Welcome. This document contains important information about our professional services and business practices at Counseling Services. Please keep a copy of this information for your records. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

About Counseling. Washington State University (WSU) Vancouver Counseling Services counselors are available to assist students with problems and concerns that may arise while a student is at WSU Vancouver. Our counselors have experience working with a diverse population with a variety of psychological concerns.

We offer short-term individual counseling, long-term group counseling, psychological testing, and crisis and consultation services. Same-day urgent appointments are available to students in acute distress. We assist students by referring them to other services on campus and to community resources that can offer more specialized or longer-term assistance with problems and concerns. We also offer informal, confidential consultation and drop-in service. Counselors also hold drop-in hours at various on-campus locations; however, this is meant to be informal and not intended to be a substitute for traditional counseling.

Counseling is a collaborative interaction with a counselor who can help to improve your life through healthier relationships, better communication, greater understanding of self, strategies for self-care, and in making choices that are more consistent with your educational and personal goals. Together, you and your counselor will discuss your needs, including the type of counseling, goals and strategies to meet those goals, and counseling duration. Both you and your counselor have a shared responsibility to positively impact your counseling.

Our Counseling Staff. Our counselors include licensed psychologists, post-doctoral psychological residents and doctoral level trainees who work under the clinical supervision of our licensed psychologists. Our work is grounded in research and tailored to fit the unique needs of each client. We employ evidenced-based practice and our approaches may include the following therapies: cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused, gestalt, psychodynamic, interpersonal, emotionally-focused, and other treatments that will best fit your needs. Within these approaches, counselors actively incorporate the personal and cultural values and experiences that reflect the diversity that each individual brings. If it appears that another counselor might be a better fit for you, your counselor or the counseling staff can arrange a transfer for you. If it appears that your needs cannot be met at Counseling Services, we will be happy to facilitate a referral to a community provider.

Patience B. McGinnis, PsyD, is a licensed clinical psychologist and Student Wellness Center Manager. She has been licensed as a psychologist in the state of Washington since 2009 and in the state of Oregon since 2010. Dr. McGinnis received a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis & Clark College (1996); Master of Science in Special Education from Portland State University (2000); Master of Science in Clinical Psychology from Pacific University (2004); and Doctor of Psychology from Pacific University (2007). She has worked at university counseling centers as well as in managed health care and she previously worked as a special education teacher. Her clinical interests include anxiety, depression, eating concerns, ADHD, stress, life transitions, procrastination and relationship concerns. Dr. McGinnis facilitates skills-based groups at Counseling Services and she employs a cognitive-behavioral therapeutic approach, including Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT). She joined WSU Vancouver in October 2013.

Allison Chambers-Dixson, PsyD, MHA is the primary staff psychologist at Counseling Services and coordinates outreach, training, and group counseling. She has been a licensed clinical psychologist in Oregon since October 2016 and Washington since January 2017. She earned a Bachelor of Science from Portland State University (2008), where she studied organismal biology and psychology. Dr. Chambers-Dixson holds a doctorate in clinical psychology from Pacific University (2015), as well as a Master of Healthcare Administration (2015) and a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology (2012) from Pacific University. Dr. Chambers-Dixson completed extensive training as a generalist clinician in university settings, serving the diverse mental health needs of undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Chambers-Dixson’s clinical interests include trauma reconciliation, disability and chronic illness, multicultural counseling, anxiety, mood concerns,
and building healthy and satisfying relationships. She employs a gestalt and psychodynamic therapeutic approach and facilitates personal exploration and process groups. She joined WSU Vancouver in August 2016.

**Doctoral trainees and postdoctoral psychology resident.** We provide supervision and training to doctoral-level trainees who have completed at least one year of clinical training from George Fox University or Pacific University clinical psychology programs. Trainees work at Counseling Services for one academic year and are supervised by Dr. Patience McGinnis and Dr. Allison Chambers-Dixson. We also provide supervision and training to assist a postdoctoral psychology resident with obtaining licensure in the state of Washington. The postdoctoral psychology resident has completed all the requirements for a doctoral degree from an American Psychology Association (APA) accredited program, including completion of dissertation and a pre-doctoral internship meeting APPIC standards prior to the start of the residency. The postdoctoral psychology resident works at Counseling Services for 12-months and is supervised by Dr. Patience McGinnis.

