

Mental Health, Equity, and Conflict Resolution

Ravi Gable, Health Education Coordinator

Nythalah Baker, Director Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Michael Liut, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Computer Science



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Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

- *University of Toronto, Governing Council* -



Mental Health and Wellness

Ravi Gable, Health Education Coordinator






recognize. respond. refer.

Mental Health Training for UTM Staff & Faculty

Health & Counselling Centre | University of Toronto Mississauga
Fall 2020

learning outcomes.

- recognize indicators of concern
- respond in a supportive manner
- refer to most appropriate resources
- resources on- and off-campus



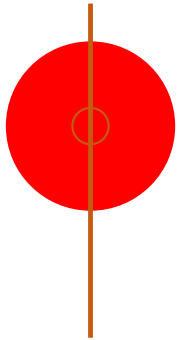
“The first priority is to ensure that all students are informed of all programs and services available, and how and when to access them.”
- President Gertler

common student health concerns.

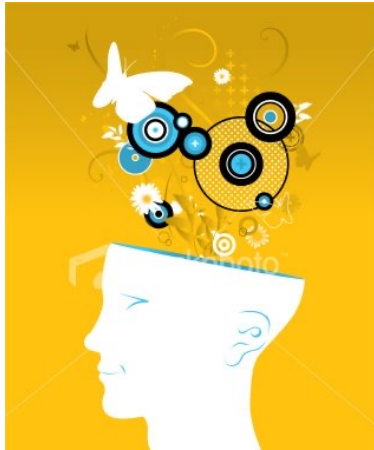
Top factors affecting academics:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| 1. stress | 42 % |
| 2. anxiety | 35 % |
| 3. sleep difficulties | 29 % |
| 4. depression | 24 % |
| 5. cold, flu, sore throat | 20 % |
| 6. Work | 18% |
| 7. Internet Use/Computer Games | 16% |





recognizing. how do you know when to act?



thoughts

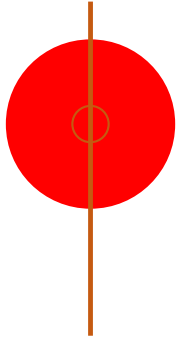


feelings



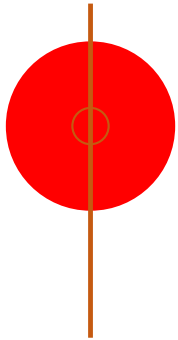
actions

• •



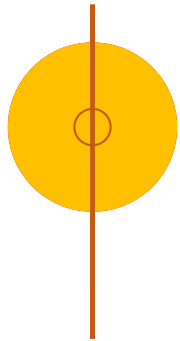
recognizing. indicators of concern.

- worrisome changes in hygiene/personal appearance
- significant changes in appetite or weight
- alcohol or substance use
- problems sleeping, concentrating, hyperactivity
- constant and/or intense worry or anxiety
- unprovoked angry outbursts, general irritability
- persistent sadness, frequent tearfulness
- disengaging or isolating from others (i.e., commitments, missing classes)
- confusion, disorientation, apparent disconnect from reality
- expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness



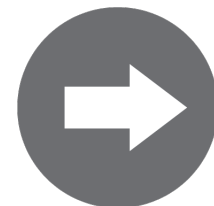
recognizing. assessing level of concern.

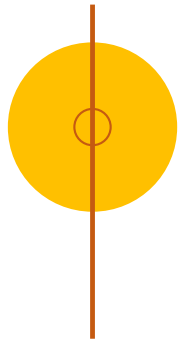
- is it a **significant shift** from the individual's norm?
- does it seem to be **persistent**, lasting too long, or getting worse?
- is it **interfering with the student's ability** to do the things they need and/or want to do?
- could this simply be a **normal reaction** to a difficult situation?
- if you don't have sufficient answers to any of the above, **who could you speak to?** What's the '**marker**' for seeking additional support?



responding.

