Welcome to Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services (ECDS), a part of Ferris State University. Our mission is to assist Ferris students, faculty, and the community with services related to academic success and career counseling. Additionally, we provide classroom accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Counselor Credentials (2012-2013)**

Deb Cox, LPC, Dept. Head
Kimberly Dickman, LLF

Julie Rudolph, LPC
Marie Yowitz, LLMSW

**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 elapsing without services), it will be scanned and archived for five years in a secure database system.

Although there is no cost for our services, all costs related to disability records, new testing requirements, or record requests are the full responsibility of the student. If you have questions about records kept or received by ECDS, please contact our office to discuss this.

**Appointments**

Availability for sessions is by appointment or walk in. For consistency sake, you may want to consider scheduling an appointment in advance so you can continue to work with the same counselor. Appointments are scheduled Monday through Friday from 8:30AM 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. Counseling emergencies should be directed to your local 911 service, or hospital; non-emergency personal counseling issues should be directed to the campus Personal Counseling Center—231.591.5968. **Please note:** if you miss 2 counseling appointments without notifying the ECDS office 2 hours in advance, the department staff will not be allowed to schedule another appointment for you until the following semester. Appeals to be reinstated for appointment scheduling can be made in writing to Debra Cox, Department Head; see the mailing address at the bottom of page 4.
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 at your next session. 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 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 may need to release disability information to professors, volunteer note-takers and other Ferris staff, if required by law, to provide you with more complete services. If you agree with this statement, please sign on page 4.

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, with the exceptions described below. The following guidelines about the treatment of such information have been adopted by ECDS. These guidelines incorporate relevant state and federal regulations, as well as ethical standards for counselors:

- ECDS student file information is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Except as provided elsewhere, no one will have immediate access to student files except appropriate staff of the Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services office.
- Sensitive information in student files will not be released except in accordance with state and federal laws (see Limits of Confidentiality, page 4, below)
- 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 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, consistent with provisions in FERPA.
- 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 (Licensed) Professional Counselor.

Problems that you may have with our working together may always be discussed between us. If, however, you feel you have a complaint that you wish to take further, you may contact Debra Cox, ECDS Department Head. You may also contact the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, BHP, Health Investigation Division, P.O Box 30454, Lansing, MI 48909-8170. The telephone number is (517) 373-9196.

We encourage all clients to evaluate our services. Yellow evaluation forms are located in the ECDS office and in individual counselor’s 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 a later time.
**Limits of Confidentiality**

1. If we believe you are in imminent danger of causing serious harm to yourself or another person, including the transmission of potentially lethal, contagious diseases, we are obligated by law to take action to protect you and/or inform the other person(s) and relevant authorities.

2. If we have reason to believe you have engaged in acts of child or dependent adult abuse or neglect, or that you were the victim of child abuse or neglect, we have an obligation by law to report that information to the appropriate government authorities.

3. Client data will be entered into a database with reasonable security methods. Administrative staff in ECDS will perform routine record keeping and collecting of demographic and academic information.

4. If we are subpoenaed by a court, or directed by court order, we may be required by law to release your records.

5. If you file a complaint against our office, or sue us, your records may be released to other university officials, and contractors, including government officials.

6. Information pertaining to behavior, crimes, or fraud that may jeopardize an individual or compromise the University is subject to disclosure.

7. Students who have been referred to the ECDS office will have the following records released; please **initial** and fill in the appropriate lines:

   ___Michigan Rehabilitation Services (name of caseworker)__________________________
   ___Faculty/Staff (name)__________________________________________________________
   ___FSU Personal Counseling Center (counselor name)________________________________
   ___Parents/Legal Guardian/Spouse (name)__________________________________________
   ___Other (name)________________________________________________________________

**By signing you indicate the following:** I have read and understand the information outlined above. I understand I will have an opportunity to discuss any questions I may have regarding these services during my session. On the basis of the stated information, I consent to receive services from the Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services office.

If you would like a copy of this disclosure statement, your counselor will be happy to provide one for you or you can access the disclosure form on our website at: http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/colleges/University/disability/forms/disclosure-statement.pdf

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<tr>
<th>Printed Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parent Signature: ___________________________</td>
<td>Student ID: ______________________</td>
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<td><strong>(Please note: Students 17 years of age or under require parental signature)</strong></td>
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| Witness: ___________________________ | Date: ___________________________ |

**Ferris State University**  
Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services (ECDS)  
901 S. State St., STR 313, Big Rapids, MI 49307  
Telephone (231) 591-3057 Fax (231) 591-3939  
e-mail: ecds@ferris.edu