A crisis situation occurs when the student feels unable to cope with the circumstances of his/her life. The more helpless the individual feels, the greater the sense of urgency about the crisis. As a result of the crisis situation, the student may feel depressed, anxious, hostile or ashamed. A psychological emergency occurs when a person is:

- Suicidal
- Homicidal
- Gravely Impaired (psychotic):
  - confusion
  - not in control of his/her behavior
  - hallucinations
  - disorientation
  - extreme hyperactivity
- Physically Assaulted or Witness to an Assault
- Sexually Assaulted
- Fears for their Life or the Life of Someone They Know
- Physically Abused
- Experienced Recent Death of a Friend or Family Member

If you encounter a student experiencing a crisis, there are a number of helpful actions you can take. First, it is important to help the student discuss the situation and his/her feelings. Let the student know that you hear the concern. Tell the student you want to help. You have probably been approached because you are trusted. Second, assist the student in exploring the situation or problem and deciding what course of action needs to be taken. Third, decide what your limits are in working with the student and let the student know when the limits have been reached. Fourth, know appropriate referral resources. These are listed at the back of this booklet.

When dealing with most students in a crisis situation, conveying your concern and willingness to help in any way you can (including referral) is probably the most important thing you can do. Your support, encouragement and reassurance will be particularly valuable to a student in crisis.