- **Is it an emergency?**
 - Call for **safety or medical emergencies (24/7)**
 - Call Campus Police 905-569-4333 or 9-1-1
- **If not an emergency, consider timing. Can or can't it wait until next day?**
 - Campus Police are your after-hours partners (**after 5pm & on weekends**)
 - Call Campus Police (general line) 905-828-5200
 - They will work with the appropriate administrators
- **Concerned about next steps?**
 - Consult with immediate supervisor to ascertain next steps
 - If/as needed, consult with the Assistant Dean, Student Wellness
 - Call 905-569-5758 or e-mail sbc.utm@utoronto.ca





responding.

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/sas/sites/files/sas/public/shared/SASdocs/Distressed-student.pdf>

Responding to Distressed Students

A quick guide for faculty and staff at the University of Toronto Mississauga



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utm.utoronto.ca/distressedstudent

Emergency Situation

- medical emergencies
- suicide attempts
- assault
- police matters
- all after-hours emergencies and crises

For emergency situations call:
(available 24/7)

UTM Campus Police
(905) 569-4333

911

Student Crisis Situation

- in crisis or overwhelmed
- disturbing behaviour
- references to suicide or violence

For student crisis situations call:
(during regular business hours)

UTM Student Affairs
(905) 828-5758
or
U of T Student Crisis Response
(416) 946-7111

Personal Safety Situation

- harassment and stalking
- bullying and threats
- domestic/family violence
- sexual assault

For personal safety situations call:
(during regular business hours)

U of T Community Safety Office
(416) 978-1485

Concerning Student Situation

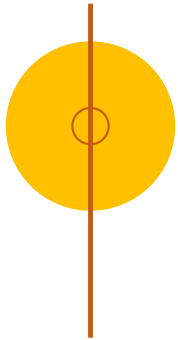
- complex academic situations
- unusual, distressing or unmanageable behaviour

For concerning student situations call:
(during regular business hours)

UTM Office of the Registrar (academic)
(905) 828-5399

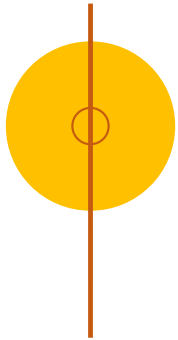
UTM Student Affairs (behaviour)
(905) 828-5758

U of T Student Academic Progress (behaviour)
(416) 946-0424



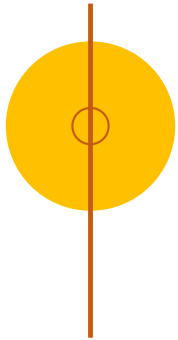
responding. Safety considerations.

- **Ensure that you and the student are safe** – assess the situation for possible safety concerns
- **In case of immediate safety concern, seek help right away (safety supersedes confidentiality)**
- **Seek support, ask for help, report up** – remember you are not alone



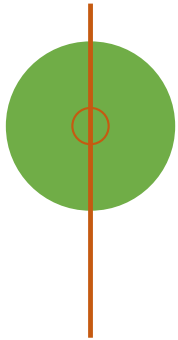
responding. How to provide a supportive response.

- **Choose right time & place** – respect student’s right to privacy
- **Be specific** – what have you observed that has led you to be concerned
 - *“hey there, I noticed (...) I just wanted to check in to see if you were doing ok?”*
- **Take a non-judgmental approach** – avoid making assumptions; consider your facial expressions/body language; avoid using criticizing language & attitudes
- **Listen actively** – ask questions, clarify, reflect back what you’ve understood
- **Try to instill a sense of hope** – that things can get better



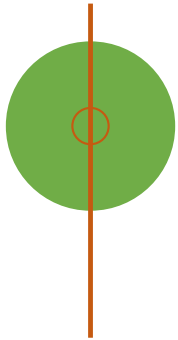
responding. How to provide a supportive response.

- **Avoid giving advice too quickly** – allow the student time
- **Don't promise to keep the conversation a secret** – may need to involve others
- **Discuss options and resources available** – the student should choose what resources they think will be most helpful
- **Maintain appropriate boundaries** – avoid probing questions; getting the student connected to the most appropriate resources should be the goal; self-care



referring.

