

***New Client Information for Individual Counseling and Consent for Services
(Disclosure Statement)***

Welcome to Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services (ECDS), a part of the University College at Ferris State University. We are happy to be able to provide beneficial services and information at no cost to Ferris State University students, faculty, and the community.

Counselor Credentials (2009-2010)

Deb Cox, LPC, Dept. Head
Julie Rudolph, LLPC
Rosemarie Van Ham, LPC

Records

Records include copies of forms you have signed, identifying information, dates of sessions, brief notes regarding progress, copies of correspondence, and verification of any consultations or collateral contacts made. Your records are stored safely with attention to your privacy. Counseling files are not part of academic records and are not accessible outside ECDS unless you choose to give your counselor written permission to release information in your record to a third party. When a file becomes inactive (two years old) it will be scanned and archived for five years in a secure database system.

Appointments

Availability for sessions is by appointment or walk in. For consistency sake, you may want to consider scheduling an appointment so you can continue to work with the same counselor. Appointments are scheduled Monday through Friday from 8:15AM to 4:30 PM. If you must miss an appointment, we would appreciate it if you would notify the ECDS office at (231) 591-3057 as soon as you are aware you will not make your appointment. **Please note:** if you miss 2 counseling appointments without notifying the ECDS office 2 hours in advance, the Center staff will not be allowed to schedule another appointment for you until the following semester.

How to Get the Most out of Your Counseling Experience

You will get the most out of your sessions with your counselor if you take responsibility for determining the course and content of the sessions. In between sessions, follow through on action items determined by you and your counselor and discuss with your counselor any problems or circumstances that may be interfering with your progress. Ultimately, it will be up to you to set the pace and direction of your action plan and to make well-informed decisions.

Referral

If a client's counseling needs are outside the mission of the ECDS, the counselor may refer a client to other professional resources on campus or in the community. If a client does not wish to participate in counseling, there are other resources available to which you may be referred.

Educational and Career Counseling Sessions

In your first session, you will have the opportunity to discuss your educational and career goals, concerns, etc. Your counselor will ask questions seeking information regarding your educational and career background, current situation, and future goals. You and your counselor together will determine goals, a tentative plan of action, and follow-up steps for you to take. If another session is elected, you will work with your counselor to determine the objective of the next meeting. Counseling sessions generally last 50 minutes and in some situations may be longer or shorter.

Educational and Career Assessments

The ECDS offers a number of assessments to help you better understand your educational strengths and career related interests, skill, values, and personal preferences. The primary assessment tools used are: the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, the Strong Interest Inventory, the Barsch Learning Styles Inventory, and the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory. The assessments are provided at no cost to Ferris State University students and can be taken on your own time. A fee may be charged to non-FSU students. Please note that the American Counseling Association ethical standards prohibit counselors from releasing assessment results to clients without first providing an interpretation of the assessment.

Assessment Results

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Strong Interest Inventory are kept in a secure third party electronic database. This database is accessed by ECDS personnel by login and password information. The records will be kept indefinitely. The LASSI and BARSCH are stored in the ECDS office in a locked file system.

Disabilities Services Counseling Appointments

In your first session, you will meet with a counselor to complete the Intake Interview Process. Subsequent sessions will focus on your SRA (Service Request Appointment) for each semester, as well as other concerns or needs of the student.

If you are receiving accommodations for a disability, **it is your responsibility** to schedule an appointment for continuation of those services prior to the beginning of the next semester. **Accommodations are not provided automatically each semester.**

You are responsible for reading and complying with written procedures and guidelines for services. The ECDS counselors are authorized to release disability information to professors, note-takers and other Ferris staff to provide you with more complete services.

Confidentiality

All ECDS individual records are confidential. Information from your individual records will not be disclosed without your written consent, to the extent protected by law, and except as described below. The following guidelines about the treatment of such information have been adopted by the ECDS. These guidelines incorporate relevant state and federal regulations, as well as ethical standards for counselors:

- No one will have immediate access to student files except appropriate staff of the Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services office.
- This information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Sensitive information in student files will not be released except in accordance with state and federal laws.
- If a student wishes to have information about his/her counseling sessions and/or disability shared with others, the student must provide written authorization to the ECDS to release the information. Before giving such authorization, the student should understand the purpose of the release and to whom the information is being released. The student should also understand there may be occasions when the counselor will share information regarding a student's counseling sessions and/or disability at his/her discretion if circumstances necessitate the sharing of information and the counselor has determined that there is an appropriate legitimate educational interest involved.
- A student has the right to review his/her own file and request copies of documentation of their counseling sessions and/or disabilities services and any correspondence sent to them with reasonable notification and request.

Informed Consent

If you have any questions about the Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services Office, or our services, please ask your counselor.

Problems that you may have with our work together can always be discussed between us. If, however, you feel you have a complaint you wish to take further, you may contact Deb Cox, Department Head of the ECDS or William Potter, Dean of University College. You may also contact the Department of Community Health, Board of Counseling, at P.O. Box 30670, Lansing, MI 48909. The telephone number is (517) 335-0918.

We encourage all clients to evaluate our services. Yellow evaluation forms are located in the ECDS office and in individual counseling offices. You do not have to put your name on the evaluation. To encourage students to evaluate our services, you may fill out the bottom of the evaluation form with your name and telephone number. Drawings are held monthly for a prize. You may fill out the evaluation form on the day of your appointment or take it with you and return it at another time.

