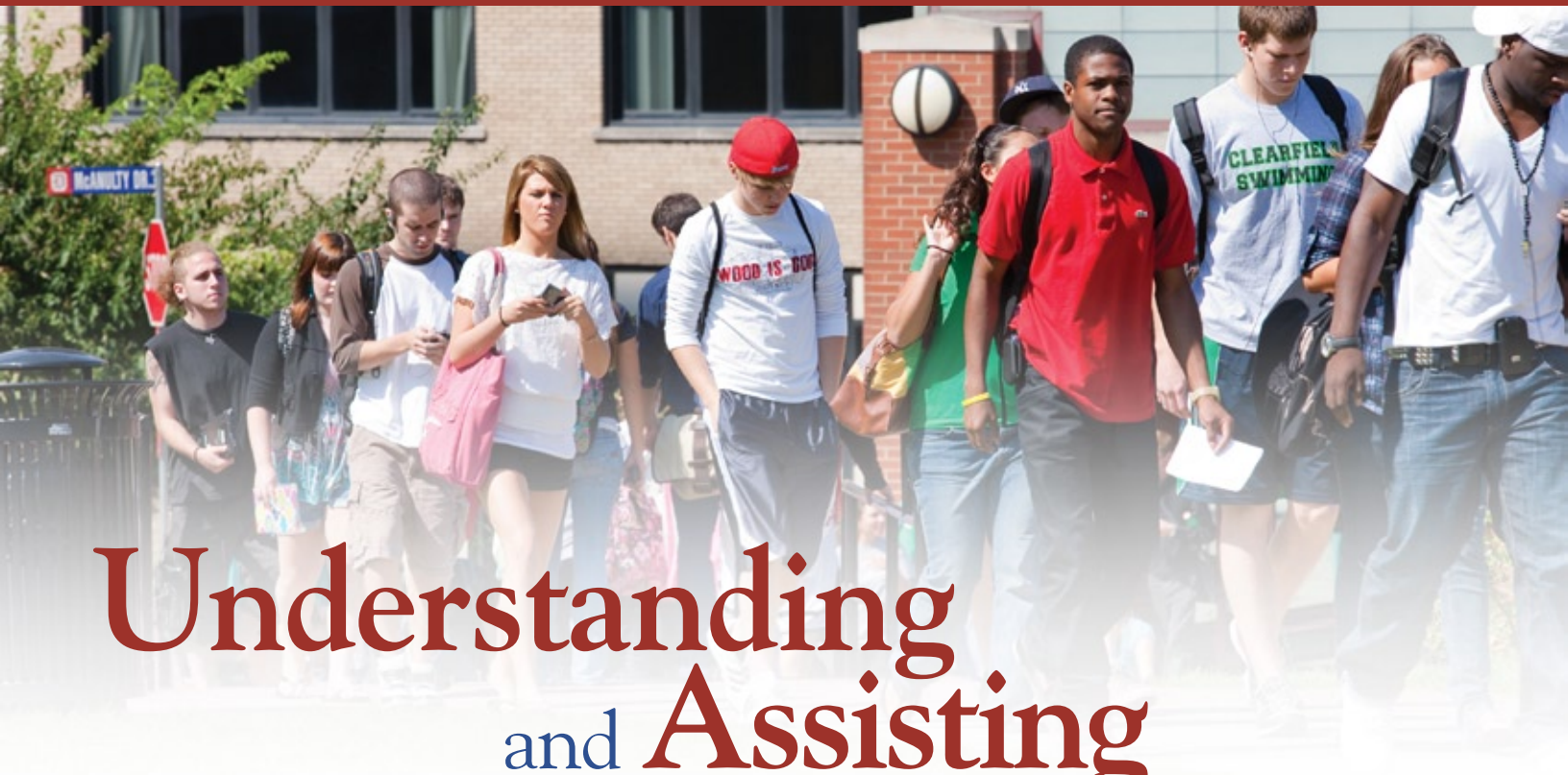


# Student Life

## DEVELOPMENTS

A semi-annual newsletter for Duquesne University faculty and staff

Spring 2010



# Understanding and Assisting Our University Students



Today's college students are referred to in many ways: Millennial Students, Generation Y or the MT (Multitasking) Generation. In this edition of *Student Life Developments*, we provide you with a brief description of the characteristics of these students and the *Top Ten Health Impediments to*

*Academic Performance*, according to The American and National College Health Association.

We also share with you the main issues and/or reasons why Duquesne students seek assistance through our University Counseling Center.

