



Personal & Career Counseling Services Informed Consent

Welcome to Counseling Services at Chemeketa Community College. Chemeketa's Counseling Services offers confidential, short-term professional counseling for personal, career, or crisis counseling. Counseling Services are available for free to all currently enrolled Chemeketa students. This is an introduction to our counseling procedures. If you have questions after reading this information, please discuss them with your counselor.

You have the right to withdraw this consent at any time without affecting your right to future care with Counseling Services.

WHAT TO EXPECT: During your initial contact, a counselor will discuss the nature of your concerns. You will be asked questions about your goals for counseling and/or career development in order to determine appropriate options available to you. The process is confidential as outlined below.

COUNSELING SERVICES: We provide both personal and career development counseling. These may include career assessments and exploration, problem solving, crisis intervention, adjustment issues, and other areas of personal concern that may interfere with your academic success in college. If you require services that are outside the scope of assistance provided by our counselors and/or that involve long-term, intensive, or specialized care or hospitalization, you may be referred to an appropriate mental health provider in the community. If you have questions about experience, credentials, or theoretical orientation, please feel free to discuss them with your counselor.

Participation in personal counseling has shown significant benefit for people who undertake it for personal growth, behavioral change, self-development, improvements in relationships, increased feelings of well-being, and improved stress management. It can be helpful in the resolution of specific problems and the exploration of personal issues and concerns that impact your success in college. Career counseling benefits can include enhancing self-knowledge, development of a clear education plan, and matching your interests and goals with your career choice.

Counseling does, however, carry some risks. These may include uncomfortable feelings which can result from the exploration of difficult or unpleasant aspects of past or current experiences or discomfort from attempts to stretch oneself by engaging in new behaviors, relational skills and coping strategies. Best outcomes are typically associated with the following:

- Consistent attendance and active effort in collaboration between student and counselor
- A positive relationship between student and counselor—Therefore if at any time you feel uncomfortable or dissatisfied with your counselor, it is important that you discuss this so that we can make the appropriate adjustments or, if needed, we can assist you with a referral to another counselor.

STAFF: The counseling staff is composed of professional counselors who have graduate degrees in counseling, social work, or clinical psychology, and are qualified to practice in Oregon. Occasionally we also employ counseling interns who are supervised by graduate level counselors while completing their counseling programs. Referral to staff will be based on your counselor's professional judgment as well as on your specific needs and preferences. If you have any significant concerns or feel you have been treated unfairly, you have a right to make a complaint to the Associate Dean of Counseling and Student Support Services or to any applicable licensing board.

AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE: Career and personal counseling is available during regular business hours throughout the year by appointment only, except in emergency situations. If you require emergency services when Counseling Services are unavailable, you are advised to call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) or go to a hospital emergency room. Once you begin counseling, if your counselor is unavailable and you need support, you have the option of requesting a meeting with another counselor.

REMOTE COUNSELING: Telemental health (TMH) refers to counseling sessions that occur via phone or video conference using a variety of technologies. TMH services may not be appropriate, or the best choice of service for reasons including, but not limited to: heightened risk of harm to oneself or others; lack of access to, or difficulty with communications technology; significant communications service disruptions; your location; or need for more intensive services. In these cases, your counselor will help you establish referrals to other appropriate services. There are, however, additional risks including:

- Sessions could be disrupted, delayed, or communications distorted due to technical failures.
- TMH may reduce visual and auditory cues and increase the likelihood to misunderstand one another.
- In rare cases security protocols could fail and your confidential information could be accessed by unauthorized persons.
- Your counselor may determine TMH is not an appropriate option or stop TMH at any time if your condition changes or TMH presents barriers.

Counseling Services works to reduce these risks by only using secure video conferencing software and these policies and procedures:

- You may only engage in sessions when you are physically in Oregon. Your counselor will confirm this each session.
- You and your counselor will engage in session only from a private location where you will not be overheard or interrupted.
- You will use your own computer or device.
- You will ensure that the computer or device you use has updated operating and anti-virus software.
- You will not record any sessions, nor will Chemeketa record your session without written consent.

Should there be technical problems with video conferencing, the most reliable backup plan is contact by phone. Make sure the Counselor has the correct phone number at which you can be reached, and have your phone with you at session times.

CONFIDENTIALITY: In accordance with state and federal law, as well as professional ethical guidelines established for counselors, psychologists and social workers, the counselors maintain confidential records of personal counseling sessions. Client communications may be viewed by other staff in Counseling Services. E-mail communications may be stored electronically as treatment records. If we believe you are in crisis and we are unable to contact you, we may call your emergency contact or local emergency services providers.

Exceptions to this confidentiality include:

- You give written permission to share information with specific others
- You disclose an active situation of abuse of a child, elder or vulnerable adult
- You are in danger of harming yourself or someone else
- Situations required by law

Counselors may also provide academic advising, which may become part of your educational record. This is distinct from personal counseling, which is strictly confidential as outlined above.

STUDENTS 17 and UNDER: A student who is 14 years or older may access counseling services without parental consent. The counselor may disclose health information to a minor's parent or guardian if 1) it is appropriate and in the minor's best interest, 2) the minor must be admitted to a detoxification program, or 3) the minor is at risk of committing suicide and requires hospital admission. Counselors are expected to involve parents or guardians by the end of the minor's treatment unless the parent/guardian refuses involvement, it is inadvisable to do so, or the minor has been emancipated and/or separated from the parent for at least 90 days.