The Unique Challenges of Engaging and Teaching First-Year Students

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Center for the First-Year Experience
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Progression and Sequencing of Community Building

Progression and sequencing are important for community building activities. To maximize potential, activities should build upon each other. Choose activities that fit your students and their level of group development. Progression and sequencing of activities should be used in a single class period as well as over the course of the semester. Once a higher level of activity has been reached, it may or may not need to be repeated. This will depend on the class’ development, needs, or progress. Activities build in the following order:

- **Introductions** – Allows all students the opportunity to speak about the simplest components of themselves, breaks initial barriers to communication
- **Name Activities** – Activities that assist the class in learning each other’s names. It is helpful to connect their name to an action, dance move, favorite snack, etc.
- **Name Challenges** – Activities in which students must recite names on the spot – provides incentive to remember names (Sheet Drop, Hummala Hummala Hummala)
- **Get to Know You Activities** – Simple activities that begin to reveal aspects of a person, such as things that require stating favorite foods or activities. Activities help establish connections to others with similar interests (Life Lines, Concentric Circles, Move your Butts)
- **Icebreakers** – Once the group has reached a level of comfort with names and each other, icebreakers can be used to get the group moving, make the group more comfortable with one another, to re-focus the group, or to introduce certain topics.
- **Team Builders/Initiatives** – Activities that require the group to work together to solve a problem. Lessons can be drawn from these activities that can be applied to classroom learning.
- **Boundary Breaking Activities** – Activities that require personal disclosure and may cause questioning of self or values. Students need to feel supported and safe, and groups must be well developed, to participate in these activities. The facilitator must be comfortable with facilitating and processing the activity and managing potential emotional distress.

**Tips for Success**

- This is not just a check-list to complete. Each group of activities can be used multiple times depending on your desired outcomes. Some groups may never participate in the highest level of activities. Use activities that meet your students’ needs or the topic being addressed.
- Ensure that the group is comfortable with one another before introducing activities that include touching, invasions of a student’s personal space, and/or personal disclosure.
- Activity suggestions are available throughout this chapter, in texts available in the University 101 Programs Office, on SharePoint, and on various websites, such as Building Dynamic Groups from The Ohio State University Extension (http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~bdg/)
All About Me

You may want to ask students to complete a worksheet like this before the second day of class. This is a helpful way to collect contact information from you students, as well as get a better sense of who they are, how they feel about the class, and how you can support them throughout the semester.

Name: ____________________________________________

Hometown (& previous cites/countries): ________________________________

Cell number: __________________________  Home number: _______________________

E-mail address: __________________________  Current residence: _______________________

Major and Anticipated Career: ____________________________________________

What you were doing this spring / summer: _______________________________________

Why you’re taking U101: _______________________________________________________

Person(s) you most admire: __________________________________________________

Favorite Food(s): _____________________________________________________________

Medical issues/allergies instructors should be aware of: _____________________________

Three things you hope to get out of this class (be as specific as possible):

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

Three things that each cost $3 or less, but have the ability to make your day

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

One thing you most hope to contribute to this class:

______________________________________________________________
Who are UW-Madison First Year Students??

Fall 2015 Enrollment by Residency

Fall 2015 Semester Enrollment by Racial/Ethnic Category

95.8% 14.1%

47.5%

20000
18000
16000
14000
12000
10000
8000
6000
4000
2000
0

Fall 2015 Undergraduates

95.8% 14.1%

47.5%

Fall 2015 Enrollment by School/College

Top 5 Majors
1. Economics
2. Biology
3. Political Science
4. Psychology
5. Communication Arts

Average 1st-year student spends about 181 hr/wk preparing for class

Average ACT Score: 28.7
Average SAT Score: 1304

Participation Rate in WI Experience Activities

35% Study Abroad
37% Participate in Research

25% Participate in Research
2019 LIST

Students heading into their first year of college this year are mostly 18 and were born in 1997.

Among those who have never been alive in their lifetimes are Princess Diana, Notorious B.I.G., Jacques Cousteau, and Mother Teresa.

Joining them in the world the year they were born were Dolly the sheep, The McCaughey septuplets, and Michael "Prince" Jackson Jr.