- Refer when:
 - you've tried to help/support, but the student is still struggling
 - you feel the situation requires help beyond your knowledge/skill
 - student is not comfortable talking to you



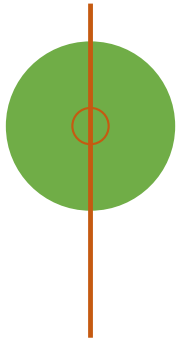
referring. how.

- when referring, don't push, give the student the information they need, and allow them to make the choice to seek out a particular resource

*“would you like me to help connect you with some possible supports on campus?”
“here are 1 or 2 resources on campus that many students find helpful...”*

- as much as possible, prepare the student for what to expect from the resource offered, it may increase the likelihood of follow-through

“if you want to see a mental health professional today, the Health & Counselling Centre has drop-in appointments, it's free, and confidential.”



referring. after making the referral.

- After referring, if appropriate, follow up with the student to see if they need any further support
- As always, be mindful of appropriate boundaries.
 - Example: Always, respect their right to privacy regarding personal health information (which includes whether they have seen a health-care provider) students can choose to share this information, but should not be expected to

Resources | campus

Resilience at UTM

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/sas/resilience>

Health & Counselling Centre

905-828-5255

Sexual Violence Prevention & Support Centre

416-978-2266

Accessibility Services

(905) 569-4366

Campus Police (General Inquiries)

905-828-5200

Academic Advising – OOTR

Financial Aid – OOTR

Student Housing & Residence Life

Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre

International Education Centre

In the event of an emergency call
Campus Police 905-569-4333 or 9-1-1

UTM Health & Counselling Centre

- We offer **short-term, solution-focused counselling, physician medical appointments, nutritional counselling, and nursing care**
- Our staff & services include:
 - Registered Nurses
 - Family Physicians
 - Psychiatrists
 - Personal Counsellors and Mental Health Workers
 - Dietitian
 - Wellness Ambassadors (Health Promotion)
 - Immunizations, flu shot, etc.
 - Disability and verification of illness documentation
 - more...



UTM Health & Counselling Centre

- Now offering **virtual care/telehealth** options (via telephone and online)
- In-person appointments at the discretion of the physician
- Location: Davis Building 1123A
- Hours of Operation:
 - **Mon, Tues, Fri 9am-5pm**
 - **Wed, Thurs 9am-7:30pm**



Resources | MySSP app

- My SSP App – 24/7, confidential counselling and mental health support
- Virtual and phone (call/text) options available
- Download the MySSP App on the Apple App Store or Google Play Store
- Call 1-844-451-9700 (within North America)
- Call 001-416-380-6578 (outside North America)



Resources | community

Good2Talk (24/7/365)

1-866-925-5454

Distress Centres of Greater Toronto (formerly Spectra Helpline)

905-459-7777 (24/7/365 for English;
M-F, 10am-10pm for multi-lingual)

Telehealth Ontario (COVID-19 advice/questions)

1-866-797-0000

Walk-in clinics

Nearby Emergency Departments:

- Trillium/Credit Valley
- Brampton Civic Hospital
- Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital

In the event of an emergency call
Campus Police 905-569-4333 or 9-1-1

Questions



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Equity and Inclusion

Nythalah Baker, Director Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

UTM Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office (EDIO)



- Develop and deliver equity, Indigenous, and human rights related programs and services for students, staff, faculty, and librarians.
- Work with academic, administrative, and students as campus partners.



- Education opportunities
- Community building and engagement
- Systemic change initiatives
- Complaint resolution assistance with concerns of discrimination or harassment



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EDIO: Indigenous Initiatives Unit

- Build and enhance Indigenous Presence at UTM
- Build and maintain strong relationships with Indigenous communities external to UTM
- Work closely with the tri-campus Office of Indigenous Initiatives
- Support and enhance the Indigenous Centre programming and services

The Indigenous Centre:

- Support Indigenous students, staff, and faculty at UTM as well as inspire future Indigenous students to a welcoming and inclusive UTM community.
- Promote equity and inclusion of Indigenous people among students, staff, faculty, and throughout the campus.



