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Approval: <i>[Signature]</i>		Date: 3-29-13
Date Revised: <i>NEW</i>		Review by: 2016
Policy/Revision Submitted by: Debra Disney		
LOCATION: SH		

SUBJECT: Policy on Student Counseling Services (SCS)

I. POLICY:

All currently enrolled students (both part-time and full-time) are eligible for short-term, psychotherapy services, if their psychological or developmental concerns fall within the scope of services and level of care described in GENERAL INFORMATION below. Counseling will be provided by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor or a graduate-level counseling intern.

II. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure (a) MC follows a uniform process of delivering mental health services to students; (b) counseling services meet guidelines put forth by the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association; (c) counseling services meet guidelines suggested by the American College Counseling Association; (d) an effective method to provide adequate counseling services to all appropriate students; and (e) an effective method to provide referrals for community counseling resources for all students whose needs are outside the scope of what MC can reasonably provide.

III. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Students are appropriate for counseling by the Student Counseling Service if their concerns may be adequately addressed through 12 or fewer, once per week, 45-60 minute outpatient psychotherapy sessions.

Students whose concerns or disorder require more than once a week therapy, intensive outpatient, or where the standard of care would include services of a specialist, such as nutritional counseling, a diagnosis-focused psycho-educational or group therapy, or other more intense level of care, have needs that cannot be met by the Student Counseling Service. These conditions might require a medical leave for treatment via a more intensive level of care, or that the student arrange for more intensive treatment through an off-campus team of professionals.

Treatment Guidelines

Generally, students who are unlikely to benefit from time-limited therapy, or who require more intensive monitoring than can reasonably be offered by the Student Counseling Service, may be referred to community agencies. A list of those agencies will be provided to the student.

Listed below are the types of criteria to be considered when a student intake occurs. These guidelines assist the counselor in making decisions regarding whether or not the Student Counseling Service can offer appropriate services to the student.

Criteria Set A (Students should possess some of the following criteria to be considered appropriate for treatment with the Student Counseling Service.)

- Presenting problems are situational or developmental.



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- Student can identify specific difficulties and goals.
- Student possesses sufficient motivation for change.
- Student expresses a desire for symptomatic relief.
- Student can introspect, self-monitor, and experience feelings.
- Student evidences the ability to develop trust, be open, and relate to others.
- Student's prior treatment history is not severe.
- If the Student has had previous treatment, there has been a positive response and the Student is able to verbalize such.
- Student exhibits evidence of previous coping ability.
- Student demonstrates the capacity for self-responsibility.

Criteria Set B (Students who possess two or more of these criteria may be best served by other professional counseling agencies.)

- Student is likely to require emergency intervention, crisis services, or extensive case management.
- Student is likely to involve other staff due to case management difficulties.
- Student is likely to need 24-hour coverage.
- Student is likely to require hospitalization during therapy.
- Student has been hospitalized for psychiatric reasons within the last three months.
- Student has chronic and/or present self-destructive behaviors that are potentially life threatening.
- Student has an alcohol or drug addiction that requires more intensive treatment than Counseling Services provides.
- Student does not appear to benefit from therapy or appear motivated to change.
- Student has not clearly profited from previous counseling services.
- Student is likely to require more than 1 session per week or would not tolerate extended breaks from therapy (e.g. semester or summer break).
- Student is likely to require long-term therapy.



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- Student has a longstanding or severe pathology (e.g. severe personality disorder, present or chronic psychosis, dissociative episodes).
- Student has chronic or multiple stressors that would impede short-term interventions.
- Student's GAF (Global Assessment of Functioning) is chronically low.
- Student is unable to meet the demands of active participation in therapy.
- Student requires services based on a DSM diagnosis.
- Student requires expertise/resources unavailable from the Student Counseling Service.

When in doubt about whether or not to offer services to a student based on the above criteria, the Student may be scheduled for an extended assessment session with the counselor. The counselor may review the case with the Dean of Enrollment Management/Student Services before proceeding with treatment or referral. In some instances, the counselor may decide that a referral to community resources may be in the best interest of the Student.

Limitations to Treatment

Situations in which MC Student Counseling Service may refuse treatment include:

- 1) Ongoing treatment for a student who chronically presents an imminent danger to self or others (e.g., a student who is determined to kill themselves, and has a feasible plan to do so; or a student who is experiencing hallucinations and is unable to care for themselves).
- 2) Court-ordered or forensically oriented treatment (e.g., substance abuse treatment, treatment for criminal behavior such as rape or pedophilia, etc.).
- 3) Treatment for disorders of such severity that the MC Student Counseling Service cannot provide adequate care (e.g., treatment for a full-fledged eating disorder that requires closely coordinated medical, nutritional, psychiatric, and psychological care).
- 4) Treatment that falls beyond the areas of expertise or outside the scope of services provided by the MC Student Counseling Service.
- 5) Treatment for a student who seeks counseling but nevertheless is fundamentally unwilling to address the disorder in question (e.g., a student who is addicted to cocaine, but adamantly refuses to consider curbing or receive treatment for their drug use).
- 6) Treatment for a student, whose behavior creates a hostile working environment at the Student Counseling Service office, affecting staff and/or other students (e.g., a student who is grossly verbally abusive towards and/or threatens staff).
- 7) Treatment for a student who needs more intensive or extensive treatment than can be provided at the Student Counseling Service (e.g., multiple weekly appointments, uninterrupted long-term care, and/or frequent between session supports).



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- 8) Other situations that are determined to be outside the scope of services provided by this facility or in which case the clinical staff member determines that treatment would be detrimental to the Student or to the proper functioning of this facility.

Policy on Mandated Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Service does not provide mandated counseling services. Some of the reasons for this policy include:

- 1) Mandated counseling places the Student Counseling Service in an unproductive, punitive role (and potentially injures the reputation of the service in the college)
- 2) Mandated counseling is inconsistent with professional standards and ethics of emotional health professionals
- 3) Making counseling a condition of something has the potential to undermine any benefit that could have come from counseling otherwise
- 4) Mandated counseling has shown little efficacy (and therefore isn't an effective use of time/resources for any involved parties).

IV. PROCEDURE:

1. In cases where students' psychological and/or mental health needs fall within the scope of services provided by the Student Counseling Service, up to 12 sessions will be allowed per student per issue per year, not to exceed 24 total sessions. When a student has received 24 sessions, a determination will be made on a case-by-case basis regarding availability.
2. In cases where students' psychological and/or mental health needs exceed the services available at the Counseling Center, students will be informed of this problem and will receive recommendations for their treatment off campus in their home locale, or will be referred to specialists within the nearby areas if those services are available locally.
3. The Student Counseling Service will maintain a list of providers of mental health services in the local area for the purpose of student referrals.
4. Students whose psychological or substance abuse treatment needs exceed the services available through the Student Counseling Service will be informed of the procedures for medical/psychological leave and the limitations of services available on campus for the student. Students may be required by their dean to take an involuntary leave of absence if their disorder causes a significant risk to their safety, the safety of other campus community members, or incurs a significant disruption to the academic goals of others.