Since they have been on the planet:

1. Hybrid automobiles have always been mass produced.
2. Google has always been there, in its founding words, "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible."
3. They have never licked a postage stamp.
4. Email has become the new "formal" communication, while texts and tweets remain enclaves for the casual.
5. Four foul-mouthed kids have always been playing in South Park.
6. Hong Kong has always been under Chinese rule.
7. They have grown up treating Wi-Fi as an entitlement.
8. The NCAA has always had a precise means to determine a national champion in college football.
9. The announcement of someone being the "first woman" to hold a position has only impressed their parents.
10. Charlton Heston is recognized for waving a rifle over his head as much as for waving his staff over the Red Sea.
12. Ellis Island has always been primarily in New Jersey.
13. "No means no" has always been morphing, slowly, into "only yes means yes."
14. Cell phones have become so ubiquitous in class that teachers don't know which students are using them to take notes and which ones are planning a party.
15. The Airport in Washington, D.C., has always been Reagan National Airport.
16. Their parents have gone from encouraging them to use the internet to begging them to get off it.
17. If you say "around the turn of the century," they may well ask you, "which one?"
18. They have avidly joined Harry Potter, Ron, and Hermione as they built their reading skills through all seven volumes.
19. Attempts at human cloning have never been federally funded but do require FDA approval.
20. "Crosstown Classic" and the "Battle of the Bay" have always been among the most popular interleague rivalries in Major League Baseball.
21. Carry Me Back to Old Virginy has never been the official song of the Virginia Commonwealth.
22. Phish Food has always been available from Ben and Jerry.
23. Kyoto has always symbolized inactivity about global climate change.
24. When they were born, cell phone usage was so expensive that families only used their large
phones, usually in cars, for emergencies.

25. The therapeutic use of marijuana has always been legal in a growing number of American states.

26. The eyes of Texas have never looked upon The Houston Oilers.

27. Teachers have always had to insist that term papers employ sources in addition to those found online.

28. In a world of DNA testing, the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington has never included a Vietnam War veteran “known only to God.”

29. Playhouse Disney was a place where they could play growing up.

30. Surgeons have always used “super glue” in the operating room.

31. Fifteen nations have always been constructing the International Space Station.

32. *The Lion King* has always been on Broadway.

33. Phoenix Lights is a series of UFO sightings, not a filtered cigarette.

34. Scotland and Wales have always had their own parliaments and assemblies.

35. At least Mom and Dad had their new Nintendo 64 to help them get through long nights sitting up with the baby.

36. First Responders have always been heroes.

37. Sir Paul and Sir Elton have always been knights of the same musical roundtable.

38. CNN has always been available *en Español*.

39. *Heaven’s Gate* has always been more a trip to Comet Hale-Bopp and less a film flop.

40. *Splenda* has always been a sweet option in the U.S.

41. The Atlanta Braves have always played at Turner Field.

42. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have always been members of NATO.

43. Humans have always had implanted radio frequency ID chips—slightly larger than a grain of rice.

44. TV has always been in such high definition that they could see the pores of actors and the grimaces of quarterbacks.

45. Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith have always been *Men in Black*, not their next-door neighbors.

46. The proud parents recorded their first steps on camcorders, mounted on their shoulders like bazookas.

47. They had no idea how fortunate they were to enjoy the final four years of Federal budget surpluses.

48. Amoco gas stations have steadily vanished from the American highway.

49. Vote-by-mail has always been the official way to vote in Oregon.

50. ...and there has always been a Beloit College Mindset List.

***

In fairness to the class of 2019 the following are a few of the expressions from their culture that will baffle their parents, older friends, and teachers ...with translations.

1. They need to plan ahead so they don’t find themselves “dankrupt.”

One of a variety of painful declarations that we are out of weed.

2. A heavy dose of “Natty Light” has always caught up with them in the morning.
It may taste great and be less filling, but there are limits.

3. As long as they can find a ballpoint pen they can use their “redneck teleprompter.”

The bigger the back of your hand, the more notes you can include, but don’t get caught looking.

4. “Smartphone shuffles” have always slowed down traffic between classes.

