The Counseling Center offers a variety of services for students including individual and group counseling, consultation, psycho-educational screenings and referral services. Below is an outline of our policies. We would appreciate it if you would take the time to read this information. If you have any questions, feel free to discuss them with any of our staff. You may also ask to speak with the Director. Thank you for your cooperation.

Your Initial Contact: We want to provide prompt service, so we have developed a walk-in system where students can be seen on a first come, first serve basis from 10am - 3pm Monday through Friday. This will be a brief meeting with a clinician to help determine what recommendations fit your needs. This may include individual or group treatment in our center or the community. Due to high client demand at certain times of the semester, you may have to wait before your following appointment. If you need assistance before your next appointment, please feel free to call or come to the Counseling Center and ask to speak to the “Counselor on call.”

Emergency Assistance: As always, if you need emergency help from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. you can always come to the Counseling Center. You can also call Health Services at 874-2246 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays, or you can call the URI Police at 874-2121. Additional resources in the community include: South County Hospital 401-782-8000, The Suicide Prevention Hotline 1-800-273-8255, or the Crisis Text line by texting Hello to 741741.

Your Counselor: The Center staff is made up of psychologists, clinical counselors, and advanced graduate students-in-training. We want you to have confidence in your counselor, so feel free to inquire about your counselor’s background and training. You can be assured that our graduate students are nearing the end of their academic training and that they receive weekly supervision from professional supervisors.

The Process of Counseling: The experience of counseling, or psychotherapy, varies depending on the counselor, the client, and the particular concerns which the client brings. There are a number of different approaches which may be used to help with the concerns you hope to address. In general, the process involves you speaking about your issues openly and honestly. Your counselor will listen to you attentively and respectfully, ask you questions, and work with you collaboratively to address your issues. You should expect to be able to discuss with your counselor any concerns you have, whether about the challenges you are facing or about the process of counseling itself. While your counselor will help you meet your goals, he or she might not tell you exactly what to do. Rather, you will both work to energize your strengths to help you make the best decisions and take action to improve your life.

The process of counseling often takes time, and it is rare for people to feel that their problems are solved in one or two sessions. After one or two sessions, your counselor should be able to offer you some initial impressions of what the work will include and what methods could be used. Since counseling can involve an investment in time and energy, you should use your own judgment to assess your level of comfort working with your counselor. If you have questions or doubts about the process, you should feel free to discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, your counselor will be glad to refer you to another counselor at the Counseling Center or off-campus. Your counselor knows that a good counseling relationship is a necessary condition of counseling and will be supportive if a referral to another counselor would be most helpful to you.

Length of Services: The URI Counseling Center, like most college counseling centers, generally provides short-term services. If it appears that long-term services are appropriate, your counselor will assist you in locating an off-campus provider.

Keeping Appointments: In order to make progress in counseling, it is important that you keep appointments. Should you need to miss a session, please call us at 874-2288, at least 24 hours in advance, so that another
student who may need services can be helped. After your initial session, if you should miss an appointment without canceling, please call the Center within 24 hours to arrange your next appointment. Missing too many sessions without notice may result in a termination of services.

Evaluation of Services: We value feedback regarding our services. In addition to any verbal feedback you wish to give us, we would encourage you to fill out our anonymous evaluation forms, which are e-mailed during the end of the semester. Your comments are used as a basis for modifying and improving our services.

THE UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER: A CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE

The Counseling Center has a strong commitment to keeping the information you share confidential. Below is an outline of our policies regarding confidentiality. Please read this information and acknowledge that you have done so by signing in the space provided.

Confidential Services: Confidential information is kept securely at the Counseling Center and is only shared with other Counseling Center staff for the purpose of professional consultation, training, and clerical record keeping. Beyond our own commitment to confidentiality, Rhode Island and Federal law requires it. The laws state that counseling information must remain confidential and secure within the agency, except in certain rare situations (listed below), or unless you indicate in writing that you wish the information to be communicated to specific persons outside the center.

Exceptions to Confidentiality: Exceptions to confidentiality arise but they are rare. These exceptions are designed to preserve health and safety. They include: 1) Cases of imminent physical or psychological danger to yourself or another; 2) Cases of suspected child or elder abuse. Generally, only current abuse is reported. However, when there is an old pattern of abuse, it may be reported if there is a strong likelihood that it is continuing with identified minors; 3) Extremely rare instances when a court subpoenas Counseling Center records. If we ever need to act on one of these exceptions, we will do so in a caring manner, and an attempt will be made to try to include you in the process whenever possible.

Training and Professional Consultation: The Counseling Center serves as a training facility for graduate students in the mental health field. In order to assure our clients the best possible treatment, trainees regularly review assigned cases with staff supervisors and/or in case conference. Cases may also be presented by senior staff for educational purposes. In addition, staff members may consult with one another, individually or in case conference, when the need arises. All case presentations are handled in a professional manner for the purposes of ensuring quality care for our clients. Finally, Health Services often works in conjunction with the Counseling Center, in a professional interdisciplinary capacity, on issues where psychological and physical health coincides. Be assured that only pertinent information will be exchanged between agencies to ensure you receive the best possible interdisciplinary assistance.

Group Sessions: Group and workshop participants are asked to promise to respect the privacy of others by not sharing information from or about group members with anyone else.

Thank you for reviewing this information. If you have any questions, feel free to discuss them with your counselor or the Director of the Counseling Center.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Samuels, Ph.D.
Director

{Check here } I affirm that I have read and understand the above statement.

Sign: ___________________________ Date: ____________________