**Fees and Eligibility.** All of our funding is through the Services & Activities (S&A) Fees which are funds allocated from a portion of tuition. Therefore, currently enrolled students who have paid the S&A fee are eligible for Counseling Services. Students who are using state waiver funds and/or have not paid the S&A fees may only access the crisis and consultation services and group counseling. There is no charge for counseling, with the exception of psychological testing in which a nominal fee is charged for the administration of a learning disability and/or ADHD evaluation (see the section of Psychological Testing for details).

**Client Information.** When you first come in to meet with a counselor, or if it has been more than six months since your last appointment, we will ask you to provide personal information on a Client Information Form, Initial Assessment Form, and Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS) Form, either electronically or in hard copy. The information you provide will assist our counselors in understanding your concerns and how we may help to meet your needs. This information is confidential and is stored in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

**First session.** You will be scheduled for an initial assessment to get a broad understanding of your concerns. The length of this appointment will be approximately 45-50 minutes. When there is high demand for services and so as to reduce the wait-time for this first appointment, you may instead be scheduled for an initial consultation. The length of this appointment will be approximately 25-30 minutes. At this first appointment, counselors ask standard questions to help gain an understanding of your situation and concerns and decide with you the most appropriate resources for assisting you, either within Counseling Services, through other services on campus, or in the community.

Beginning with our initial assessment/consultation process, we use our field’s best practices to make each student’s experience in pursuing counseling is as effective and efficient as possible. We offer initial assessments/consultations each day. We then meet weekly as a staff, typically on Tuesday mornings, to make the best clinical treatment assignments or referrals for each client on an individual basis. This process minimizes wait time for initial counselor contact and maximizes fit between clients’ needs and the treatment options offered. At this weekly staff meeting, the counseling staff meets to match client needs to the particular specialties and schedules of the team. At this time, clients will be assigned to an individual counselor, assigned to a therapy group, referred to a community provider, or placed on the waitlist. You will be contacted by the following week to schedule a follow up appointment. If you are assigned to an individual, your assigned counselor will work with you individually to determine the goals, duration, and best methods of counseling. If it is determined that your concerns require longer-term care or specialized care, or if you prefer to establish longer-term relationship with a counselor, we can refer you to other providers that can offer this type of care. We maintain current information on psychological services in the community for students who request extended counseling or services by a therapist with particular expertise.

**Individual counseling sessions.** Short-term individual counseling (beyond the initial assessment/consultation) is offered based on a variety of factors (e.g., availability, client-therapist fit, and level of care needed for treatment). Based on these factors, WSU Vancouver Counseling Services counselors will provide students with short-term individual therapy services, or will provide referral resources within the community, for continued off-campus health-related services. The length of each individual counseling session will be either short (25-30 minutes) or long (45-50 minutes). The frequency of sessions varies (e.g., weekly, bi-weekly) depending on your situation.

**Group counseling sessions.** Long-term group counseling is an opportunity for students to develop skills and receive
multiple perspectives, support, encouragement, and feedback from other students in a safe environment. There are two
types of groups currently offered at WSU Vancouver Counseling Services: interpersonal process groups and skills-based
groups. Interpersonal process groups are unstructured for students to receive support, feedback, and alternative
strategies for coping with personal concerns. Skills-based groups are structured for students to learn how to cope with
distressing events more effectively and practice skills such as mindfulness, distracting, self-soothing and radical
acceptance. The length of each group counseling session will be between 60-90 minutes. A 30-minute group screening
appointment is often the first step to joining a group so as to assist you with identifying goals for the group, determining
the best group for your individual needs and goals, learning more about the group experience, reviewing the limits to
confidentiality, and answering questions you may have about group counseling.

