

# MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE

## CENTER FOR COUNSELING AND HUMAN RELATIONS

### INFORMED CONSENT

Welcome to the Center for Counseling and Human Relations. This document contains important information about our professional services and policies. Please read it carefully and ask any questions you might have so that we can discuss them during our meeting. When you sign this document, it will represent an understanding between us.

#### Counseling Services

Counseling is not easily described in general statements. There are many different approaches we may use to support and help you resolve the problems that you hope to address. Counseling calls for an active effort on your part in order for it to be most effective and successful.

Counseling has been shown to have benefits for people who participate in it. It often leads to improved relationships, solutions to specific problems, significant reductions in feelings of distress, and improved well-being. Since it often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness at times. We encourage you to bring up concerns and questions as they arise. We take your feedback and needs seriously and will respond with care and respect, including your wish to talk with a counselor different than your initial counselor. If you request a different counselor, we encourage you to discuss this with your current counselor.

#### Counseling Sessions

We provide short-term counseling to students, from 1 to approximately 14 sessions per year, as time and staff are available. Within that framework, the number of sessions and frequency of counseling is up to you, though your counselor may make some recommendations. If you would prefer long-term, more open-ended counseling, we can give you names of several clinicians off-campus.

The first few sessions usually involve assessing the problem(s) with you and learning more about their present and/or past context. During this time, you and your counselor can decide if he/she is the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your goals. A counseling session is 50-minutes long, though our first meeting may last 80 minutes so that we can carefully assess your needs with you.

#### No-Show Policy

If you need to cancel your appointment, please let us know at least 24 hours in advance, so that we can offer that time to another student. If a student makes an appointment and does not show up and/or notify the CCHR of cancellation three times, we will consider referring the student to counseling services off campus.

#### Emergencies After Hours or on Weekends

##### **Contact Parton Health Center (Centeno House, ext. 5135)**

If you need to speak with a counselor about yourself or someone about whom you are concerned, you can call or visit the Parton Health Center or Porter Hospital Emergency Room, when the Health Center is closed. A nurse will speak with you and then, if you wish, will try to contact the counselor in our office with whom you have met. If that person is not available, you will be given the opportunity to speak with an Emergency Team Counselor from our local community mental health agency, the Counseling Service of Addison County (CSAC).

The CSAC Emergency Team has worked with us for over thirty years and knows our students and campus life well. The Emergency Team counselor will inform our office about his/her meeting with you the next morning for coordination of care. There is no charge for this service.

#### Contacting Your Counselor

We are often not immediately available by telephone. While we are in our office between 8:15 AM and 5 PM, we are usually meeting with students. You can leave a message with our administrative associate, Donna Stark, at 443-5141. We will make every effort to return your call on the same day.