



*Center for Student Wellness  
Division of Student Affairs*

## **Winthrop University Counseling Services Policy Statement**

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you, and we understand the decision to begin counseling is important and sometimes difficult. We hope counseling will be a meaningful and enriching experience for you. Because a successful counseling experience depends on mutual understanding and consideration, please familiarize yourself with some of our policies.

### **Initial Consultation**

Your first visit to Counseling Services is referred to as the “initial consultation,” and it generally lasts 30 minutes. You will meet with the Same Day Counselor to discuss your concerns, and you and your counselor will select the best resources for your difficulties. If the level of services offered at Counseling Services seems sufficient to help you resolve your concerns and if you decide to continue counseling, your counselor will schedule you for an intake appointment with an ongoing counselor. If the counselor determines that your concerns would be better served by another agency, he or she will make a referral to an appropriate resource in the community. You may meet with the Case Manager Intern to help facilitate this referral if you choose.

### **Number of Appointments**

The services we provide to students are short-term and time limited. Students may receive up to ten appointments during an academic year for individual or couples counseling. Some students may find that they do not need this many sessions. For those students who realize that this number is insufficient to meet their needs, an outside referral may be discussed with their counselor. Group therapy does not count toward the ten-session limit.

### **The Nature of Counseling**

Due to the short-term and time-limited nature of our services, you and your ongoing counselor will set reasonable goals for your episode of counseling. Ongoing therapy is an active exercise in growth. For counseling to be effective, both the counselor and the client must both be active participants in each session, and the client must work to apply their new understanding and strategies both during and in between sessions. The therapeutic relationship you have with your counselor will end when you have met your therapy goals. If it appears that your sessions will run out before you have met your therapy goals, your counselor will work with you to find an appropriate counselor in the community.

### **Requesting Another Counselor**

You may request to change therapists if you prefer to work with another counselor. You are encouraged to discuss this option with your counselor during the intake or shortly thereafter. If you return to Counseling Services in the future and prefer to work with someone other than your previous counselor, you should tell the administrative assistant when you make an appointment.

Health Services • Counseling  
Services • Health Promotion •  
Student Advocacy & Trauma  
Support

803/323-2206  
803/323-3332 (fax)  
wuhealth@winthrop.edu  
www.winthrop.edu/csw  
Rock Hill, SC 29733



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### **Rescheduling and Missed Appointments**

You are allowed two missed appointments. You may forfeit your eligibility for ongoing counseling appointments for three months if you miss more than two scheduled appointments. If you must reschedule or cancel an appointment, we ask that you do so at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments rescheduled or canceled fewer than 24 hours in advance may be counted as missed appointments. If you arrive 15 or more minutes late for a scheduled appointment, it may be considered a missed appointment.

If you do not attend your scheduled appointment and fail to cancel your appointment within a reasonable amount of time (24 hours prior to the appointment), you will be charged a \$20 no-show fee.

Initial Here: \_\_\_\_\_

Charges will be placed on your account following your scheduled appointment. It will show up on your Winthrop Account as "Student Wellness," but it will in no way identify that you have received Counseling care.

On the occasion that your counselor needs to reschedule your appointment due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances, Counseling Services will contact you as soon as possible and work with you to reschedule as close to your previously scheduled appointment as possible. This situation is not considered a missed appointment.

### **Evaluation of Our Services**

We send an evaluation invitation via email to every student who has used our services and agreed to participate in our survey. Your anonymous feedback about the quality of the services you received is highly informative and appreciated. We hope that you will participate and that when you receive this invitation you will take a few minutes to complete and return it.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

The ethical codes of American Counseling Association, National Association of Social Workers, the International Association of Counseling Services, and the laws of South Carolina guide the policies of Winthrop University Counseling Services. This means that the information you share with your counselor is confidential. University officials, teachers, parents, law enforcement officials, potential employers, and others have no access to any of your records without your written permission. The only exceptions to this rule of confidentiality are the following:

- If appropriate, your counselor may consult with your treating physician or other healthcare provider at Winthrop University Health Services to coordinate your care.
- If there is clear evidence that you are likely to physical harm to another person in the near future, it is your counselor's duty to warn the person involved. This step would be taken as a last resort and only if absolutely necessary.
- If there is clear evidence that you are likely to do physical harm to yourself in the near future, it is your counselor's duty to contact others. This step would be taken as a last resort and only if absolutely necessary.

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- If you share information about the abuse or neglect of any juvenile or vulnerable adult(s), your counselor may be required by state law to report that information to the Department of Social Services.
- If you are seventeen or younger or have a legal guardian, your parents/guardians may have legal access to your counseling records.
- If ordered by a judge to testify or provide counseling records as part of a judicial proceeding, your counselor would be required to comply. Such a situation may arise in child custody proceedings or in proceedings in which your emotional condition is an important element.

Psychologists, Counselors, Social Workers, and counselors-in-training at Counseling Services may receive supervision from senior staff. This means that information you share with your counselor may be reviewed by a supervisor to ensure that you are receiving the highest quality of service. It is your right to know the name of your counselor's supervisor. Your counselor may seek consultation with other professional mental health clinicians on the Counseling Services staff in order to help you better deal with your concerns. Health care providers and counselors involved in your care have access to your health and counseling electronic health records for the purpose of coordinating your care. You may limit sharing of information between providers. If you have any questions or concerns regarding confidentiality, please feel free to discuss them with your counselor.

Counseling staff at Counseling Services will not report any information about student-clients, including attendance or lack thereof, to any person, agency, or group who has mandated counseling for the student.

I have read and I understand this Policy Statement. I voluntarily consent to counseling within the parameters of the Policy.

Student Signature:

Date:

WU ID#:

Parent Signature:

Date:

*If student under 16, in accordance with SC Law Code Section 63-5-340*

Legal Guardian Signature:

Date:

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