One can avoid all eye contact as one moves through the madding texting crowd.

5. “Vatican Roulette” has always been risky but acceptable.

If you’ve got rhythm and like your planning natural, then Vatican Roulette is the game for you.

6. A significant other who is a bit “too Yoko Ono” has always created tension.

A partner too hard to handle...hard for your friends to compete with perfection.

7. “Quiche” has everything to do with hot and nothing to do with food.

Turn down the heat. Some people are just so hot they enhance the appetite.

8. “Trolling” innocents on social media has always been uncharitable.

Cynical and bullying attacks on happy campers, preserved on the internet, may come back to haunt you.

9. They’ll know better than to text their professors “TL DR” about assignments.

...and just hope their professor doesn’t scribble back to them, about their own papers: “TOO LCGN: DIDN’T READ.”

10. Slurring “textroverts” have always been a fact of social life.

If you’re too drunk to say it face to face, you probably should wait until morning before you start texting.

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THE MINDSET LIST

2019 LIST

BOOKS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

FEEDBACK

PREVIOUS LISTS

FOR NEWS MEDIA
# The First-Year Experience: A Timeline for Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STUDENTS ARE</strong></th>
<th><strong>PREPARATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>INTRODUCTION &amp; EXCITEMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>CONNECTION</strong></th>
<th><strong>reCONNECTION</strong></th>
<th><strong>SELF-CARE</strong></th>
<th><strong>INVolVEMENT</strong></th>
<th><strong>CLOSURE &amp; REFLECTION</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling anxious/excited</td>
<td>Becoming a Badger</td>
<td>Getting organized &amp; setting goals</td>
<td>Resuming their routine &amp; finding resources</td>
<td>Feeling overwhelmed</td>
<td>Feeling rebellion/activism</td>
<td>Realizing time is moving quickly</td>
<td>Center for the First-Year Experience offers Teaching and Learning workshops and consultation throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring independence</td>
<td>Learning about campus</td>
<td>Exploring campus &amp; becoming more independent</td>
<td>Recognizing a change in relationships</td>
<td>Being excited about upcoming break</td>
<td>focus outwardly on community</td>
<td>Looking to future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing a place in their new community</td>
<td>Finding support in staff &amp; peers</td>
<td>Preparing for their first exam</td>
<td>Focusing on self-care</td>
<td>Finding closure with their first semester</td>
<td>Joining an org</td>
<td>Developing a legacy, giving back</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;How do I fit in?&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Thinking about a summer job</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>Faculty/TAs can engage and support students by</strong></th>
<th><strong>Preparation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Introduction &amp; Excitement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Connection</strong></th>
<th><strong>reConnection</strong></th>
<th><strong>Self-Care</strong></th>
<th><strong>Involvement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Closure &amp; Reflection</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating learner-centered syllabi &amp; course plans</td>
<td>Setting clear expectations for learning in your courses</td>
<td>Creating a welcoming environment inside and outside of class</td>
<td>Encouraging office hours</td>
<td>Promoting hard work, balance, and healthy choices</td>
<td>Sharing opportunities for students to engage in research, scholarship, and campus community</td>
<td>Repeating supportive messages and information on resources (office hours, tutoring)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussing office hours, tutoring, and academic integrity</td>
<td>Sharing something about yourself on the first day</td>
<td>Providing suggestions on how to be successful in your class</td>
<td>How are classes going for you? For students?</td>
<td>Trying an active learning technique in your class (any size class!)</td>
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<th><strong>Faculty/TA professional development opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching Academy Summer Institute (TASI)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching Academy Fall Kick-off</strong></th>
<th><strong>Gather info from LGBTCC and MHC on climate and inclusivity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Check out DOLT academic Technology resources</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching Academy Winter Retreat</strong></th>
<th><strong>Watch for spring teaching and learning workshops</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching and Learning Symposium</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Learn@UW workshops</td>
<td>New Madison Teaching and Learning Excellence (MTLE) cohort begins</td>
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<td>L&amp;S TA Training</td>
<td>Review McHenry website for resources regarding students with disabilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Review peer feedback in teaching resources on teaching academy website</td>
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**Timeline:**
- **Pre-Arrival**
- **First Class Days **
- **First Exams **
- **Thanksgiving **
- **End of Semester **
- **Spring Break **
- **End of Semester **

