Working together to support students in crisis

NACADA Annual Conference

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Agenda

- Introductions
- History of BIT/Care Teams
- Advising representation on BIT/Care Teams
- Advising students in crisis
- Case studies
- Advocating for advisor involvement

Who We Are

- (and why we're here)

Calley Stevens Taylor, PhD

Dean of Student Success, Cedar Crest College. Allentown, PA.

- Small, private liberal arts college.
- 154 years old
- 1,400-1,600 students
- 50% Traditional Women's College, 50% in the School of Adult and Graduate Education
- Bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees in liberal and practitioner fields

Related Experience

- Care & Crisis Team member, UNC Asheville (2006-2010). *Role: Director of Advising and Learning Support*

- Behavior Intervention Team Appeals Committee (2020-2013), Reading Area Community College. *Role: Director of Advising and Enrollment Services*

- Care Team member, Cedar Crest College (2013-present), Title IX Deputy Coordinator (2014-present). *Role: Dean of Student Success*

Related Training and Development

Crisis and Risk Management	Title IX
• National Response Framework, An Introduction. FEMA Emergency Management Institute • Active Shooter: What Can You Do? FEMA EMI • QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Certification. • NCHERM Care Team Best Practices. • National Incident Management System (NIMS). FEMA EMI • Introduction to Incident Command System ICS-100 for Higher Education. FEMA EMI • ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents FEMA EMI • Mental Health First Aid Certification (2016, 2019) • NCHERM Conduct Board Training. • Campus Behavioral Crisis Intervention. Behavioral Science Applications. • Threat Assessment Training. • Support Team Network Training.	• ATIXA Title IX Investigator Certification, Level 3. • ATIXA Title IX Prevention and Investigation Training. • ATIXA Title IX Mandated Reporter Training. • ATIXA Title IX Investigator Training (Levels 1 & 2). • ATIXA Title IX Training.

Rebecca Hapes, PhD.

Senior Academic Advisor, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

- Large, land-grant, public institution
- Opened 1876 (145 years)
- Enrollment on main campus of 69K students
- Bachelors, masters, doctoral degrees, law and medicine on other campuses

Related Experience

- Academic Advisor: someone to whom students disclosed their experiences, who then had to report on those disclosures (2004 – present)

- Assisted faculty within Department of Entomology with submission of "Tell Somebody" reports
  - Tellsomebody.tamu.edu
  - "As a member of this University community, if you observe any behavior that is concerning you may report the behavior using the online reporting form"

Related Training and Development

- Active Shooter Preparedness (2020)
- 12th Man Emergency Playbook (2020)
- Facilitator, Green Dot Training, College Curriculum, Alteristic (2018)
- Green Dot Bystander Training, Texas A&M University (2018)
- Stand UP Workshop, Sexual Assault Survivors Services, Step In Stand Up Campaign, Texas A&M University (2017)
- Conflict Management Workshop, Texas A&M University (2012)
- Mediator, The Center for Change and Conflict Resolution (2009)
- A Community of Respect, Texas A&M University (2006)
- QPR Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper (2004)

BIT/Care Teams and Advising Representation

Evolution of BIT/Care Teams

- Care Teams existed in higher education for some time, but the shootings at Columbine High School, Virigina Tech, and Northern Illinois University resulted in increased emphasis on behavioral intervention as a tool to prevent violence (Sokolow & Lewis, 2008).

- National Behavioral Intervention Team Association (NaBITA) defines Behavioral Intervention teams as "multi-disciplinary group[s] whose purpose is to support its target audience...via an established protocol designed to help detect early indicators of the potential for disruptive conduct, self-harm, and the risk of violence to others." (NaBITA, n.d)

- Care Teams or Students-of-Concern teams may operate with less formal structures than BITs and tend to work with more holistic approaches to identifying and mitigating a wider range of risks (Sokolow, et al., 2014).

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Evolution of BIT/Care Teams

- Early teams most often managed cases involving psychological challenges, conduct violations, alcohol/drug issues, and academic misconduct (Van Brunt, et al., 2014).

- By 2018, NaBITA members reported that top case types managed by their teams had shifted to psychological - suicide or depression; other psychological; and academic, financial, or social stress/needs (Schiemann & Van Brunt, 2018)

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Visibility of Care Teams

- After the Virginia Tech massacre, BIT and Care Teams become more prevalent – and expected by families, educational leaders, and state legislatures.

