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**Subject:** December-Eve Student Wellness Reminders  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 30, 2021 1:19:46 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

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Greetings colleagues,

We started the semester with a focus on student wellness, in partnership with our colleagues in Student Affairs. I write today to provide a refresh on some of the materials we covered, in hopes that it may be helpful as you move into the final weeks of the semester. COVID remains a hard-to-gauge factor in what post-holiday case rates will look like. Even with declining cases, students are still struggling to cope - as we all are - given the uncertainties surrounding the ongoing global pandemic, and they have been navigating some challenging conversations regarding campus safety and ongoing maintenance projects as well.

In other words, it has been another challenging fall. The bright side: the vaccination program continues, with another date coming this [Thursday for shots and boosters](#). Kevin Sheppard, our new Title IX coordinator, is meeting with students and building relationships across campus. Chief Yearta is working closely with CSL and VP Burkhalter to respond to safety concerns. And Facilities AVP James Grigg responded quickly to recent maintenance concerns, sharing details on the solutions already in place and/or on the project roster for December and January. I am reminded of a post Adolphus and I shared last year on the importance of extending grace to each other as we work together to improve on all aspects of the Winthrop community.

I write to ask that you do all that you can to see and hear your students, extend that grace, and support them with as much empathy and flexibility as you can during these final weeks, without sacrificing the rigor that we prize in our Winthrop learning communities. Winthrop is known for its caring, connected faculty. However, as we discussed in August, it can be hard to remain a resource when your own well runs low. I continue to work with the deans and my VP peers to consider ways to end the semester strong for our faculty, staff, and our students, and I trust that you all will do the same in your classes and programs.

Consider whether now is a good time to put reminders into your BB courses or out through class communications regarding student wellness resources. A list of key links is provided below:

- Counseling Services: <https://www.winthrop.edu/hcs/cs-about-counseling-services.aspx>
- Online resources: TAO (Therapy Assistance Online) Self-Enrolled Self-Help: <https://us.taocconnect.org>
- Food Box: <https://www.winthrop.edu/cas/nutrition/the-food-box.aspx>
- Available emergency funds: <https://www.winthrop.edu/student-life/>

Finally, here is an excellent resource for identifying when students are in distress and suggestions for how to respond, from [Stanford University's Red Folder resource page](#). If you click on the plus signs on the website, you will find suggested language to help you frame conversations with students who may need assistance.

# How to Respond to a Student in Distress

**This is not a script**, but rather guidance and examples of what you might say in a supportive conversation with a student. It is important that you use language that feels natural to you and fits the context of your interaction with the student.

Say What You See	+
Indicators of Distress	+
Show You Care	+
Hear Them Out	+
Know Your Role	+
Connect to Help	+

Best of luck to you all for completing the semester. Please let me or any of our partners in Student Affairs or University College know if you have any questions about how best to support your students for a strong fall finish.

Adrienne

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