**Same-day appointments.** Counseling Services reserves up to four 30-minute appointments each day for students with
time sensitive or urgent psychological concerns.

**Consultations.** Counseling staff is available to consult about the referral process. We also offer “Let’s Talk” an informal,
confidential consultation and drop-in service, based on a program piloted at Cornell University. Counselors also hold drop-in hours at
various on-campus locations; however, this is meant to be informal and not intended to be a substitute for traditional counseling.

**Psychological Testing.** Psychological testing may help you and your counselor better understand your concerns. It may
be recommended to help focus the goals of counseling, to clarify difficulties, to target specific problems, or to guide
treatment of mental health concerns. Testing may be needed during the course of treatment or may occur as a separate
service. For example, you may need testing to help with eligibility for other campus resources, such as accommodations
and services through the Access Center.

The amount of time necessary to complete a psychological assessment depends on the scope of the evaluation. An
assessment may include formal psychological testing, interview and observation, history, and an interview with a parent
or caregivers to acquire a detailed developmental and psychological history. At specified times during the academic year,
Counseling Services offers assessments of learning disability and/or ADHD. This can take several hours and may require
more than one appointment. There is a nominal fee for this service, which will be discussed before testing is scheduled
and is expected at the start of the evaluation. Hardship requests will be considered and there is no charge for the initial
consultation.

**Session Limits to Ongoing Individual Counseling.** Counseling Services staff assist WSU Vancouver students who are
experiencing some form of psychological or emotional distress. In order to make sure all students have access to timely
services, Counseling Services has established session limits for ongoing individual counseling services. Please note that
there are no session limits to urgent appointments, consultations, or group counseling sessions and with rare exception, all
currently enrolled students have unlimited access to these services.

After the initial assessment/consultation (described above), WSU Vancouver students will be eligible for up to 15
appointments per year of individual counseling when they seek ongoing counseling services. Therefore, it is important
that students work collaboratively with their therapist in determining how best to use their sessions. Clients are
encouraged to talk to their therapists concerning how many appointments they have currently used and also how many
appointments they have accumulated in any prior therapy at Counseling Services.

**Notice of Privacy Practices.** We keep a record of services we provide to you (RCW 70.02.120). We will not disclose your
record to others unless you direct us to do so or unless the law authorizes us to do so. You may ask to see a copy of your
record and you may ask us to correct that record. If you wish to do so, please contact the manager of Counseling
Services, Dr. Patience McGinnis. Please allow 10 business days for requests of records.

Counseling Services provides and/or makes available its Notice of Privacy Practices which describes how your health
information may be used and disclosed and how you get access to this information. By signing this agreement, you are
acknowledging receiving and/or being offered a copy of Counseling Services Notice of Privacy Practices.

**Client Rights.** You may ask to change counselors at any time. Your counselor will be happy to discuss with you his or her
theoretical or therapeutic orientation and the proposed treatment, including any risks, requirements, or expectations that
might exist. You have the right to receive care that is nondiscriminatory and the right to confidentiality. You have the right
to refuse treatment at any time (RCW 18.83.115).

As indicated above, we keep a record of the services we provide you. Our records are stored in locking file cabinets within Counseling Services. Some of the information you give to us may be stored in electronic format or is managed electronically. We strive to protect the security of our records and maintain practices in accordance with federal and state guidelines. We use appropriate firewall protection, data encryption and password protection to insure the privacy of your information. You may ask us for more information about how our records are stored or transmitted or to review your record. You also may ask us to correct that record if you find it to be in error. If there is a breach of security of your records, you have the right to be informed of that breach.

Confidentiality and Privacy. The American Psychological Association Code of Ethics and certain federal and state laws considers the personal information you discuss in counseling to be confidential. No record of counseling is indicated on an academic transcript. Counseling Services uses physical, administrative, and technical safeguards to protect your mental health information and records. Counseling is private and confidential, and any contact with, or information shared with any of the members of Counseling Services is generally not disclosed to others without your written permission (RCW 70.02.020), except as required or permitted by law. Additionally, if you sign a form that authorizes a release and specifies what is to be released, then under most circumstances the release is valid for 90 days and can be revoked at any time at your written request. Please note that in order to coordinate the best services for you, we may consult with other Counseling Services staff and/or other health care providers without your written permission.

