



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Dr. N.S.A.M. FIRST GRADE COLLEGE

COUNSELLING CELL

MANUAL

FOR

COUNSELLING CELL

INTRODUCTION:

The college years are a time of accelerated growth, significant challenges and sometimes considerable stress. The Student Counselling Service at N.S.A.M. First Grade College is set up to help the student community address a variety of concerns that arise during the college years. The centre provides students with an opportunity to explore these concerns and problems with the guidance provided by trained and professional personnel in a confidential setting.

Student counselling services of N.S.A.M. First Grade College will be offering support to students in the following areas:

- **PERSONAL COUNSELLING**

- a. **Objectives:**

- To provide quality mental health care to the student community
 - To help students develop their coping skills
 - To guide students to appropriate centres/personnel for therapeutic support (when necessary)

- b. **What does it mean?**

- Supportive one-on-one counselling services
 - Providing referrals

- c. **Issues addressed:**

- Relationship and adjustment issues
 - Stress related concerns
 - Issues relating to self-esteem and personal growth
 - Body image and eating disorders,
 - Substance abuse and other addictions,
 - Depression and suicidal tendencies

- Body image and eating disorders,
- Substance abuse and other addictions,
- Depression and suicidal tendencies

- **ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAMMES**

- a. **Objectives:**

- To offer support and guidance to students to achieve academic success

- b. **What does it mean?**

- Supportive one-on-one counselling services
 - Peer support group interventions
 - Psycho-educational assessments if required

- c. **Issues addressed:**

- Test anxiety
 - Study skills
 - Learning differences
 - Academic goal setting
 - Test taking skills
 - Concentration and memory related concerns
 - Time management issues

- **OUTREACH WORKSHOPS**

- **Objectives:**

- To facilitate preventive measures so that students can make informed choices
 - To disseminate information and sensitize students to issues related to positive mental health

- b. **What does it mean?**

- Workshops to be conducted for students on relevant themes
 - Small group supportive programmes

- Guest lectures

c. Issues addressed:

- Any of the issues outlined in section 1 and 2 (Personal counselling, Academic Programmes)
- Any issue that emerges to be relevant for the student community

- **CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

a. Objectives:

- i. To assist students in decisions related to career development
- ii. To provide information on career related issues
- iii. To collaborate with placement and training committees in organizing programmes

b. What does it mean?

- Supportive one-on-one counselling services
- Guest lectures

c. Issues addressed:

- Psycho-educational assessment
- Career related information-courses, scholarships etc

- **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

a. Objectives:

- To offer immediate and short term intervention during personal crises
- To guide students to appropriate centers/personnel for long term therapeutic support (when necessary)

b. What does it mean?

- Mobilize immediate action during crisis
- Telephonic and online support
- Short term supportive counselling

c. Issues addressed:

- Suicide cases
- Clinical depression
- Substance abuse
- Other stress related crises

Who can seek help?

- Anyone who is a registered student of N.S.A.M. First Grade College is eligible to access these facilities.
- The facilities are also extended to the students of institutions that are under the banner of Nitte Group of Institutions.

Who can be contacted on campus?

- The campus has a coordinator who will be responsible for coordinating all counselling services. There is a team of teachers trained as counsellors who will be involved in the counselling activities at the college. Students may contact any one of them.
- In the beginning of each academic year the schedule of availability of teacher counselors would be made decided and put up in the notice board. The telephone number of the teacher counselor is provided to the students availing of this service to contact in case of emergency.

How do I contact them?

Procedures:

- Student can approach the centre coordinator or teacher counsellors directly and register to avail facilities offered.
- Students can also be referred to the centre by parents, faculty or peers. The counsellor can then take up the case.
- Registration forms and consent forms are to be filled by the student before the actual counselling sessions begin.
- The student and the counsellor will initially discuss the general and specific concern areas outlined by the student. There would also be a discussion about the resources that

		members
1.	Chairperson- Principal	1
2.	Teacher Counselors (with one as coordinator)	3
	TOTAL	4

The constitution of the committee can be increased if required as per the requirement during the academic year.

Working of the Committee:

- The committee will deal with all issues relating to mental health in the campus-awareness campaigns, preventive and in offering counseling services to student community
- In the context of awareness campaigns, preventive care the committee is responsible for organizing any activity to achieve the objectives set. This could be talks on mental hygiene or even organizing events/ sessions for students and staff.

Responsibilities of the Coordinator:

- The Coordinator of the committee is expected to convene the meetings and set an agenda for the discussion.
- The Coordinator of the committee is responsible for ensuring that each member has submitted and has maintained the relevant documents.
- To write and circulate the minutes of the meeting.

