



*Elizabeth G. Lobo, Ph. D.*  
*Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*  
*Office of the Provost*

November 17, 2022

Dear Members of the SMU Community:

The Holiday Season, from Thanksgiving to the New Year, is filled with tradition, gatherings, community, and family. The Season can also be a time of significant stress for many members of our community. So, we ask each of you to be aware of signs of stress in yourself and those around you.

Students may be overwhelmed during this time, especially first-year students as they are experiencing their first round of final exams. As always, but especially at this time of the year, students are encouraged to visit the offices at the [Dr. Bob Smith Health Center](#) located at 6211 Bishop Boulevard.

As faculty and staff members, please be aware of the Dean of Students' [Caring Community Connections](#) program. The online submission form allows us to convey our concerns about a student so that the University's Student Affairs staff are able to provide students with appropriate care, information, and access to resources. Additionally, if you have concerns about students and are not sure what to do, please refer to the attached brochure, "or feel free to contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 214-768-4564.

Referral Information:

[Counseling Services](#), 214-768-2277

[Office of the Dean of Students](#), 214-768-4564

[Office of the Chaplain and Religious Life](#), 214-768-4502

[SMU Police Department](#), 214-768-3388

Employees may also find managing Holiday pressures to be particularly challenging, so please take advantage of – and encourage any faculty or staff who need assistance to consider - the [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#).

Physical exercise is also often helpful in alleviating stress, and SMU is fortunate to have the extraordinary resources of the [Dedman Center for Lifetime Sports](#) available for faculty, students, and staff. Please take advantage of these facilities even during these busy times.

Best wishes for a happy and productive Season. If you have the opportunity, we urge you to reach out to an individual who is separated from family and friends during this time and invite them to share some of your traditions and goodwill of your family and friends.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, Ph.D.  
Provost and Vice President for Academic  
Affairs



K.C. Mmeje, Ed.D.  
Vice President for Student Affairs

# What You Should Do

## OBSERVE

You may be the first to notice that a student is in distress

**Academic Indicators** - noticeable absence(s) or tardiness, decline in grades and/or quality of work, repeated requests for special consideration or extensions, disruptive classroom behavior, excessively blaming others, references to self harm or harm to others in verbal/written work, disproportionate response to grades/evaluated work

**Emotional Indicators** - direct statements from student indicating distress, increased dependency on others, inability to get along with others, withdrawing from others, overly anxious or worried, significant change in mood

**Physical Indicators** - emotional outbursts, excessive weight gain or loss, personal hygiene changes, loss of interest, sleep disturbances, tearfulness, impaired speech, difficulty concentrating, noticeable cuts/bruises, frequent illness

## ACT

If the behavior you've observed warrants immediate attention and constitutes an emergency, call SMU PD ASAP at 214-768-3333

For other situations, we encourage you to discuss your concern directly with the student before making a referral to CCC. **Request to meet** with the student privately. **Speak directly**, describing your observations and what concerns you. **Express the impact** you believe the concern is having on the student. **Listen actively** to the student's response. **Summarize** what you hear the student say.

## REFER

Submit your student concerns using the online submission form available 24/7 at [smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc](http://smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc)

If appropriate, feel free to direct students to resources. Follow up your referral with an "informational report" CCC submission



# What We Will Do

## Routine Concern

Contact student to schedule appointment

Meet with student and develop appropriate action plan

## Informational Report

Review concern and contact submitter if additional information needed

Keep concern for possible future reference

In handling student concerns, the Office of the Dean of Students may do one or more of the following:

- Connect with the student to discuss the concern
- Assist student in navigating university processes
- Provide information about resources available to the student
- Develop an action plan, in collaboration with the student, to address the concern
- Teach self-advocacy
- Consult with faculty, staff, and students about handling a concern
- Support and follow-up as needed

For more information, questions, or consultation about the Caring Community Connections Program, please call us at 214-768-4564