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Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office Team



Cat Criger,
Indigenous Advisor



Martina Douglas,
Program Coordinator



Tee Duke,
Assistant Director
Indigenous Initiatives



Nythalah Baker,
Director, EDIO



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Leadership at the University of Toronto

“The creation of an equitable community, one that is diverse as well as inclusive and that is respectful and protects the human rights of its members, requires the work of every member of the community, across all our sites and campuses, including students, teaching staff, administrative staff, visitors, alumni, and guests.”

*Statement on Equity, Diversity, and
Excellence*

University of Toronto



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Ontario Human Rights Code
How well do you know it?



How many code grounds exist within the Ontario Human Rights Code?

A: 12

B: 15

C: 17

D: 13

E: I have no idea



What protected social areas are covered by the OHRC?

A: Housing, employment, education

B: Employment and public services

C: Hospitals, community centres, movie theatres, public transit

D: All of the above

E: None of the above



What grounds are covered in the OHRC?

A: Gender, Sexuality, Ancestry, Marital Status, Age, Race, Disability

B: Colour, Race, Citizenship, Ethnic origin, Creed, Disability, Sex, Sexual orientation

C: Age, Ancestry, Colour, Race, Citizenship, Ethnic origin, Political Affiliation,
Record of offences

D: Gender, Marital Status, Age, Race, Disability, Ethnic Origin, Sexuality,
Place of Origin

E: None of the above



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Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)

- Free from discrimination or harassment based on actual or perceived protected grounds (17)
- In services, employment, associations – live, work, study
- Treat people with dignity so all can have equal access to opportunity to contribute to and participate in society
- This is the minimum

17 Protected Grounds

Age	Ancestry	Citizenship	Creed / Religion	Colour
Disability	Ethnic Origin	Family Status	Gender Expression	Gender Identity
Marital Status	Place of Origin	Race	Record of Offences (employment)	Receipt of Public Assistance (Housing)
Sex	Sexual Orientation			



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U of Toronto Policies: Things You Need to Know

- Policies that provide community expectations as well as responsibilities as students and employees:
 - Student Code of Conduct
 - Sexual Harassment & Sexual Violence Policy
 - Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy
 - Discrimination and Harassment Policy
 - Collective Agreements (e.g. CUPE 3902, Unit 1)
- Informed by OHRC legislation and others (e.g. OHSA, AODA)



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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- **Diversity** is all the ways that we are different.
- **Equity** is recognizing that not everyone has the same experiences, opportunities, or access to resources, and then working to eliminate barriers.
- **Inclusion** is equity in practice, is intentional, and addresses inequities in power to ensure spaces and opportunities for all to thrive.



Equity and Inclusion: What do they mean for your role as a TA?

Working with your TA peers:

- Maintain respectful and inclusive communication and behaviours free of putdowns, name calling, stereotyping, discrimination

Working as a Teaching Assistant:

- Lead and support respectful and inclusive learning spaces online and in labs through your discussions with students
- Recognize your boundaries and responsibilities as an employee and a student
- Report up to your supervisor if an interaction with a student or TA peer includes conduct, posts, or language that is uncomfortable, a put-down, or belittling to you



Where to get assistance?

