

COUNSELING FAQ'S

Many students feel intimidated about starting counseling. Here are some common questions students ask about starting the process. All of these questions can be brought up in counseling too; being transparent about your hesitations will be additionally beneficial for the process.

WILL THE COUNSELOR JUDGE ME?

NO.

Counselors are trained to provide a non-judgmental, kind, and non-shaming space, to help you feel supported. Their mission is that you feel safe, heard, and seen.

WHAT IF MY PROBLEMS ARE TOO SMALL?

No issue is too small to discuss in counseling. Many people discuss non-urgent topics. Counseling provides a space to explore anything you want.

IF I MEET WITH A COUNSELOR, WILL THEY TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT WHAT WE DISCUSS?

NO.

Unless your safety or someone else's safety is in danger, your counselor cannot share what you tell them with anyone, including your family members, teachers, friends, or employers. Your sessions are private and confidential.

WILL THE COUNSELOR FORCE ME TO DO THINGS THAT I AM NOT COMFORTABLE WITH?

NO.

Counselors want you to feel empowered and supported. They want you to have ownership over the work you do together. You are never obligated to continue meeting with a counselor if you do not wish to continue, nor will they force you to do anything you are not comfortable with.

WILL MY PARENT(S) FIND OUT I'M MEETING WITH A COUNSELOR?

POSSIBLY.

Your parents will not find out if you see a counselor at Hunter. If you go off-campus and use health insurance, you'll be mailed a receipt to your home address. This receipt is coded, but will indicate you had a mental health session with a counselor. There are ways to opt-out of these receipts. You and your counselor can also discuss ways to talk with your parents about your decision to pursue counseling.

CAN I DISCUSS IDENTITY ISSUES (QUEERNESS, MONEY, RACE, GENDER, RELIGION) IN COUNSELING?

ABSOLUTELY!

Counseling works best when clients are encouraged and enabled to bring their most authentic, whole, complex selves. No matter the background of your counselor, clients should feel entitled to request that race, culture, and identity be a key part of the work. A trained counselor will possess the understanding and skills to easily integrate cultural considerations in the therapy. Don't be afraid to bring this up as a priority when you attend the first session.

AAPI MENTAL HEALTH: WHAT IS COUNSELING?

FAQ's, Resources, & Support



For more information, contact
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AAPI MENTAL HEALTH

Despite stereotypes of being smart and healthy, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face myriad racial, cultural, and economic stressors that usually aren't addressed. For example, many AAPI students feel immense pressure to succeed academically, balance family obligations with individual aspirations, and develop identities as young people. Although many AAPIs experience depression and anxiety, they don't typically seek help.

(For more info: bit.ly/FirstGen_AAPA)

WHAT IS COUNSELING?

Counseling, also called *psychotherapy*, is one way to address stress. Here, a trained clinician meets with you individually, in a quiet room for 30-50 minutes. All sessions are **confidential**. The counselor helps you identify what you're feeling, why, and how you can feel better.

Examples of typical counseling issues include:

- Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence Issues
- Relationship Stress (Friends/Dating)
- Family Stress/Parental Conflict
- Academic Difficulties: Being Distracted, Procrastinating, Struggling in Class
- Identity Issues (racial, ethnic, gender, queer, religious, ability, social class)
- Anxiety about the Future, Career Plans
- Trauma History
- Thoughts of Suicide, Self-Harm

FINDING A COUNSELOR

Research has shown that AAPIs benefit from counseling. Many people start counseling for the first time during college.

Counseling...

- Provides a space to speak freely without burdening someone or being shamed.
- Allows you to work at your own pace in a safe and confidential environment.
- Helps you identify stressors you didn't realize were contributing to your mood.
- Helps you recognize your strengths, builds your self-esteem, and gives you tools for addressing challenges in the future.

Hunter's Counseling & Wellness Services (CWS) provides free short-term support for all Hunter Students. Students can go to their office in Hunter East on the 11th Floor or call them (212-772-4931) to make an appointment. CWS staff will work closely with you to identify and address your presenting issue and, depending on your needs, will help you connect with appropriate resources within the community.

NYC COUNSELORS

There are many counselors across NYC who provide treatment specifically for AAPIs. HCAP has a list of counselors outside Hunter that you can find on huntercap.org.

APPOINTMENT QUESTIONS

- **Payment:** Do you have health insurance? If so, call the 1-800 number on the back of your insurance card. Find out if your insurance covers mental health visits. If it does, how much is your copay is (i.e., cost per visit) for each counseling session?
- **Calling the counselor/clinic:** Tell the operator that you're a new client and interested in counseling. If you're using insurance, ask if they accept your insurance plan. If you're not using insurance, many counselors offer a "sliding scale," an adjustable price per visit based on your financial situation. Inquire about what options they provide for clients not using insurance and ask if they have a sliding scale.
- **Intake:** Set up an Intake (i.e. introductory) appointment. They will work with you to find a time in your schedule.