**Key Dates:**
- **First Day of Classes**
- **Including Spring Enrollment**
- **Start of Spring Semester**
- **Spring Break**

**Contact:**
Carren Martin, for more information: carren.martin@wisc.edu or 265-0363

**For a detailed listing of Teaching & Learning Resources:**
visit tle.wisc.edu

**Learn about campus-wide initiatives:**
- **At Risk, suicide prevention:** uhs.wisc.edu/umatter
- **Tonight, sexual assault awareness:** uhs.wisc.edu/tonight
- **Alcohol Edu:** uhs.wisc.edu/alcoholedu
Biocore TA training – 18 February 2016
Inclusive communication

Resources
Self work
Is Your Communication Bias-Free and inclusive?
A discussion of unconscious bias as well as inclusive language.
https://www.marketing-partners.com/conversations2/is-your-communication-bias-free-and-inclusive

CIRTL Network Diversity workshop
A self-guided workshop that is designed to enhance awareness of fundamental issues surrounding diversity.
http://www.cirtl.net/DiversityWorkshop

Implicit Association Test
https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/IATdetails.html

Preparing students to work together in groups.
Examples of Discussion Guidelines
Examples of guidelines or 'ground rules' that can be given to a class for use, or can provide a basis for a discussion about developing an atmosphere of mutual respect and collective inquiry. Useful as groups are being formed.
http://www.crlt.umich.edu/node/58410

Using Student Groups: Inclusive Practices
Explores how to encourage productive student interactions in your classrooms, particularly when using small groups.
http://crlt.umich.edu/node/58408

Diversity & Inclusive Teaching
Inclusive teaching strategies with resources for positively addressing student diversity.
https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/diversity/

Creating Inclusive College Classrooms
An exploration of the kinds of interactions that occur between and among instructors and the students in the classroom. These interactions are influenced by: (a) the course content; (b) prior assumptions and awareness of potential multicultural issues in classroom situations; (c) planning of class sessions, including the ways students are grouped for learning; (d) knowledge about the diverse backgrounds of students; and (e) decisions, comments, and behaviors during the process of teaching.
http://crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1

Facilitating Effective Group Discussions: Tips
Tips for creating an inclusive environment, framing positive discussions, and addressing potential problems in discussion.
http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/sheridan-center/teaching-learning/effective-classroom-practices/discussions-seminars/facilitating

