

Behavior
Intervention
Team

2012-
2013

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BIT

Behavior Intervention Team

Introduction: The health, safety and well being of individuals who make up the Fisk community are a high priority for the University. For this reason, policies have been created to address student problems and concerns that interfere with successful engagement in campus life.

National trends have shown that mental health issues and alcohol and drug abuse are growing concerns that are better managed with preventive measures and early interventions. Recent high profile instances of violence on college campuses have resulted in enhanced emergency response and intervention mechanisms intended to prevent the occurrence of such events. In light of these issues in higher education, Fisk has in place a cross-functional Behavior Intervention Team to address concerns that arise with individual students.

Purpose: The Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) is a group of administrators and staff who work closely with students who are struggling within the academic or social environment at Fisk. The team works to coordinate university resources to assist students who are at risk academically, or who exhibit maladaptive behavior or signs of emotional distress. The team also identifies students who have either experienced personal loss or failures while enrolled or who may be a danger to themselves or others within the Fisk community. The team develops intervention plans for each individual student based on the problems and concerns identified.

Crisis/Behavior Intervention

The BIT deals with matters of crisis, disturbing behavior, and medical and mental health situations in order to propose appropriate responses and interventions. Situations of acute crisis typically result in immediate follow up with the student of concern.

Team Composition:

- Vice President of Student Engagement & Enrollment Management
- Associate Professor of Psychology
- Dean of Student Engagement
- Director of Campus Services
- Director of Public Safety
- Director of Counseling Services
- Resident Hall Director

BIT Procedures

- Students may be identified for monitoring by the BIT team or by faculty, staff or other students at the University. In other words, **ANYONE** can make a referral to the BIT.
- If someone believes there is an immediate threat of self harm or harm to others, they should call Public Safety at 615.329.8777.
- The Student Engagement Office and the Director of Counseling Services serve as the initial contacts when concerns arise about a student's behavior or when a member of the community learns of a life change or incident that is affecting a student's ability to function appropriately or productively in the university environment, either inside or outside the classroom.
- The BIT will take the information provided and make a decision about whether the student should be assessed further.
- If the team determines the student needs intervention, the student will be contacted by an assigned member of the team to initiate conversations about how to assist the student and assess the level of threat noted.
- **All matters discussed with the BIT are regarded as highly confidential.**
- The Counseling Center and Student Health Services representatives on the team do not comment on specific student matters, but serve as a resource for the team in determining general intervention strategies and providing professional mental and physical health consultation.

Threat Assessment

The BIT assists in assessing threatening situations and developing risk abatement plans that minimize the potential for violence. Leaders of the University's Emergency Management Team may also be consulted in extreme incidents. Self-injurious behaviors/suicide ideation or attempt; erratic behaviors that disrupt the normal proceedings of the University and/or situations in which hospitalization are required will be considered matters of highest concern and in need of immediate University response and intervention.

Behavioral Intervention Process

A. Business Hours-

- During normal business hours (Monday-Friday 8am-5pm) Counseling Referral forms are to be submitted to the Director of Counseling Services. The Vice President of Student Engagement and Enrollment Management and the Director of Counseling Services are to be contacted following the submission of a referral.
- Information Gathering/Risk Assessment- Once a referral form has been received by the Behavioral Intervention Team, the team will meet to implement the assessment process. The most appropriate time to include the student in the process will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- In general, the BIT will gather preliminary information regarding the concern and then appropriate team members will interview the student as part of the initial assessment process. The interview will provide the opportunity for the student to share his/her concerns about the situation and ask for needed assistance in solving it. Information gleaned in the initial interview will be helpful in determining appropriate intervention strategies.

That process may include, but is not limited to, any of the following processes:

- Interviews with all available parties with information about the situation
- Interviews with the person alleged to have displayed inappropriate/concerning behavior
- Interview with any identified potential targets of inappropriate/concerning behavior
- Assessment by counselor/mental health professional
- Contacting a student's parents or family members
- Reviews of student's academic and disciplinary history
- Legal/criminal background check

Levels of Risk- Based on all data gathered, the BIT will use the following scale to determine the level of risk that the behavior/situation poses to the student and others.

- **Low risk-** There is no serious threat to the student of concern or others. At this level, any concerns between individuals can generally be resolved by addressing the conflict or dispute between the parties involved. Counseling and follow-up support may be recommended. Generally, in this situation, the student can acknowledge the inappropriateness of the behavior and engage in behavior to make amends with the other party. These students may be experiencing mental health problems but their conduct is not generally in violation of the university's code of conduct.
- **Moderate risk-** At this level, there may be a threat to self or others that could be carried out although there is no evidence that the student has taken preparatory steps. These students are generally experiencing mental health problems and displaying disruptive behavior.

- **High risk**---At this level, there appears to be an imminent and serious danger to the safety of the student of concern or others. It appears that specific steps have been taken to carry out a plan to harm.

Possible Resolution/Outcomes- Based on the Risk Assessment, the BIT will determine the possible resolutions or outcomes

- No Action. Further observations
- Assist in developing an action plan for assistance
- Referral to existing on-campus support resources
- Referral for Student Code of Conduct Violation
- Recommendation of Medical Leave of Absence
- Recommendation of Involuntary Leave of Absence
- Recommendation of Interim Suspension
- Other options

B. After Business Hours

- Contact the Director of Counseling Services and the Vice President of Student Engagement and Enrollment Management
- Resident Director will make contact with the student and monitor the situation. Resident Director will conduct hourly checks until student has been seen by a qualified mental health professional
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