Obviously, many of these issues may directly influence our students' classroom experience. Their behaviors impact not only themselves, but also the faculty and fellow students in the classroom. We are fortunate at Duquesne to be able to provide many options for assisting students as they work through personal problems and issues.

We continue our efforts to implement the Strategic Plan and increase the intentional collaborations between Student Life and Academic Affairs. One of the hallmarks that make an education from Duquesne University unique is the strong sense of caring and concern for the well being of our students, as lived out by our dedicated faculty and staff.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to utilize the services highlighted in this newsletter if they have concerns regarding a student. If you have any questions about this information, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Student Life Staff. We hope you find this information useful.

Rev. Sean Hogan, C.S.Sp.  
Executive Vice President for Student Life

# Understanding and Dealing with Today's Millennial Students



Several studies describe the Millennial Students as feeling special, sheltered (by helicopter parents), confident, team oriented, pressured, conventional, service oriented, academically focused and technology-savvy/dependent/involved.

They spend an average of 53 hours per week using electronic technology, including the Internet, iPods, cell phones, PDA's, video games, etc. They want immediate answers and service and they are in their own worlds with mobile technology, which keeps them in contact but not in a face-to-face environment. This can inhibit social interaction development. They are arriving on campus with higher expectations and can/will tell hundreds with the click of a mouse if those expectations are not met.

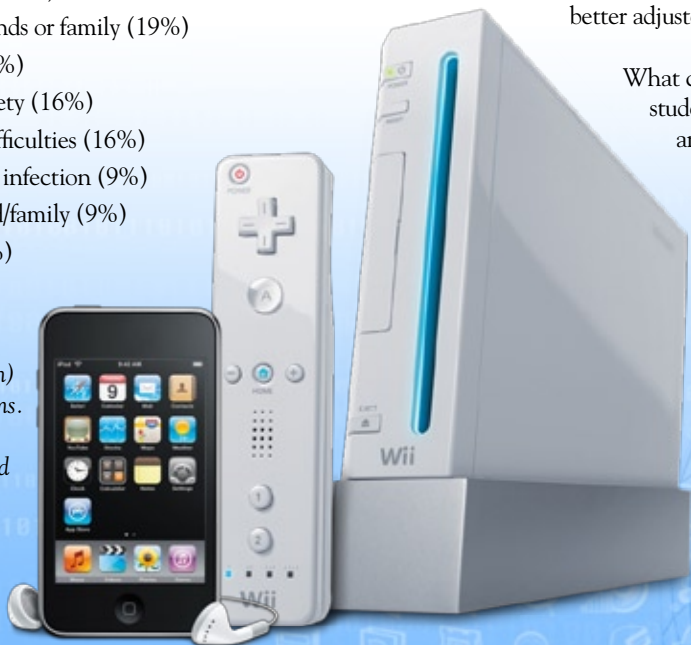
Family is important to them. They get along with parents and share parental values, believe religion is important, think it is cool to be smart and engage in community service. They expect and need praise and positive feedback. They tend to multitask well and will, according to futurists, change careers as many as ten times.

Communication is key to them. They expect it to be provided quickly and efficiently. They are exposed to media coverage of extreme issues.

The Millennials are seeking counseling in increasing numbers. The American and National College Health Associations assessed 80,000 students in 2009 to determine the *Top Ten Health Impediments to Academic Performance*. They are:

- Stress (40%)
- Cold/flu (29%)
- Sleep problems (26%)
- Concern for friends or family (19%)
- Internet use (17%)
- Depression/anxiety (16%)
- Relationships difficulties (16%)
- Ear, nose, throat infection (9%)
- Death of a friend/family (9%)
- Alcohol use (8%)

Note that only number 2 (cold/flu) and number 8 (ear, nose, throat infection) are physical health problems. The remaining eight are directly or indirectly related to and influenced by psychological concerns.



Similarly, the students' current issues at the Duquesne University Counseling Center are:

- Anxiety (related to stress) (55%)
- Problems related to social environment (53%)
- Primary support group or lack thereof (50%)
- Depression (36%)
- Adjustment problems (33%)
- Relationship problems (25%)
- Alcohol use, eating disorders and self-harm (2% or less)

Penn State conducted a *Study of Collegiate Mental Health* administered to 66 universities and colleges where over 28,000 students were seen in 2009. Here are some of the findings of these students:

- 33% received counseling before or after entering college
- 25% were receiving psychiatric meds
- 14% seriously considered suicide
- 10% participated in self-injury
- 5% considered harming another
- 4% underwent psychiatric hospitalization
- 3% were receiving drug or alcohol treatment
- 3% attempted suicide
- 2% did harm another

Students who felt they had higher levels of social support correlated to significantly lower levels of depression, anxiety, hostility, social anxiety and academic distress. That suggests that the more active they are socially or with extra-curricular activities, the more connected and better adjusted they will be.