- Your course supervisor or lead Teaching Assistant
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office
 - www.utm.utoronto.ca/equity-diversity
- Sexual Violence Prevention & Support Centre
 - www.svpscentre.utoronto.ca
- Your Union and Collective Agreement
- UTM Human Resources



Questions



Conflict Resolution & Intervention

Michael Liut, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, Computer Science



Conflict Resolution

- A means for 2+ parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement
- Different situations may require different types of intervention:
 - With Students
 - With other Teaching Assistants
 - With Supervisors (Staff/Faculty)
 - On-campus vs. off-campus
 - Online vs. in-person



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7 Steps to Resolution

1. Understanding the conflict
2. Communicating with the opposing part(y/ies)
3. Brainstorming possible resolutions
4. Selecting the 'best' resolution
5. Using a mediator
6. Exploring alternatives
7. Coping with the stress



Bystander Behaviour

Social Influence: assume that it isn't a problem because others don't intervene

Audience Inhibition: fear of embarrassment

Diffusion of Responsibility: assume someone else will do something

Social Norms: believe that others aren't bothered or that nothing will change

Outcome: fear of retaliation or negative outcomes

Social Norms and Bystander Behaviour

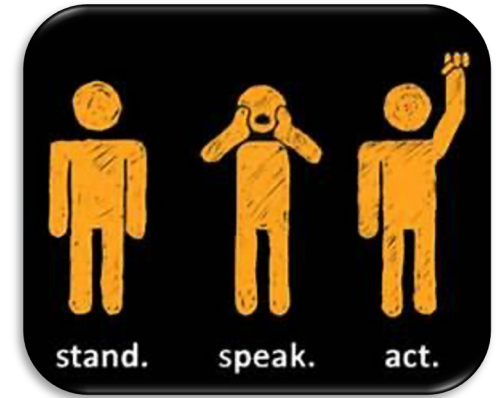


- Social norms refer to the acceptability of an action or belief
i.e. unwritten rules about what is normal for a group or setting
- Misperceived norms are a strong influence on behaviour
 - Often used as self-justification
 - Influence problem's perception and intervention
 - Reinforces unhealthy cultures and other prejudices



Intervention Options

- Direct vs. Indirect
 - Talk to the person directly or to others who are present
- On the spot or later
 - Take action immediately or after the fact
- The goal is to have more options to respond and feel good about how you choose to respond
 - It may not always “feel good” but may be the “right course of action”