Generally, your confidentiality is protected by federal and state laws and by the ethics of our profession. The exceptions to this include but are not limited to the following:

1. If we believe you are in imminent danger of causing harm to yourself or someone else, it is our legal and ethical responsibility to act to keep you safe, which may necessitate the disclosure of confidential information. We may contact emergency personnel, law enforcement, family, or significant others, including the emergency contact person you identified on your Client Information Form, to facilitate maintaining your safety and the safety of others.

2. If we have reason to believe that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered abuse, exploitation, or neglect; or is in imminent danger of suffering abuse, exploitation, or neglect; we will report the incident (or cause a report to be made) to the proper government agency or law enforcement.

3. If a court of law compels a release of records through a subpoena and/or other legal process, we are legally required to comply and will make the records available to the court and involved legal professionals.

4. If you bring charges against your counselor and/or the counseling center.

5. To obtain payment for the services being provided to you, treatment you are being referred to and/or receiving outside of Counseling Services, and certain health care operations.

Supervision/Consultation and Recording of sessions. Doctoral level trainees and post-doctoral psychology residents provide counseling services and are supervised by a licensed psychologist in accordance with state law and professional guidelines. A doctoral level trainee and post-doctoral psychology resident will ask for permission to record your sessions to review with his/her clinical supervisor. This is done for training purposes only and will not be shown outside of Counseling Services. The recordings are erased or destroyed after review by the counselor and supervisor and no later than the end of the academic year in which they are made. You will be asked to sign this document authorizing permission to do this; your agreement to be recorded is voluntary; and consent to record is not a requirement to receive counseling. If you have questions or wish to contact the trainee’s or resident’s supervisor, please contact the manager of Counseling Services, Dr. Patience McGinnis by calling 360-546-9238 or requesting a meeting with her at the reception desk.

Cancellation & Missed Appointments. Regular and consistent attendance at counseling appointments is critical in order to benefit from the counseling process. Please make every effort to keep your appointments and an attempt will be made to notify you in the event that a counselor has had to cancel your appointment.
Cancellations: Your appointment times are reserved for you alone. If you need to cancel your scheduled appointment for any reason, please do so 24-hours in advance so that we can make the time available to others. If you “late cancel” your scheduled appointment (less than two hours’ notice), you may be removed from your counselor’s schedule so that another student can be seen.

Missed Appointments: Demand for services is high and at times we need to place students on a waiting list due to limited appointment availability. If you fail to show up for your appointment (no call, no show), you may be removed from your counselor’s schedule so that another student can be seen.

Once you are removed from your counselor’s schedule, you will need to call Counseling Services at 360-546-9238. If there are no openings at that time, you may request to be placed on our waiting list for ongoing counseling.

Evaluation of Services. Evaluating our services helps us to maintain their quality. You are encouraged to give individual feedback to your counselor at any time. In addition, you may be asked to fill out a short questionnaire regarding your counseling experience.

Use of Email. With your permissions, Counseling Services may use email to contact clients about scheduling purposes, or to facilitate referral or follow-up, or other clinic business, such as surveys. Because email is not a secure form of communication and confidentiality cannot be ensured, please refrain from using email to communicate with a counselor about personal matters. You assume all risks communicating electronically. Please do not use email to communicate an urgent or crisis message; counselors do not provide counseling via email and do not typically check email outside of operating hours.

Also with your permission, our electronic record-keeping system can send automated email reminders of appointments. Please know that the security of transmission cannot be ensured; these sent reminders may be stored, not only on our server but by WSU and by those used by your email or phone provider. If you do not wish to receive these emails, please do not provide your e-mail address on the Client Information Form you complete today.

