



Confidentiality Policy Informed Consent for Individual Counseling

Massachusetts law requires that we explain to you the meaning of confidentiality and the exceptions to it at the onset of counseling. We ask that you read the information provided here and ask your counselor any questions you wish so that you are clear about the topic.

1. All sessions with a counselor are confidential. In general the staff will not give out any information about you to your parents, friends, professors, administrators or others without your permission except in the circumstances described in paragraph 2 below. In addition, if you are under 18 years of age, the counselor reserves the right to advise your parent(s) or legal guardian about developments that could significantly affect your health or well-being at WPI. In such situations, the contents of specific meetings between you and your counselor will not be discussed, but your overall progress may be discussed in general terms.
2. A counselor is legally required to break confidentiality regarding what you have communicated with the counselor if you threaten to do harm to yourself or another individual and the counselor reasonably believes that you may act on that threat. In such situations, the counselor ordinarily arranges for you to be evaluated by a psychiatrist or psychologist in a hospital setting. It also may be necessary to contact family members or others who can help to provide for your safety. In cases of threats or actual violence toward another, the counselor is legally obliged to take protective actions, which may include notifying the potential victim, campus security and/or the police in the potential victim's community. Counselors also must break confidentiality by filing a report with the appropriate state agency if they become aware and believe that a minor (under age 18), disabled, or elderly person is suffering abuse.
3. Your counselor may consult and seek supervision with another professional about his/her assessment and/or treatment. Efforts are made to avoid revealing your identity in all such consultations and supervisory sessions. All of the consultants are also legally bound to maintain confidentiality.