What can staff and faculty do to help the Millennial students with their concerns? Be observant, inquisitive and supportive. If you notice significant changes in a student's attendance, dress, behavior, demeanor or other fairly dramatic differences, address your concerns with the student in a helpful, inquisitive way. Avoid giving advice, but do listen carefully, reflect your understanding and encourage the student to seek further clarification or help by referring them to the appropriate resource, e.g., Counseling Center, Learning Skills, Spiritan Campus Ministry, Residence Life, Judicial Affairs, etc. If in doubt, call the Counseling Center for assistance at 412.396.6204.

# Campus Community Risk Team

Several years ago, Duquesne University formed the Campus Community Risk Team (CCRT), a central entity where students, faculty and staff can report acts of violence. CCRT members meet on an as-needed basis to prevent violence and provide a safe environment for students, faculty, administrators, staff and campus community members to report concerns. Issues vary in severity, and each case is treated with the same level of consideration.

Members of the CCRT evaluate each situation and make recommendations to the appropriate Vice President for action. One of the main goals is to bring together different branches throughout campus, including Student Life, Academic Affairs, and Legal Affairs. By sharing information, potential violence is avoided and assistance is provided to those who need it.



Any sign that a student or employee has the potential to hurt themselves or others would be a reason to voice concerns. If you have concerns about a member of the University community, please contact Paul Richer, Associate Professor, Psychology Department, 901 Rockwell Hall, 412.396.5074.

## Partnering with the Resident Directors

One of the best resources available to our students is their Resident Director (RD). Each RD is a full-time, professional staff member who has earned a Master's Degree. These individuals live on campus with students and work to provide a strong community that is focused on the Mission of the University.

In working for the success of our students, the RD's and their staff are available to assist any resident in need. The RD's work both during and outside of regular business hours to assist students. This staff serves on call and someone is available 24 hours a day to address any issue or concern.



If you have concerns regarding any student that you think the RD should be aware of, or can assist with, please contact the individual building offices. Some of these concerns may be (but are not limited to):

- Students not attending class
- Changes in a student's personality
- Changes in classroom participation or quality of work
- Students who are ill
- Students having roommate issues
- Students dealing with a death in the family or family crisis
- Clarification of issues in the halls such as fire alarms or elevator problems

The Office of Residence Life is available to assist you with the success of our students. If you would like to reach a specific Resident Director, please feel free to use the following contact numbers.

- Dan Cangilla, Assumption Hall Resident Director  
412.396.5047
- Nick DuBos, Brottier Hall Resident Director  
412.396.1600
- Erik Trembulak, Duquesne Towers Resident Director  
412.396.5089
- Shaunna Stuck, St. Ann Hall Resident Director  
412.396.5083
- Kellee Beresik, St. Martin Resident Director  
412.396.5095
- Megan Julius, Vickroy Hall Resident Director  
412.396.4211



# Duquesne CARES

Culturally, we are just unsure and inconsistent as to how we want to address the issue of alcohol and/or drug use. Indeed, there is a “bi-phasic” effect of these substances. In low to moderate, and therapeutic doses, the substances can produce euphoria, and a strong sense of well-being. They can be great fun, and are used in a variety of settings from religious to formal ceremonies, to social and recreational events.

As such, it gets complicated when “it” becomes a problem.

There are two general levels of concern when we are talking about the problems of drug and/or alcohol use. The first is when it crosses the threshold of abuse/dependence, or addiction. The other is in the “any given night” scenario (i.e., drunk driving).

It’s not always clear when and how to get help. But if someone is aggressive or belligerent, get back-up quickly. If it is a lower priority concern— such as performance change over time, then watch, document, consult.

But you don’t have to decide alone. Please feel free to contact DU CARES at 412.396.5834 or [gittinsd@duq.edu](mailto:gittinsd@duq.edu) to think out loud, ask questions, or use a sounding board. Let’s work together to help our Duquesne community. You’re not alone in this.

