Welcome to the Tarleton Student Counseling Center. Please read the following information about your rights and responsibilities and our policies and procedures. If you have any questions after reading this document, please do not hesitate to discuss them with your counselor.

Intake: The first interview will be with an intake counselor who will talk with you about your needs and the ways in which the Counseling Center might be able to help. Options may include: individual, couples or group counseling, career counseling, or referral to another office or service provider better suited to your needs. Please note: your intake counselor may not necessarily be the counselor you continue to meet with after intake.

Client Rights
Confidentiality: Information obtained during counseling or in written form through testing will not be disclosed to anyone without your written permission. Legally, however, we are required to disclose information to:

- protect you or someone else from imminent danger,
- report suspected abuse of children, the elderly, or the disabled,
- report suspected sexual exploitation of a client by a therapist,
- respond to a court subpoena.

All counselors at the Student Counseling Center are committed to the ethical standards of practice as set forth by American Counseling Association and the National Association of Social Workers, and the State of Texas.

It is important for you to understand that you do not have to disclose your counseling history to most employers. Your interactions with the Student Counseling Center are confidential, and are not discoverable by background or record checks.

Electronic Records: The Student Counseling Center maintains electronic records. This means that confidential information about treatment is stored on the center’s secured server.

Respect: You can expect to be treated with respect by your counselor and the staff of the Student Counseling Center. As much as possible, your appointments will begin and end on time. We will attempt to contact you if rescheduling is needed. You can expect your counselor’s full attention during sessions. You may ask questions regarding your counselor’s training and qualifications. You may ask about the counseling process, or any specific counseling strategies your counselor may suggest. You are encouraged to discuss your progress and review your goals with your counselor. If you feel that you are not making progress toward your goals, you should discuss this directly with your counselor. You have the right to terminate counseling at any time if you so desire, and to request referral to another counselor.

Good to Know: Because counseling involves discussing issues that are presenting you with some difficulty, you may find: 1) the energy it takes to focus on your issue(s) makes it harder to concentrate on other things; 2) emotions may be more available to you and you may feel moodier; 3) you may see things in new or different ways and this may be confusing or difficult for a short time; and 4) relationships may be affected as you examine interpersonal issues.

Session Limits: In order to meet the needs of as many students as possible, the Student Counseling Center has implemented an eight-session per semester limit on services. Students are allowed eight sessions per semester; however this limit can be appealed at regular counseling center staff meetings as needed. If a client does not keep a scheduled appointment, the missed appointment is deducted from the eight-session limit (see below: Keeping Appointments).

Client Responsibilities
Active Participation: In order for counseling to be effective, you must take an active role. This involves being honest with your counselor, discussing concerns openly, completing assignments when appropriate, listening to your counselor and providing feedback about the process of counseling.

Keeping Appointments: Our ability to provide quality services to the greatest number of students is dependent on clients keeping their appointments. We expect that you will notify us in advance if you cannot or choose not to keep an appointment. If you do not keep your appointment and do not call to cancel within 24 hours, or if you cancel two out of three consecutive appointments, we will assume you are no longer interested in our services. Additionally, each
missed appointment (without prior notice) will be deducted from your eight session per semester session limit. You may return for services at any time, however you will be assigned to a counselor after other students on our waiting list (if any) have been assigned.

Email: We cannot guarantee that the contents of an email message will remain confidential. While we will do our best to keep your communication private, email usage can be monitored and the content of your personal messages may be read by others. Email is not an appropriate medium for individual questions regarding counseling. Our staff does not respond to inquiries from our clients regarding specific counseling issues because confidentiality is essential to the counseling process and cannot be assured with email. Often staff access to email is limited to the Student Counseling Center work hours. Also, you have no way of knowing if a specific staff member is unavailable due to illness, vacation, or other reasons. This means that your message may not be read immediately. If time is of particular concern for you, please contact the front desk at 968-9044 and tell the receptionist that you need immediate assistance.

Counselor Rights:
To Seek Consultation with other Student Counseling Center Professionals: While information will not be released to anyone outside the Student Counseling Center without your permission, as professionals, we may confer with each other within the Student Counseling Center to review therapy plans and progress. You will be informed regarding your counselor’s title within the agency and the name of their supervisor, if applicable. However, as some clinicians in the center pursue licensure or, as is the case with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum and Internship or Graduate Social Work students at Tarleton, they may receive supervision from a counselor, social worker and/or faculty member outside the center. If your clinician currently receives outside supervision, he/she will provide you with a separate informed consent document detailing the supervisory relationship. All supervisors are bound by the same ethical and legal obligation for confidentiality as the Student Counseling Center clinicians.

Social Media Policy: The counselor does not engage in contact with clients via social media because:
1. The counselor cannot obtain and maintain absolute proof of client’s identity
2. The counselor can never be completely sure that no information could be obtained by a third party via social media
3. Engaging in social media relationship with a client violates the counselor’s code of ethics. (A.5.e ACA, 2014)
4. The counselor does not engage students in any outside social roles

Wait List: During particularly busy times of the semester, we may be unable to schedule you with a counselor soon after your intake appointment. At the time of intake we will try to inform you as accurately as possible how long you may have to wait for a counselor at the Student Counseling Center. If you wish, we will also review other options for you, such as referral to other agencies on campus, community mental health agencies, and private practice counselors.

If you have questions or a grievance regarding your counselor’s conduct, you may solicit help from the Director of the Student Counseling Center, or one of the following licensing boards:

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors
Texas Department of State Health Services
Mail Code 1982
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

E-mail: lpc@dshs.texas.gov
Telephone: (512) 834-6658
Fax: (512)834-6677

Texas State Board of Social Worker Examiners
Texas Department of State Health Services
Mail Code 1982
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

E-mail: lsw@dshs.texas.gov
Telephone: (512) 719-3521 or (800)232-3162
Fax: (512) 834-6677

I have read and understand the policies and procedures of the Student Counseling Center and am aware of my rights and responsibilities as a client.

_________________________________________________  ___________________________________________________
Client Signature                                             Date

_________________________________________________  ___________________________________________________
Printed Name                                                Intake Counselor

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