’s behavior on-campus is being reviewed or evaluated. It is a conflict of interest for a counselor to be made part of a university administrative meeting that is evaluation a student’s behavior, which can result in actions taken regarding that student.

Counseling Services does not fulfill an evaluative/administrative role on this campus regarding whether or not students should be permitted to stay on campus. That role resides with the student affairs office or other administrative level office. It is a conflict of interest for counseling services staff to be both counselor and evaluator/administrator to students. This dual relationship would also potentially compromise students’ perception of Counseling Services’ role and their willingness to seek out necessary assistance.

If counseling services is working with a student who is at imminent risk of harming themselves or someone else, confidentiality limits do not apply and the student will be sent to Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center for an emergency psychiatric evaluation. Students who are not willing to voluntarily submit to a psychiatric evaluation will be subject to meeting with a delegate from Niagara County Crisis Services who is able to prescribe an involuntary hospitalization for a psychiatric evaluation.

Students are viewed by Counseling Services personnel as independent adults with all of the rights of adults with mental health conditions. It is the student, not the parent/guardian or the university, that is our client and with whom our responsibility lies.

Counseling Services is available to meet individually with any enrolled student who wants to address various mental health concerns.

Counseling Services does not force, and does not support forced ongoing mental health counseling for students, but is willing to meet for an initial appointment with students mandated by the university.

Verification of attendance at any appointment at Counseling Services (mandated or otherwise) is done only with the legally-valid, non-coerced, written consent of the student.

Once a legally-valid, non-coerced, written consent is obtained for the student, Counseling Service personnel initiate appropriate communication with university personnel, student family members, and other service providers.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to Monica Romeo, LMHC, Director, Counseling Services (p:716.286.8536; LL Seton Hall, Niagara University, NY 14109).