

DOCUMENTS OF THE GENERAL FACULTY

**RESOLUTION REQUIRING COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC) AND
BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL) INFORMATION ON ALL COURSE SYLLABI**

On behalf of the Senate of College Councils, Rachel A. Osterloh (president, Senate of College Councils) urged the Faculty Council to endorse a policy that would require all course syllabi to include information about the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) and the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL). The presentation and discussion can be found in the minutes of the regular meeting (D 14503-14516). The Faculty Council endorsed the recommendation at its meeting on March 21, 2016.



Hillary Hart, Secretary
General Faculty and Faculty Council

**RESOLUTION REQUIRING COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC) AND
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SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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Dear Faculty Council,

I hope this letter finds you well. This letter is sent on behalf of the Senate of College Councils, the official voice for students in academics at the University of Texas at Austin. We would like to discuss our thoughts on the importance of the inclusion of the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) Crisis Line and Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) on college syllabi. We would strongly urge the committee to consider mandating the inclusion of these two resources on university-wide syllabi.

Mental health on college campuses is an incredible issue not only facing our University but our nation. A spring 2015 survey performed by the American College Health Association - National College Health Assessment of 74,438 undergraduates at 108 schools found that 57.7% of surveyed students had felt “overwhelming anxiety” in the past 12 months, 35.3% felt “so depressed that it was difficult to function” in the past 12 months, and 9.8% of those surveyed had “seriously considered suicide” in the past 12 months. As a student leader, I have known too many students who have left their mental health problems unaddressed. It is an epidemic. I believe our University has a moral responsibility to help these students and advertise the resources our campus offers.

Further, Faculty Council has been outspoken as to how the implementation of Campus Carry will negatively affect campus life. I have heard from multiple concerns from professors about fears regarding the unsavory intersection between guns and mental health. As a member of the Working Group and now the Implementation Task Force, I absolutely believe that the key to campus safety is promoting the resources of the Counseling and Mental Health Center. Members of the UT Austin community all want the same thing – safety of our members and of our home. This is one step that can be taken to help actively assuage the concerns of the faculty and help enhance the quality of life for students on the Forty Acres.

In the spirit of advertising resources, I strongly urge the Policy Committee within the Faculty Council to consider adding this proposed amendment to the requirements for college syllabi:

“The CMHC Crisis Line is a confidential service of UT Austin’s Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) that offers an opportunity for UT-Austin students to talk with trained counselors about mental health concerns on a 24/7 basis. The number is: 512-471-2255.

If you have concerns about a student, faculty, or staff member in the UT-Austin community, contact the 24-hour Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) at 512-232-5050.”

Connecting students to resources is one tangible step in battling the stigma of mental health concerns on college campuses. We strongly encourage Faculty Council to implement this measure to provide for a happier and healthier Forty Acres community.

All the best,

Rachel Osterloh
President of the Senate of College Councils

Xavier Rotnofsky
President of Student Government