# SUPPORT Council

Ten years ago, in an effort to respond to the many diversified needs of the college student, a group of University administrators and faculty came together to form a Support Council. The Council is comprised of two faculty members and the directors of the Health Service, Residence Life, Freshman Development, the University physician, a psychotherapist from the University Counseling Center, a member of Spiritan Campus Ministry and the DU CARES Coordinator.

Frequently, faculty and staff are exposed to troubled students, students who appear to be “at risk” or appear to have been experiencing emotional, academic, physical or social problems. If you are unsure of how to reach them, or how best to serve them, the Support Council can help.

The Council can assist you in several ways, often by providing information on how to intervene when situations arise, or by providing appropriate referrals to on-campus resources. The Council, as a first step, may be able to assist you with information on how to intervene when minor situations with students arise or by providing appropriate referrals to on-campus resources.

Sometimes, however, students are referred to the Council because the above methods have been tried, but have not been effective or because these methods are inappropriate. In such cases, the Council, as a group, reviews the situation and the history of the student involved and attempts to provide an integrated and comprehensive approach while maintaining confidentiality.

If you wish to refer a student to the Council, you may call the Director of the Health Service, Barbara Galderise, at 412.396.1650 or any of the members mentioned above.

**You’re not alone in this.**



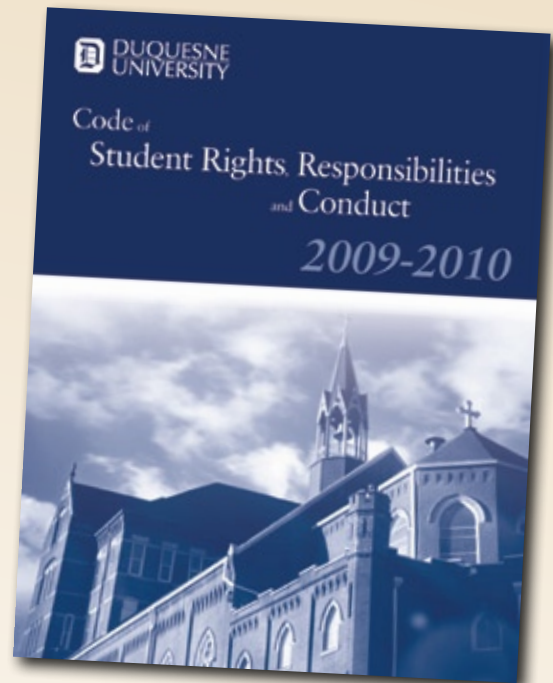
# The Disciplinary Process *and* Today's Students

The Office of Judicial Affairs administers the University's judicial system at Duquesne University. A university judicial system may have similarities to a court of law, however, the two systems are independent, have a different purpose, process, standard used to determine responsibility, and sanctioning philosophy.

The purpose of the university judicial process is to promote responsible citizenship, appropriate behavior, and self-discipline through enforcement of the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct ([www.duq.edu/student-code](http://www.duq.edu/student-code)). The system is intended to emphasize student learning through a developmental process which holds individuals accountable for their actions while upholding the moral and spiritual values of the institution.

Any member of the University community may file charges against a student for alleged violation of the Code. Once a report is filed, the accused student is contacted and required to meet with a hearing officer. At the initial meeting, the student either accepts responsibility or a hearing is scheduled

If a student is to be permanently separated from the institution for a violation of policy, he or she is entitled to due process. A student's basic due process rights are notice of charges, opportunity for a hearing, opportunity to be assisted by an advisor at a hearing, and opportunity to appeal. At Duquesne University, the Executive Vice President for Student Life, or his/her designee, may impose (in extraordinary circumstances) a University or Living Learning Center suspension prior to a hearing to ensure the safety and well-being of the student and/or members of the University community; if the student poses an ongoing threat of disruption or interference to the operations of the University; or if the student's behavior is in direct conflict with the moral and spiritual values of the University.



Several areas within the University can work simultaneously: Judicial Affairs, Campus Police, Counseling, Residence Life, Commuter Affairs, Health Service, Campus Community Risk Team (CCRT), and the Support Council.

Many factors are taken into consideration when sanctioning a student and include: the nature of the violation(s), disciplinary history, institutional precedent, understanding by the student, and other mitigating factors. Possible sanctions include a warning, reflection paper, community service, probation, eviction from on-campus housing, and University suspension or expulsion.

For more information, contact Susan A. Monahan ([monahans@duq.edu](mailto:monahans@duq.edu)), director of Judicial Affairs at 412.396.6642.