Documents maintained by the Committee:

- All documentation linked to counseling- consent forms, brief case histories etc

Confidentiality policies:

- The policies of the Counselling Centre, the ethical principles of counselling professionals, and the legal policies consider it important to protect the confidentiality of the information received in the interactions between a student and a counsellor.
- The counsellor will not speak with parents, teachers, friends, or anyone else about their concerns without the permission of the respective student.
- There are very rare exceptions - in situations involving danger to life (eg. suicidal tendencies in a student); safety issues of the student (eg. Sexual abuse) or situations involving legal procedures (eg. court orders).
- Minor students under the age of 18 who are also seeking support will also be given the same amount of confidentiality protection as an adult student, but there are some limitations if assessments are required.
- It often happens, though, that problems can be solved more effectively if the family and peers are involved. Many students find it very helpful for their counsellor to speak with a parent, a faculty member or even a friend. In such a situation the counsellor may, with the permission of the student, involve any one or all of them. This would be decided on individual case requirements with the comfort of the student getting the highest priority.
- The documents that counsellors have, such as case histories will also be maintained confidentially.

Assessment policies:

- At times, the counsellor may be required to administer certain psychometric tests. These tests can be done to understand the concerns of the students in a clearer way. The assessments can even be psycho-educational in nature. In such case, the following aspects will be considered
 - For students below 18 years- a consent letter from parents/ guardian will be required
 - For students above 18 years- a consent letter from parents/ guardian is not mandatory. However, the student will have to sign a consent letter himself or herself

Referral policies:

- Many services and resources that are not available on campus are readily available in the surrounding community. These include, for example: formal psychological, psychiatric, or neurological evaluations; intensive or extensive outpatient psychotherapy; specialized treatment programs such as for alcohol or drug treatment or eating disorders etc.
- In such cases, to offer additional support to the client, the counselling cell has identified certain professional counsellors/ health care institutions that the client can go to for specialized care. The cost for these services will have to be borne by individuals.

FAQ'S

1. Am I eligible to use the Counselling Centre?

If you are a student of N.S.A.M. First Grade College or a student from any of the institutions under the banner of Nitte Group of Institutions, you are eligible to avail counselling services.

2. What are the issues that I can ask the counsellor?

You can talk to the counsellor about any personal issues; academic or career related issues or any other issue that is important for your wellbeing. The list of issues that can be considered have been outlined in pages 2 and 3.

3. What should I do in an emergency?

You can contact the counselling services coordinator of your campus immediately. If you are not able to contact him or her, you could contact any of the other teacher counsellors listed in the above pages.

4. Are there any charges for services?

There are no charges for the services offered in the campus. For psychometric assessments, a nominal fee (approved by the university) has to be borne by the counsellee.

In cases where expert external services are availed by the counsellee, then the cost of the same is to be borne by the counsellee. The payment has to be made directly to the professional practitioner or Institution.

5. How do I know where to go for help?

The counselling facilities and services are available on campus. There is a room designated for the same. Teacher counsellors will be available based on the schedule provided earlier. You can contact the coordinators and fix an appointment with them or with the counsellors. You can even talk to your faculty and they can fix up an appointment for you.

6. If I come in to see a counsellor, I don't want my parents /friends to know. Will you have to tell them?

If you meet the counsellor, the interactions and the documentations will be confidential. However, the counsellor, in certain cases may want to call your parents/teachers or peers to enhance the effectiveness of the sessions. However, this will be done only with your permission. Regarding other confidentiality issues, kindly read our section on Confidentiality Policies.

7. Will I get psychotherapy at the Counselling Centre or off campus?

You will be offered only supportive counselling in the campus. Long term psychotherapy and specialized services can be recommended to students at certain institutions (you can be referred to these)

8. Does the Counselling Centre prescribe medication? If I already have a prescription for medication and all I need is someone to refill it, can I do that at the Counselling Centre?

No, the counselling personnel on campus are not medical practitioners and therefore will not be able to prescribe medication nor do refills.

9. What are the operating hours of the Counselling Centre?

The counselling facilities are open to the students in the campus. We request you to contact the coordinators or look at the timings section in this document.

10. How long does it take to get an appointment?

It should not take too long. However, it may happen that you may have to wait for your turn to consult the counsellor.

11. I think my friend needs help. How do I get him/her to come in to see you?

Just talk to your coordinator in your campus and register your friends' name. It is as simple as that!



PRINCIPAL

Dr. N.S.A.M FIRST GRADE COLLEGE
Yelahanka, Bangalore - 560 064.