

Faculty FAQ

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Frequently Asked Questions

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What is the difference between Counselling Services and Accessible Learning Services?

- *Accessible Learning Services* offers a variety of services to support students who have a documented disability that may impact their participation in their chosen program at Seneca. Depending on the nature of the disability, academic accommodations may be provided to support students in accessing their academic program. Accessible Learning Services also has Assistive Technologists, Learning Strategists and a Service Advisor who are available to provide students with valuable resources to help them with their disability in the academic environment.
- *Counselling Services* are available to all full-time students who may need help with a particular issue that is getting in the way of their life as a student. Counselling Services offer a range of supports including individual counselling, group counselling, workshops, events, and mental health promotion activities to help students deal with many issues such as: relationships, mental health challenges, loss, gender and sexuality issues, unexpected traumatic events, and academic stress and pressure.



What is the difference between a Letter of Special Consideration and an Accommodation Letter?

- An *Accommodation Letter* is a document created by a counsellor in Accessible Learning Services that outlines specific academic accommodations that are required for a student with a disability in order for them to access their program at Seneca. The Accommodation Letter is developed with the student after documentation has been received confirming that the student has a disability that requires specific supports to address the impacts of their disability in the academic area.
- A *Letter of Special Consideration* is a document created by a counsellor in either

Accessible Learning Services or Personal Counselling Services. The counsellor has received information from a student about an unexpected event or situation that they have experienced whose impact has significantly compromised their academic performance and/or attendance. The event might have prevented them from: completing an assignment; writing a test; meeting a deadline; or, being present in class for a period of time. In writing the letter (with the permission of the student), the counsellor is requesting that, given the situation, special consideration be given to the student that allows them to complete the missed evaluation or deadline with an alternative evaluation or modified timeline.



When do I refer a student for counselling?

You should recommend that a student contact Personal Counselling Services when:

- You are aware that a student is struggling with an issue or a problem that could benefit from speaking to a counsellor.
- The student is expressing thoughts of suicide, but does not have any current or immediate plans. *If student is actively suicidal, contact Security 416-764-0911
- You notice a marked change in mood or behaviour.
- You are concerned about a deterioration in physical health, appearance or hygiene.
- The student has suddenly started to miss classes or has stopped participating in class.
- Any other signs or behaviours that would indicate something concerning might be happening with the student.



How do I refer a student for counselling?

- When you are concerned about a student, it is okay to speak with them about your concerns (see information on “Supporting a Student in Distress”).
- If the student is receptive to counselling, pass on information about Counselling Services at Seneca. Due to Privacy and Confidentiality legislation, the student must initiate counselling on their own, no one can make an appointment on their behalf.
 - A student may be reluctant to accept that they need help right away. Sometimes they need a little time to think about it or in some cases wait until it reaches a crisis point.
 - If a student says “no” to a referral AND if it is NOT AN EMERGENCY, respect the

student's right to refuse counselling or other help. Do not take it personally.

- Provide the student with takeaway information on possible resources that they could access when they are ready.
- If the student is receptive to counselling and it is important for you to know that they have made contact with Counselling Services, you can initiate a "hand-off" with one of our managers. In this case you would let the student know that you would like to connect them with Counselling by sending an email to a manager asking them to make an appointment for you. If the student agrees, you can send an email, making sure that you copy the student on it. If possible, include the student number and campus where they are attending. Here is an example of what it might look like,

Hi Venky,

[Student Name] (if possible, include student #) is dealing with some difficult circumstances right now and is interested in speaking with a Counsellor. With her permission, I am making this introduction. [XX] is a student in the Fashion Arts program at Newnham Campus.

Venky Sridhara Rao is the Senior Manager of Counselling Services and can help to connect you with one of their Counsellors.

I am including you both on the email so you have each other's contacts.

Thank you,

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