

## Informed Consent

1. The USA Counseling and Testing Center is staffed by mental health professionals who have graduate degrees in fields such as clinical mental health counseling or counseling psychology. No direct fees are charged for counseling services. Fees are charged for testing services and are payable at the time of testing.
2. A primary purpose of counseling is to assist individuals in exploring and resolving problems. Your counselor may employ a variety of techniques and strategies as part of a plan to help you in achieving your goals for counseling. These will be explained to you. If at any time, you have a question or concern about the approaches taken, you are encouraged to ask your counselor for clarifications.
3. Although counseling is usually beneficial, it does involve potential risks. Psychological discomfort is sometimes associated with talking about personal issues as well as making changes in one's life.
4. Your participation in counseling is voluntary and you may terminate this process at any time. After initiating counseling, if you desire to see a different counselor or should your counselor become incapacitated, arrangements will be made to refer you to someone else within the Department or a professional in the community if appropriate.
5. Your counselor may consult with other counseling professionals within the Department if deemed appropriate to ensure quality care. Should this occur, those consulted will respect the confidential nature of the information disclosed.
6. It is important for you to keep scheduled appointments. If you arrive more than ten minutes late for an appointment, it may have to be rescheduled. If you find that you cannot keep a scheduled appointment, you are requested to notify our office in advance. If you fail to show for three appointments, you may forfeit your right to further counseling during the semester.
7. Information revealed in writing or orally during the intake and counseling process will be held in strict confidence. No information about you will be released without your written consent unless there are compelling ethical and/or legal reasons for doing so. Confidentiality may be broken if you threaten serious harm to yourself or another person, report child abuse, and/or your counselor is court ordered to testify.
8. Case documents are securely maintained and are not integrated into a student's official school record. These records are retained for a period of ten years from the date of last service delivery.
9. Coordination of Care with Student Health Services: Clinical records are maintained in an electronic health records system that is shared by UCTC and the University of South Alabama Student Health Center (SHC). For the purpose of coordination of care in the event that a referral to a medical or psychiatric provider at SHC is needed, the Medical Director of the Student Health Center, the Psychiatry Chair and Residents have access to clinical records entered by counselors at UCTC.
10. If you are dissatisfied with serviced provided, you have a right to file a written complaint with the Vice-President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. Complaints must be filed within 30 days of the event that led to the dissatisfaction. See *The Lowdown* (student handbook) for further information on this grievance process.

Upon consideration of the information given above, by signing below I authorize University Counseling and Testing Center to provide counseling and/or testing services for me.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_