The Importance of TAs for undergraduate learning
Your Teaching’s Impact on Undergraduates
An exploration of how you, as a graduate teaching assistant, impact your undergraduate students.
http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/news/your-teachings-impact-undergraduates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a student is struggling with...</th>
<th>Refer them to...</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A disability</td>
<td>McBurney Disability Resource Center</td>
<td>702 W. Johnson Street - Suite 2104</td>
<td><a href="http://mcburney.wisc.edu">http://mcburney.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol and/or other drug abuse</td>
<td>University Health Services (UHS)</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - 7th Floor</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/health-topics/alcohol">http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/health-topics/alcohol</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a survivor of sexual assault, dating violence, and/or stalking*</td>
<td>University Health Services (UHS)</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - 8th Floor</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/assault/">http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/assault/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A hate/bias incident</td>
<td>Dean of Students Office (Hate/Bias Incident Report Form)</td>
<td>Bascom Hall - Room 70</td>
<td><a href="https://students.wisc.edu/dos/reporting-allegations-of-hate-bias/">https://students.wisc.edu/dos/reporting-allegations-of-hate-bias/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing a major or selecting courses</td>
<td>Their academic advisor or the Undergraduate Advising Website</td>
<td>Bascom Hall - Room 70</td>
<td><a href="https://advising.wisc.edu">https://advising.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-College Advising (CCAS)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://ccas.wisc.edu/careerexplorationcenter">https://ccas.wisc.edu/careerexplorationcenter</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Exploration Center (CEC)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://careerexplorationcenter.wisc.edu">https://careerexplorationcenter.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting involved</td>
<td>Student Job Center</td>
<td>202 Bascom Hall - Room 10</td>
<td><a href="http://www.studentjobs.wisc.edu">http://www.studentjobs.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin Involvement Network (WIN)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://win.wisc.edu">https://win.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Leadership and Involvement (CLF)</td>
<td>Red Gym - 2nd Floor</td>
<td><a href="https://clf.wisc.edu">https://clf.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural Student Center (MSC)</td>
<td>Red Gym - 2nd Floor</td>
<td><a href="https://msc.wisc.edu">https://msc.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Dean of Students Office</td>
<td>Bascom Hall - Room 70</td>
<td><a href="https://housing.wisc.edu">https://housing.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal or family issues that are keeping them from class</td>
<td>Counseling and Consultation Services, University Health Services (UHS)</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - 7th Floor</td>
<td><a href="http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/services/wellness/stress.shtml">http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/services/wellness/stress.shtml</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommate issues</td>
<td>Dean of Students Office</td>
<td>Bascom Hall - Room 70</td>
<td><a href="https://students.wisc.edu/dos/student-assistance/">https://students.wisc.edu/dos/student-assistance/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
<td>House Fellow/Residence Life Coordinator, University Housing</td>
<td>Residence Hall Office</td>
<td><a href="http://uhs.wisc.edu/programs/sss/housing">http://uhs.wisc.edu/programs/sss/housing</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Succeeding academically in a class</td>
<td>Tutoring &amp; Learning Support Resources Website</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - Office 4413</td>
<td><a href="http://tutoring.wisc.edu/">http://tutoring.wisc.edu/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their career goals</td>
<td>Career Exploration Center (CEC)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://careerexplorationcenter.wisc.edu">https://careerexplorationcenter.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their identity/fitting in/making friends</td>
<td>Their academic advisor or the Undergraduate Advising Website</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://advising.wisc.edu">https://advising.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Their identity/fitting in/making friends</td>
<td>Their career advisor in their School or College</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 6</td>
<td><a href="https://advising.wisc.edu">https://advising.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Educational Opportunity (CEO)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 16</td>
<td><a href="http://ceo.wisc.edu">http://ceo.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Fellow/Residence Life Coordinator, University Housing</td>
<td>Residence Hall Office</td>
<td><a href="http://housing.wisc.edu">http://housing.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Services (ISS)</td>
<td>Red Gym - Suite 217</td>
<td><a href="http://iss.wisc.edu">http://iss.wisc.edu</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Campus Center (LGBTCC)</td>
<td>Red Gym - Suite 123</td>
<td><a href="https://lgbt.wisc.edu">https://lgbt.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Multicultural Student Center (MSC)</td>
<td>Red Gym - 2nd Floor</td>
<td><a href="https://msc.wisc.edu">https://msc.wisc.edu</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer Transition Program, Center for the First-Year Experience (CFYE)</td>
<td>Ingram Hall - Room 101</td>
<td><a href="https://transfer.wisc.edu/">https://transfer.wisc.edu/</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Services &amp; Military Assistance Center</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - Suite 10301</td>
<td><a href="http://veterans.wisc.edu">http://veterans.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitioning to college</td>
<td>333 East Campus Mall - Suite 10301</td>
<td><a href="http://veterans.wisc.edu">http://veterans.wisc.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td>Helen C. White Hall - Room 6171</td>
<td><a href="http://writing.wisc.edu">http://writing.wisc.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a student is a risk to themselves or others, call the UW Police Department at 608-262-2677 or call 911.

If a student is displaying behaviors (e.g.: significant absences) that may interfere with their ability to be successful at the University or is disrupting the learning of others, submit a Student of Concern Report to the Dean of Students Office.

*You are required by law to report first-hand knowledge or disclosures of sexual assault. When a victim of sexual assault discloses his or her experience to you, please complete the sexual assault reporting form.

For questions or updates, please contact Kevin Clarke, Assistant Director of Academic Engagement in the Center for the First-Year Experience, at 608-265-3079 or kevin.clarke@wisc.edu