Roanoke College Mission Statement

The mission of the Roanoke College Counseling Center is to make a significant contribution to the academic mission of Roanoke College by addressing the developmental and emotional concerns of the student body. Our goal is to help students reach their full personal and academic potential by providing them with a means to more fully understand and negotiate the complexities of college life.

The Roanoke College Counseling Center staff is dedicated and committed to a respectful understanding and honoring of the various social, interpersonal and cultural contexts represented by the students. The Counseling Center embraces diverse perspectives, maintains strict confidentiality, establishes a professional atmosphere and holds to the highest clinical and ethical standards.

Staff

Paul Henrickson, M. Div.
Dean of the Chapel

Rhonda Ryan, Ph.D.
Licensed Professional Counselor

Montenique L. Finney, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist

Kathy Russo
Coordinator, Chaplain’s Office

Roanoke College Counseling Center Hours

Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

When the Counseling Center is closed, students should call Roanoke College Campus Safety: (540) 375-2310.

Aiding Students in Distress: A Guide for Faculty & Staff
Introduction
The years of college can be among the most exciting and gratifying of a person’s life. However, for some, being a college student also can cause significant amounts of stress, confusion and uncertainty. As faculty or staff members, you may encounter some of these distressed students. Your role can be a positive and important one in identifying students who are having personal or academic difficulties and helping them to utilize the resources available to assist them. The purpose of this brochure is to provide a brief overview of the Roanoke College Counseling Center Services, a list of symptoms of distress and to provide some suggestions for assisting distressed students and making referrals.

Roanoke College Counseling Center Services
The Roanoke College Counseling Center is designed to meet the needs of the college community with compassion and honesty. The Counseling Center is located in the Faculty House and offers crisis consultation and individual counseling for students. There is no charge to students for services at the Counseling Center. Appointments last for approximately fifty minutes and are scheduled based on counselor availability. To make an appointment, please call (540) 375-2302. Prior to speaking with a counselor, students will complete information sheets and consent forms. During the first visit, students work with counselors to determine a course of action, which may include continuing therapy on campus or receiving a referral to an off-campus counselor. Occasionally, one session proves sufficient. Most often, the student decides to see a Counseling Center counselor on an ongoing basis, usually once a week. All information about a student’s counseling is confidential, except in situations where there is a threat or danger to life.

When to Refer
Many faculty and staff members have contact with students on a frequent basis and consequently have many opportunities to observe some of the signs and symptoms that could be indicative of the need to refer for professional assistance. Below are some of the general symptoms of distress:
- Depressed or leathargic mood
- Verbal/written references to suicide or homicide
- Inappropriate or exaggerated emotional reactions
- Behavior that is disruptive or threatening
- Significant decreases in energy and motivation
- Erratic class attendance or class performance
- Repeated requests to obtain deadline extensions
- Marked change in appearance and hygiene
- Marked disorientation, paranoia and/or bizarre behavior

Approaching Distressed Students
If you decide to approach a student or if a student reaches out to you for help, here are some suggestions that might be useful:
- **Talk to the student** in private and be straightforward about your concerns for his or her welfare.
- **Listen to the student’s thoughts and feelings** in a respectful, caring and nonjudgmental way.
- **Let the student know** that you believe a consultation with a counselor could be helpful. One way to do this is to say something like this:

  "Counseling can be helpful for people who feel the way you do. I’d be glad to give you the number to the Counseling Center. If you would like, you can use my telephone now and call the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment. I am also more than willing to walk over to the Counseling Center with you."

- **Don’t hesitate to follow-up** privately with a student to ask if he/she made a successful contact with the Counseling Center.
- **If you are uncertain about the appropriateness of a referral** or the student resists a referral and you remain concerned, feel free to call the Counseling Center for a consultation.

Urgent Situations
If a student demonstrates a desire to harm him/herself or others, excessive rage, incoherent thoughts or any other behavior that is cause for immediate concern, we suggest you do the following:
- If possible, provide a quiet place for the student.
- Maintain a calm and supportive attitude.
- Do not leave the individual alone.
- If it is during normal business hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm), contact the Counseling Center and convey the urgency of the situation to the receptionist.
- After normal business hours, faculty, staff and students should contact Roanoke College Campus Safety at (540) 375-2310.

Meet Our Counselors

**Rhonda Kitts Ryan, Ph.D., LPC**
A licensed professional counselor, Dr. Ryan has over twenty years experience in the mental health field. She received her undergraduate degree from Emory & Henry College. She completed her Doctorate degree in Counseling from Virginia Tech. Dr. Ryan sees the anxieties and uncertainties of our current culture as translating into a need for some helpful support and feedback as one makes the transition into fully functioning adulthood.

**Montenique L. Finney, Ph.D., LCP**
Dr. Finney is a licensed clinical psychologist. She received her Bachelor’s Degrees in Psychology and Sociology from Duke University and her Master’s Degree and Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Ohio State University. Dr. Finney believes that counseling is a process that requires active participation, skill building, patience and personal insight to be successful.