- There was also a push to make the work of these teams more public.
  - Dickinson College:
  https://www.dickinson.edu/info/20226/student_life/3540/care_team
  - The University of Montana Western:
  https://www.umwestern.edu/section/behavioral-intervention-team-bit/
  - Dominican University of California
  https://www.dominican.edu/campus-life/health-and-wellness/care-team

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Advising Representation on BIT/Care Teams

- NaBITA recommends a tiered approach to Care Team membership. Core members are considered essential, middle tier members engage with the team as needed, and outer tier members are important to supporting students but not usually invited to team meetings (Van Brunt, et al., 2015).
  - In 2015, NaBITA suggested that advisors fit into the outer tier.
  - By 2018, 35% of NaBITA member institutions reported that academic advisors were members of BIT/Care Teams, though only 4% of student referrals came from academic advisors.
  - In 2020, advising or academic representation was still not among the top core members: Residence Life, Counseling, Campus Safety, Student Conduct, Dean of Students, Disability Services, Case Manager, Title IX.

Advising Students in Crisis

Care Team Responsibilities for Advisors

- Funnel referrals from other advisors to the team
- Gather information from advisors regarding student cases
- Notify faculty of student cases
- Gather information from faculty regarding student cases
- Interface between faculty and students
- Assist students with academic decision-making
- Assist students with navigating academic policies
- Support students' return after extended absence or leave

Advisor Preparation

- Know the reporting responsibilities per your institution requirements, state guidelines, and associated laws
- Know your institutional reporting protocols
- Know the necessary resources and appropriate referrals
  - Within the campus environment and surrounding community

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Advisor Interactions

- Thank the student for trusting in you
- Listen to the student
- Believe the student
- Advocate on behalf of the student – provide control of the situation TO THE STUDENT
- Utilize supportive language that is non-judgmental {[Empathetic response](), Brene' Brown}
- Define boundaries
- Refer to appropriate medical personnel, including counseling services
- Follow up with the student

Case Studies

Advising students in crisis

Case Study #1 | Temporary Hospitalization

- Student is hospitalized for 2 weeks following a report of suicidal ideation from the resident assistant.

- Student is released into a partial hospitalization program that requires attendance from 8am-3pm daily for at least 3 weeks.

- Advisor:
  - Notified faculty of student's initial absence. Requested information about the student's status in each class and options for making up missed work/class time upon her return.
  - Assisted the student in contacting faculty of day classes to assess their willingness to allow her to make up work missed during the partial hospitalization.
  - Upon learning that continuing with all daytime classes would not be possible, advisor assisted the student with the medical withdrawal process from those classes, provided a revised academic plan, and helped her write an appeal for financial aid SAP.

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Case Study #2 | Death in Family

- Student notifies academic advisor that their grandmother has just passed away. Through the conversation, it becomes clear the grandmother had been sick for several months with cancer and that the student had been assisting with her care, along with care of siblings while their parents also cared for grandmother
- Student had missed classes in the midst of this time to attend to grandmother, and was driving back-and-forth between campus and home (~5 hours round trip)
- Advisor:
  - Work with student on official notification of absence
  - Communicate with Student Assistance Services regarding support services for student
  - Communicate with professors regarding situation to determine what, if anything, can be worked out on behalf of the student
  - Discuss academic options with student based on current academic standing in courses (dropping individual classes, incompletes in coursework, potential withdrawal from semester, etc)

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Advocacy

How to get involved

Why Advising Representation?

- Academic advisors are often in the position to notice when a student is experiencing a variety of stressors (Harper, 2005), including academic issues, financial insecurity, family stress, medical issues, Title IX experiences, or mental health challenges.
- Academic risk (attendance, failure to maintain progress, changes in performance) are *behaviors*, too.
- Students approaching or experiencing crisis may find that
  - Academic pressure or uncertainty exacerbates their stress; or
  - Their situation creates academic pressure or challenges by impacting academic progress, grades, financial aid, or ability to continue in a major or a career.
- Advisors are uniquely suited to helping students these complicated matters
- Advisors often have relationships with faculty that can be leveraged to assist students or inform the Care Team's work.

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Advisor Wellbeing & Self-Care

- This work is crucial, but can be emotionally and mentally demanding and draining
- Give space – emotional and mental space – to process disclosure, cases, and conversations
- Utilize relaxation techniques for yourself
- Utilize resources as appropriate for yourself
- Understand personal limitations

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Resources

- National Association for Behavorial Intervention and Threat Assessment (NaBITA) https://www.nabita.org/
  - Resources
  - Whitepapers
  - Annual surveys
  - Training
- TNG Strategic Risk Management Solutions (NCHERM)   https://www.tngconsulting.com/
  - Clearinghouse for NaBITA and ATIXA
- Follow and support the BIG Act (HB 3539), which would require Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to develop best practices for schools and higher education institutions.

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References

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