Welcome to the UNC Charlotte Counseling Center. We would like to provide you with some information about the Counseling Center that will help you prepare for your first appointment and sessions that may follow.

**Counseling is a confidential process** designed to help you come to a greater understanding of yourself, learn effective coping strategies, examine beliefs and ways of thinking about the world, reflect on patterns of behavior, increase personal confidence, and become more aware of the needs of others. Counseling involves sharing sensitive, private information that at times may be distressing or uncomfortable. On the other hand, counseling can lead to better relationships, better progress toward goals, solutions to specific problems, and reductions in feelings of distress. Your counselor is available to offer appropriate support and challenge to you throughout the process.

**The first appointment,** called the intake session, gives you an opportunity to discuss your present concerns with a counselor, who can help you decide how Counseling Center services might best match with your needs. These services may consist of individual or group counseling at the Counseling Center and/or a referral to an appropriate on-campus or off-campus resource. If it is mutually decided that additional sessions at the Counseling Center can be helpful, you will be assigned to a counselor for individual counseling or offered an appointment with a group counseling leader. Individual counseling sessions typically last 45 to 50 minutes and group therapy sessions are typically 90 minutes weekly.

In order to serve all students, our Center provides **time-limited counseling.** There is a maximum of 12 individual counseling sessions per academic year; most students resolve their concerns in fewer than 12 sessions. **Because there is sometimes a waiting list for counseling services, students who fail to show for two appointments without calling in advance or who cancel repeatedly will lose eligibility for continued services for the semester and be referred to off-campus resources. Missed appointments (without a call to our office canceling in advance) are also counted as part of the maximum number of sessions allowed per academic year.**

The ethical codes of the American Psychological Association and the National Association of Social Workers, the standards of the International Association of Counseling Services, and federal and North Carolina state law guide the policies of the UNC Charlotte Counseling Center. Under these provisions, University administrators, faculty, family members, law enforcement officials, potential employers, and others have no access to any of your records without your written permission. The only exceptions to this rule of confidentiality are the following:

1. If it is your counselor’s judgment that you are likely to do physical harm to yourself or another person in the near future, it is your counselor's duty to take steps to protect your safety and the safety of others.
2. If you share information that indicates that any person under 18 years of age or any disabled adult is currently being abused, your counselor may be required by state law to report that information to the Department of Social Services.
3. If ordered to do so by a judge as part of judicial proceedings, the Counseling Center may release information contained in your counseling record.

Some full-time counselors and all graduate student counselors at the Counseling Center receive supervision from licensed psychologists on the staff. This means that information you share with your counselor will be reviewed by her or his supervisor to ensure that you are receiving the highest quality of service. With your permission, your sessions may be digitally recorded, which allows us
to provide the most effective counseling possible. All video recordings are handled with the highest level of confidentiality and deleted after they have been reviewed.

Yes ___ I give permission to record my sessions. No ___ I do not give permission.

Because the Counseling Center staff works as a team, consultations between staff members often occur in order to help us provide the most effective service to you. If your counselor is a graduate student, he or she will identify himself or herself as such. Graduate students in training are required to receive supervision on their clients from a senior psychologist at the Counseling Center. It is your right to know the name of your counselor and his or her supervisor. You also have a right to meet your counselor’s supervisor and may request to do so at any time.

The name of the counselor I will speak to today is: ________________________________.

My counselor is ( ) licensed to practice independently or ( ) under the supervision of a senior staff psychologist. If my counselor is under supervision, the psychologist responsible for supervision is: ________________________.

With your permission, the Counseling Center can schedule and reschedule appointments, and send reminders and referral information through your University email account. The Counseling Center does not discuss specific counseling issues by email. Students are encouraged to call or see a counselor in person to discuss personal matters.

Yes ___ I give permission to receive scheduling and referral information by email

No ___ I do not give permission.

The Counseling Center at UNC Charlotte is interested in learning more about your perceptions of the counseling services offered. We would like your permission to send you email to invite you to participate in evaluating our services. If you agree, you may receive email directing you to an anonymous survey asking about your experiences. Your participation would be completely voluntary and anonymous. You may also be asked to complete a survey before or after a counseling session.

____ Yes, you may send me email inviting me to participate in an online survey.

____ No, I do not wish to participate.

Records containing information about your visits are stored in keyed file cabinets in a locked room dedicated for this purpose within the Center and are stored electronically, in encrypted form, on a file server environment in a physically secure facility. Paper and electronic files are accessible only by authorized Counseling Center personnel. If you have any question concerning your records, please feel free to talk to your counselor or call 704.687.2105.

I have read the preceding confidentiality policy of the UNC Charlotte Counseling Center and understand it. I voluntarily consent to counseling within the agreements of this policy.

Name: ________________________________ (please print) ID #__________________

_________________________________________ __________________________

Signature Date

Client Consent for Counseling 1-11.doc