

Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

Lower Columbia College's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) is a cross-campus team that meets on a regular basis to review and respond to reports of student behavior that may pose a threat of self-harm or a threat to the community.

The BIT team's mission is to provide a safe environment for the campus community through collaboration, information collection, risk assessment, and intervention.

Please **Make a Report (lowercolumbia.edu/students/make-a-report)** if you observe or experience harassment, discrimination, bias, misconduct or threatening behavior.

How BIT works

1. Anyone concerned about specific student behavior that has the potential for possible threat to self or others should **Make a Report. (lowercolumbia.edu/students/make-a-report)**
2. BIT team members review reports in a timely manner and determine appropriate action.
3. Confidentiality of reports and processes are maintained as needed.

If you are an instructor and a student enrolled in your class is disruptive:

1. The BIT team highly recommends including your classroom management policy on your syllabus.
2. Provide the student a warning for 1st offense and keep documentation of the event (should it escalate).
3. If the behavior continues, you may suspend the student for one day and should **Make a Report. (lowercolumbia.edu/students/make-a-report)** . Make sure to include your documentation of the conduct issue(s) and prior action(s) taken.

What are some signs a student may be in distress?

A student in distress may not be disruptive to others, but may exhibit behaviors which indicate something is wrong, show signs of emotional distress and indicate that assistance is needed. They may also be reluctant or unable to acknowledge a need for personal help. Behaviors may include:

1. Serious grade problems or a change from consistently passing grades to unaccountably poor performance.
2. Excessive absences, especially if the student has previously demonstrated consistent attendance.
3. Unusual or markedly changed patterns of interaction, i.e., avoidance of participation, excessive anxiety when called upon, domination of discussions, etc.
4. Other characteristics that suggest the student is having trouble managing stress successfully; e.g., a depressed, lethargic mood; very rapid speech; swollen, red eyes; marked change in personal dress and hygiene; falling asleep during class.

5. Repeated requests for special consideration, such as deadline extensions, especially if the student appears uncomfortable or highly emotional while disclosing the circumstances prompting the request.
6. New or repeated behavior which pushes the limits of decorum and which interferes with effective management of the immediate environment.
7. Unusual or exaggerated emotional responses which are obviously inappropriate to the situation.

What are warning signs of disruptive student behavior?

Severely troubled or disruptive students exhibit behaviors that signify an obvious crisis and that necessitate emergency care. These problems are the easiest to identify. Examples include:

1. Highly disruptive behavior (e.g. hostility, aggression, violence, etc.).
2. Inability to communicate clearly (garbled, slurred speech; unconnected, disjointed, or rambling thoughts).
3. Loss of contact with reality (seeing or hearing things which others cannot see or hear; beliefs or actions greatly at odds with reality or probability).
4. Stalking behaviors.
5. Inappropriate communications (including threatening letters, e-mail messages, harassment).
6. Overtly suicidal thoughts (including referring to suicide as a current option or in a written assignment).
7. Threats to harm others.

How is the BIT team different?

The BIT team deals with issues that can't be easily defined as a student conduct violation, an emergency situation (which should be reported to Campus Security), or a perceived or present threat or imminent danger (which should be reported to the Longview Police Department and then to Campus Security).

How to Respond to Troubling Student Behavior

See **Getting the Right Help** (lowercolumbia.edu/publications/emergency/getting-the-right-help) in this handbook for more information.

Use the **Make a Report** (lowercolumbia.edu/students/make-a-report) form to report incidents of **concerning or threatening behavior**.

BIT Goals

- To proactively build and sustain community with a comprehensive, collaborative team that identifies behaviors which are a risk of harm to self or others.
- To promote campus safety by fostering a culture of reporting (reducing bureaucratic process).

- To help and support students via educational, rather than punitive means, according to established protocols and transparent procedures while protecting the privacy and rights of individuals.
- To track and monitor problematic behavior by providing consultation, referral, and support to faculty and staff.
- To provide training and education as we work together to promote student and community success.
- To assess, evaluate, and evolve BIT team functions and protocols while identifying and refining best practices.
- To provide comprehensive wrap-around support for student success.