Social Media: Counseling Services staff do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).

Emergencies. On-call and after-hours services are not provided. If you experience a mental health emergency, including having an experience where you believe you may harm yourself or someone else, please call 911 or the Clark County Crisis Line at 360-696-9560. This resource is available 24 hours a day, seven days per week, including holidays.

Other policies. At any time you may refuse treatment, request a change in approach, or a change of your counselor. Additionally, although it is very rare to do so, any member of Counseling Services staff has the right to end counseling for any circumstances determined to be relevant. These may include (but are not limited to) issues with counselor safety, impairment, or if counseling is seen to be harmful. In these instances, you will be provided with a list of referrals to other local providers, or transferred to another provider in Counseling Services, depending on the circumstances.

If you have concerns about your counselor or the course of counseling, we encourage you to discuss them first with your counselor. You may also talk about them with the manager of Counseling Services, Dr. Patience McGinnis. Please discuss any questions or concerns with us during your visit or as soon as possible. You may contact the licensing board of the state, the Department of Health, or the ethics boards of the American Psychological Association.

If you have any questions about psychologist licensing, you may contact the Washington Department of Health at 1-800-525-0127; 101 Israel Road SE, Tumwater, WA 98501.
Cancellation & Missed Appointments. I understand and have reviewed the Cancellation and Missed Appointment policy with Counseling Services staff. Once I am removed from my counselor’s schedule, I will need to call Counseling Services at 360-546-9238. If there are no openings at that time, I may request to be placed on our waiting list for ongoing counseling.

_____________________________________________ __________________________________________________
Printed Name  Client’s Signature  Date

Notice of Privacy Practices. Counseling Services provides and/or makes available its Notice of Privacy Practices which describes how your health information may be used and disclosed and how you get access to this information. By signing this agreement, I acknowledge receiving and/or being offered a copy of Counseling Services Notice of Privacy Practices.

_____________________________________________ __________________________________________________
Printed Name  Client’s Signature  Date

Treatment consent. I have been informed of the types of counseling I may receive from Counseling Services counselors, the methods and techniques used; counselors’ education, training and experience; and the fees and eligibility of counseling services. Furthermore, I have received this information in writing.

I freely and voluntarily consent to WSU Vancouver’s Counseling Services. I acknowledge receiving and/or being offered Counseling Services Notice of Privacy Practices. I acknowledge my questions, if any, have been answered to my complete satisfaction. I acknowledge that by signing this agreement I agree to the terms and conditions of WSU Vancouver’s Counseling Services.

_____________________________________________ __________________________________________________
Printed Name  Client’s Signature  Date

Video Recording of sessions. WSU Vancouver Counseling Services is a training center. Doctoral level trainees and a post-doctoral psychology resident provide counseling services and are supervised by a licensed psychologist in accordance with state law and professional guidelines. A doctoral level trainee and post-doctoral psychology resident will ask for permission to record your sessions to review with his/her clinical supervisor. This is done for training purposes only; all taped materials will be restricted to the internal use of Counseling Services and will not be shown outside of Counseling Services. The recordings are erased or destroyed after review by the counselor and supervisor and no later than the end of the academic year in which they are made.

I understand that any other use of these materials is strictly prohibited, and use other than for the purposes stated here may be in violation of Washington state law and the Code of Ethics for psychologists. The confidentiality of all such materials will be safeguarded, and taped materials will be erased by the end of the academic year. I understand that the purpose of these recordings is to provide the most effective counseling possible and to provide the staff with instruction, supervision, and feedback. I understand that I may revoke this consent at any time. I understand that it is not necessary for me to agree that my session be audio/video taped in order to obtain counseling services. I further understand that I cannot be terminated as a client based on my election to revoke my permission to allow my session to be audio/video taped. Please sign below to indicate your understanding and consent to these terms.

_____________________________________________ __________________________________________________
Printed Name  Client’s Signature  Date

I have reviewed the Disclosure Statement and Consent for Counseling Services with the client.

Therapist’s signature  Date