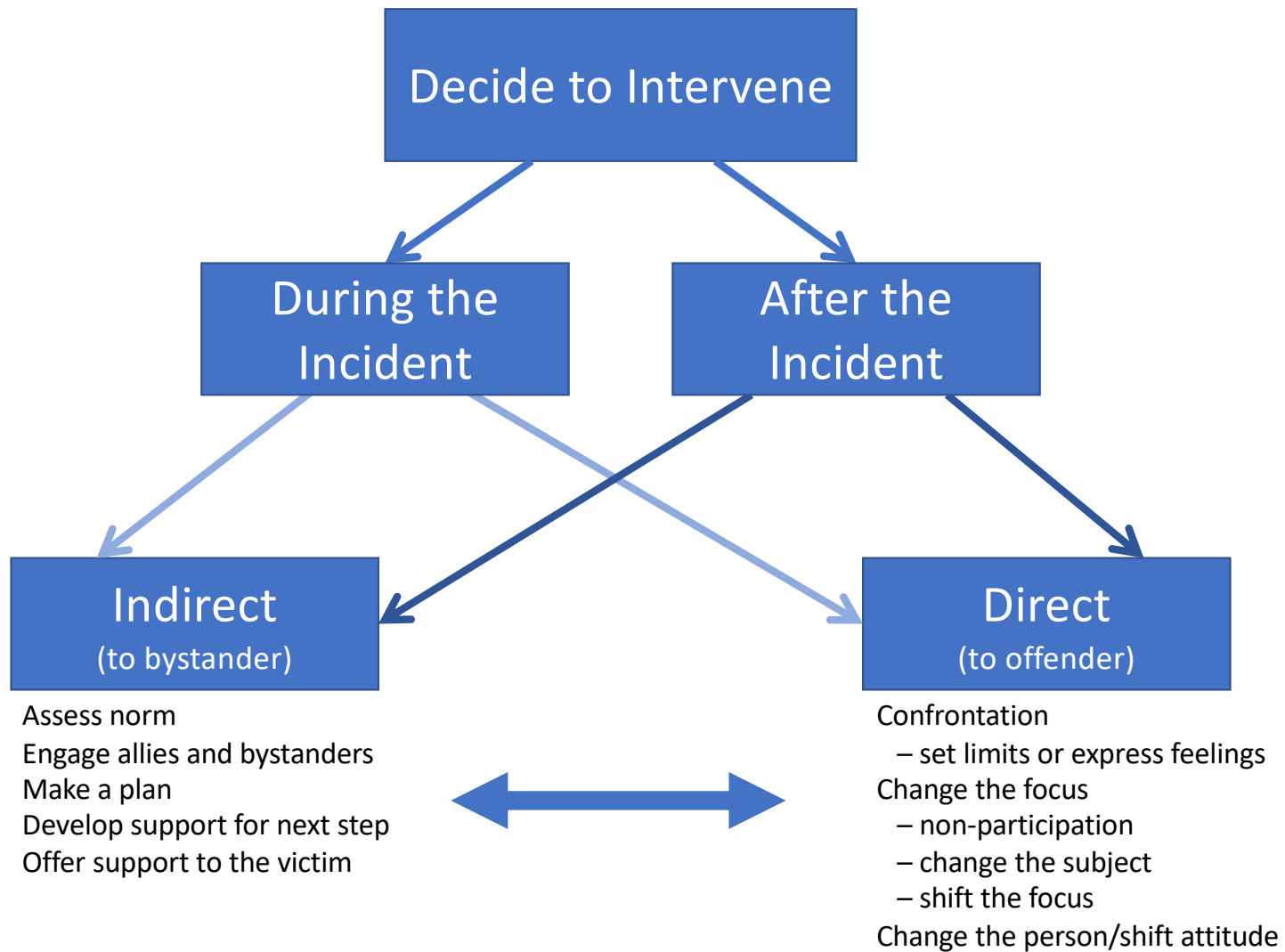


Types of Intervention

1. Confront the person, impose consequences, or express feelings.
2. Shift the focus (change the situation)
3. Shifting attitudes (change the person)

Intervention is situation-specific and must account for personality, culture and identity, power-differences, collegiality, and potential backlash.





Breakout: Case Scenarios!

After you have read the scenario, take a moment to reflect and then discuss the following with your group:

1. Identify the issues in the scenario.
2. What is your role/responsibility as a TA?
3. How would you deal with this scenario to promote a safer and more inclusive environment?
4. What resources could you/should you contact?

<https://bit.ly/32RM41D>

Case Scenario 1

- What would you do if....

A student writes to you privately on Discord asking why you gave them such a lousy mark on their test. You tell them they can write you on the class discussion board if they want to talk about their test.

The student asks you again about the test and writes, "I bet it's because you don't know the material. Most girls don't know the answers anyways."

Case Scenario 2

- What would you do if...

A student asks to talk with after class you via chat about some questions they have to prepare for the test. As you are writing back and forth, you offer to talk by video so you can share your screen and go through an example question.

When the student comes on video, you see that they appear very tired, slumped over, and appear to have been crying as there are tissues on the desk and there are tears in their eyes.



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Case Scenario 3

- What would you do if...

A student in your department has indicated that things are stressful at home lately.

On Friday afternoon, when everyone else has left, they pop into your Zoom office hours/open lab to “catch up”. In the conversation they state that they are struggling with their MCS courses and things are becoming very stressful. They state that they would appreciate a break and feel like things would be better if they just weren’t around anymore.



Other Possible Scenarios

- What would you do if a student says to you “You look so young, how could you possibly be a Teaching Assistant?”?
- What would you do if a student says to you or another Teaching Assistant “Your name is so hard to pronounce. I’ll never remember it. Can I call you something else?”?
- More examples [here](#) with responses.

Questions



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Thanks for listening!

Ravinder Gabble ravinder.gabble@utoronto.ca

Nythalah Baker nythalah.baker@utoronto.ca

Michael Liut michael.liut@utoronto.ca