THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

STANDARD PRACTICE GUIDE

SECTION:	Student Counseling	**Number:**	406.1
		Revised:	
SUBJECT:	Student Counseling Services	**Date Issued:**	6/1/70
		Attachment(s)	0
APPLIES TO:			
ISSUED BY:	Acting Vice President for Student Affairs		

I. **Policy**

A. No single University agency can best provide all the necessary responses to a student need or problem. The Student Affairs Counseling Office (SACO) works with the student until the appropriate solution or resource is found. Although the focus is primarily on students, we respond also to other members of the University community, faculty, and staff as well as parents, townspeople and alumni.

B. A major responsibility of the Student Affairs Counseling Office (SACO) is to consider how greater personalization of student services and counseling can be effected in the University environment. As the University grows larger and more complex, and the needs and interests of its students more diverse, finding resources for help at the right time is a growing problem. Moreover, the responsibility for seeking that help falls increasingly upon the individual. At the same time, the University recognizes its own responsibility to help each student make the system, its resources and services work for him. It is the belief of this Office that students can best be served by continued examination of counseling and support services in the University and by encouraging expansion of services or improvising services where they are clearly needed but do not presently exist.

C. Working directly with students seeking help has reinforced our concern about the influence of the University environment upon student life. This had led the Office to increasingly focus our energies on altering the University environment in such a way as to enhance the quality of student life.

II. **References and Definitions**

A. The professional staff is multidisciplinary, including specialists in clinical psychology, social work, student personnel and higher education.

Reference for Office function is defined as follows:

1. Counseling

Counseling service for students needing help is immediate. Referral is provided when appropriate. Help is sometimes improvised when a needed service does not presently exist.

2. Referral and Information

   Referral and Information service is available to students, faculty, staff, parents community residents.

3. Consultation

   Consultation is provided to students, faculty, and staff. Emphasis is directed to student services, the teacher as counselor, the student as counselor and special student support programs through seminar and course offerings. Direct consultation is available to the individual schools and colleges.

4. Research

   Research is conducted on counseling, student development and the campus environment.

5. Publications

   Publications are available on counseling, student services, drug and sex education.

III. **Procedures**

SACO's responsibility is to see that students on the campus get to the appropriate office or agency for the assistance they need. This involves direct services, referral to other counseling agencies and in-service training of para-professional staff.

A. Referral, Information and Counseling Services

1. In the role of personalizing University resources, SACO provides a Referral and Information Service in the Lobby of the Student Activities Building. This is a centrally located service, available on a walk-in basis, to which a student or staff may bring any kind of problem or concern. Information specialist are at our Referral and Information desk from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Anyone who wishes to see a professional staff member may do so immediately. Our professional counselors are located in offices adjacent to the SAB lobby. Questions or problems ranging from "I'm really depressed and don't know what to do," to "Who do I see about dropping a course?" to "Who do I see about working in Europe this summer?" to "I can't find anybody in the University who will listen to me or help me," are considered equally deserving of immediate attention.

2. The University community includes a wide variety of agencies, sub-parts or units that are designed to deal with students. Professional staff often have a difficult time keeping abreast of who's doing what, where and when. A student is sometimes overwhelmed by the bewildering array of agency names

and functions from which he must select in order to obtain the help that he needs. Now and then students seeking help often need aid in clarifying the issues before they or anyone else can determine which is the appropriate source of service needed. It is precisely these needs that the Referral and Information service meets for students and staff.

3. The Referral and Information service acts as a clearing house for information about all University counseling agencies and provides assistance in acquiring information about campus and community activities as well. Referral and Information service is not a long term clinical counseling office but functions as an immediately available consulting and referral agency.

B. Consultation Services

1. There are a number of agencies on this campus which provide direct service to students in an area that can be broadly defined as "counseling." Our professional staff works closely with other counselors as well as faculty and staff members to assist students, to inform the campus community of the services provided by other University agencies and to identify common problems.

2. As a consultative agency, SACO provides professional staff for a variety of programs and projects related to students' needs. The Office assists various schools and colleges in the development of faculty counseling programs and special programs for the educationally disadvantaged. In addition we have provided seminars for faculty counselors on student services and counseling techniques. SACO has assisted in the establishment of student operated centers for peer counseling. We offer accredited courses to these groups and other students who themselves perform counseling functions.

3. SACO also is available to consult with University sub-units which provide direct services to students but where the amount of behavioral science training that staff has received is minimal. Counseling broadly defined to include both academic and personal counseling as well as student services fall within the purview of our interest. Counseling activity that goes on within the schools and colleges, student service areas and the residence halls are the focus of this program. Often "para-professional" counselors desire help in examining the interpersonal dynamics that occur in their counseling and the affect of their communication style on the person they are helping. We provide in-service training and consultation to assist agencies and their staff members to observe their own relationships with students and the nature of the service they provide.

4. SACO also works closely with the Office of Orientation, conducting seminars for new students and parents, and in providing joint publications including the Perspectives and Information About Drugs booklets.

5. Consultation to students has included all-campus education programs, seminars and discussions in the area of drug and sex information.

6. Additional publications by the Office are the Guide to Counseling and Student Services booklet designed for faculty and staff and the Guide leaflet designed for students.

C. Research Services

1. SACO research explores University stress, response to stress in student life and areas of unmet student need. Designing better and more appropriate student service requires increased understanding of how the University impinges upon students and the interaction process between University and student. On-going research in the areas of student self-regulation and parental expectations provides information about student behavior, needs and background.

2. SACO also retrieves information and research data on student issues for purpose of feedback to student service departments and faculty. The gap between knowledge production and knowledge utilization in the area of student adjustment and achievement is striking. Feedback and utilization of research experience assists the University in maintaining the optimum environment for teaching and learning.

3. Program evaluation assists in decision-making for extemporizing or expanding programs and for determining priorities, SACO is responsible for evaluation of the drug education and sex education programs. Coordination and all campus program planning are involved and special relationships are established with faculty in health, education, social work, public health, pharmacy, pharmacology, obstetrics and gynecology.

D. Summary

In summary, the Office functions as a sensor, retriever, and dispersal agent in response to student interests and needs. This is achieved trough direct service to students, consulting activity, training operations and research programs.