

Mandated Assessment

DSA.DS.500.001

Mandated Assessment Policy

The University of Mississippi is concerned for every student on our campus and for our entire campus community. In an effort to more effectively serve our students and our community, the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) put in place the following guidelines to help reach students who may be in need of support but who are unwilling or unable to take advantage of these services.

Definition

A mandated assessment is an opportunity for the University to determine if a student is in need of help or support. The assessment involves an individual meeting with a designated staff member at the University Counseling Center (UCC). Following this initial meeting, additional services may be deemed necessary by the designated counselor. These services could include, but are not limited to, referral to the University Psychiatrist for additional evaluation, additional sessions with the UCC counselor, or referral to outside agent for additional assessment.

Referrals

Any University employee or student may recommend a student to BIT for possible mandated evaluation. Reports also may come from parents or others concerned about a student. Once the BIT determines that a mandated assessment is necessary, the process is set into motion.

More information about referring a student to BIT can be found on the U Matter website: <http://umatter.olemiss.edu>.

Decision-Making

The decision is made by the BIT after careful consideration of the information given and a determination of the best course of action.

Behaviors that may lead to a mandated assessment include but are not limited to:

- Threat to self
- Threat to others
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Concern that the student may not be able to function in or remain in the academic community.

Confidentiality

The session with the counselor is confidential. However, the student will be required to sign a release of information so that the counselor can communicate with BIT to help make recommendations for further action. In some cases, additional releases may be required to obtain all relevant information. No one else will have access to any information without written permission from the student being assessed. A file containing the full assessment will be maintained at the UCC. The summary of the assessment will be part of the student's file that is

maintained by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Process

Once the BIT has determined that a mandated assessment is needed, the student will be contacted by a representative of BIT regarding an appointment with the UCC. This will take place as soon as possible. The assessment will be completed at the UCC, and the student will be asked to complete the typical intake information used by the UCC as well as information specific to the mandated assessment. In addition, the student will need to sign a release allowing the University Counseling Center to share information from the Mandated Assessment with the Behavioral Intervention Team. A summary of the student's assessment must be shared with the BIT as part of the Mandated Assessment process.

Outside Assessments

A student may choose to have a similar assessment completed by a mental health professional who is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a National Board Certified Counselor, a Licensed Psychologist, a Health Services Provider of Psychology, or a board certified Psychologist who is authorized by his or her respective state and licensing boards to provide such assessments. The student will be responsible for the cost of this assessment and must sign a release allowing the UCC staff and BIT to communicate with the professional conducting the assessment.

Next Steps

Following an assessment by a member of the UCC staff, a summary is provided to the BIT for review. In situations where an outside professional has conducted the assessment, a member of the UCC staff will review and send a summary of the assessment to the BIT.

After a summary of the assessment is provided to the BIT, the team will make the decision as to what actions are necessary for the University community. Possible outcomes following the assessment could include but are not limited to: no further action required (student continues enrollment at the University); referral to the University Psychiatrist for additional evaluation; additional sessions with the UCC counselor; referral to outside agency for additional assessment; possible judicial sanctions; or the invocation of the Involuntary Withdrawal Policy.

Appeals

A student may appeal the final decision of BIT to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The appeal will follow the same guidelines outlined in the Involuntary Withdrawal Policy.

Refusal to Comply

If a student refuses to participate in the mandated assessment, the BIT will begin the process of invoking the Involuntary Withdrawal Policy. A mandated assessment will only be one part of the overall picture of the student and will not be the sole determining factor for action taken regarding the student.