



THAPAR INSTITUTE
OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY
(Deemed to be University)

**COUNSELING MANUAL
OF
THAPAR INSTITUTE COUNSELING CELL (TICC)**

I. BACKGROUND

College/University life is a time of change, growth, and transition. Attending college/university is an exciting and dynamic experience. It can also be a time of change as you grow in your self-awareness and continue to develop your own sense of identity.

Attending college also presents its challenges. Outside of the obvious academic pressures, students may have to deal with stresses such as:

- moving away from home for the first time
- financial stress
- physical or mental illness (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- end of important relationships
- illness or death of a loved one

Sometimes coping with one or more of these stresses can prove to be overwhelming. Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) helps students through these difficult times of adjustment and readjustment to the university life. We recognize that the stress associated with a high pressure academic environment at a critical developmental period sometimes creates difficulties. These difficulties are ones that can often be alleviated through professional counseling and therapeutic intervention. Against this background Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) was set up in January, 2016. TICC has been designed in accordance with the UGC norms to provide free counselling services to students and staff so that they are able to perform their responsibilities with enhanced confidence, vigour and ethics.

“Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) is an initiative to serve the student community and enable them to realize their full potential so as to contribute more productively.”

- ***Prof. Prakash Gopalan (Director, TIET)***

“Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) is an effort to be a mentor, motivator and guide to all students on campus. It aims to help students transform into significant agents of change for a better tomorrow.”

- ***Prof. Maneek Kumar (Dean Student Affairs & Professor of Civil Engineering, TIET)***

TIET Vision and Mission Statement

Vision

To be recognized as a leader committed to Excellence in Higher Education, Research and Innovation that meets the aspirations of the global community.

Mission

- To redefine and revolutionize Indian engineering education by unlocking the beauty of engineering and applied sciences for the current and future generation.
- To instil excitement of engineering in young minds.
- To make Patiala, Punjab and India proud of being the most sustainable region of the world through creating, disseminating and applying actionable engineering knowledge.

The Vision of Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC)

- Is to be recognized as a leader which will further provide assistance of the highest quality to ensure students' progress towards completion of their education and accomplishment of their personal development.
- Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) supports the aim of professional counseling to empower diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals (ACA, 2014), while mental health, wellness, education, and career goals (ACA, 2014), while advancing the vision of TIET of excellence in learning and assisting students to become self-aware and socially responsible leaders with a global perspective of tomorrow.

The Mission of Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC)

- Is to be a resource for students who seek help in dealing with personal issues ranging from adjustment problems to major crisis.

Key Services Offered:

- **Counseling Services**
All degree-seeking students currently enrolled at the TIET are eligible for counseling services.
- **Consultation Services**
Any faculty, staff, student who is concerned about a TIET student in crisis may call to discuss how you may refer the student to seek services at the TICC. Call +91-8872739998 during regular office hours (9:00am–7:00pm, Monday through Friday). You may also call after regular hours if the student's crisis is serious and urgent.
- **Outreach Services**
TICC can collaborate with TIET faculty, staff, and student groups on programs and events open to the student community.
Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) is committed to supporting university programs designed to create an atmosphere conducive to the well-being, personal growth, and psychological health of students.
- **Crisis Services**
Important: If you or someone you are concerned about is in a serious and imminent life-threatening circumstance, please bypass this information and immediately call +91-8872739998 or go to the nearest concerned authority.
Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC) offers a variety of crisis services:
 - Walk-in Crisis Services
 - After-Hours Crisis
 - Sexual Assault
 - Suicide Prevention

II. STUDENT GUIDE:

The Counseling Process

The counseling relationship is a unique one, accompanied by certain rights, responsibilities, and protections. For those considering counseling, this section provides an overview of the counseling process:

- What to expect from counseling?
- What is your role in counseling?
- What are the guidelines concerning confidentiality?

Counseling Process Expectations

- You can expect to meet with a counselor who is interested in listening to your concerns and in helping you develop a better understanding of them.
- Your counselor will take you seriously and be willing to openly discuss anything you wish to discuss.
- If you have any questions about your therapy, by all means ask. Your counselor will want to work with you and will support you in what you are capable of doing for yourself. Your counselor will maintain strict confidentiality except under unusual circumstances. If you have any questions about the limits of confidentiality, please bring them up with your counselor.

Role

Within the context of the therapeutic relationship (the professional relationship between the student/client and the counselor), you have certain responsibilities that when adhered to, may help you work more effectively toward meeting your therapeutic goals. These responsibilities include:

- Attending your scheduled appointments. If you are not able to attend, please let your counselor know with at least 24 hours' notice or as early as possible, so that someone else can use that appointment time.
- Talking openly and honestly with your counselor about your concerns. You have certain rights of confidentiality and you are encouraged to discuss these with your counselor if you are unclear about them.
- Your counselor may ask you to try a new behavior, adapt different thinking, better manage your emotional responses or experiment with a different approach to your concerns.
- You are encouraged to try and practice these new ideas and approaches outside of the counseling session.
- Please communicate with your counselor about any improvements (or not) you become aware of regarding your concerns. Your feedback is important and can help your counselor adapt her/his approach to better meet your needs.

Confidentiality

TICC strictly protects the confidentiality of information shared during sessions. We are ethically committed to confidentiality. This means that even your attendance in counseling is kept private and confidential. No record of a student's visit to the TICC is placed on a transcript or academic record.

There are four exceptions to this general rule:

- You may request (by means of a signed release) that your counselor reveal information to other individuals or agencies of your choice;
- In instances where there is imminent danger of serious harm to yourself or others;
- In cases involving physical and/or sexual abuse; and
- Where otherwise requested or mandated by court order.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

I). Individual Counseling:

What is Individual Counseling and how can it help me?

- The Counseling Services offers short-term counseling for students. During the initial session, referred to as an intake session, the counselor will determine whether the short-term nature of the counselling offered is appropriate for the student's needs. If it is decided that that longer-term or more specialized care is appropriate, then alternative treatment recommendations will be made.
- In individual counseling, you have the full attention of counselor in one-on-one atmosphere of understanding, warmth, and insight. Counselor can help you in a variety of ways because they excellent sounding-boards, compassionate listeners, and skillful experts in problems of living.
- It takes about 45-50 minutes. The individual counseling is available for a variety of problems such as anxiety, depression, relationship difficulties, stress, academic pressure, grief, general discomfort, family problems, homosexuality, substance abuse and so forth.
- Counseling done with the help of various therapies (Cognitive Therapy, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Behaviour Therapy, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Stress Inoculation Therapy, Mind fullness and so forth) and various psychometric tests.

Am I eligible for Individual Counseling services?

- All degree-seeking students currently enrolled at the TIET are eligible for individual counseling services.

Can I trust that Individual Counseling will be confidential?

- We are ethically committed to confidentiality. This means that even your attendance in counseling is kept private and confidential.

How much does it cost?

- There is no cost for services at the TICC.

ii). Group Counseling:

What is Group Counseling and how can it help me?

- Groups at the TICC are designed for students who want to understand themselves and others in greater depth. These may be students who have concerns about relationships with others; students who feel different from their peers because of the type of problem currently being experienced; and/or students who make choices based on what others want or expect instead of evaluating decisions for themselves. A common theme for group participant is wanting to learn how to change thinking, feelings, and/or behaviour to feel better about them selves and cope more effectively with life.

Am I eligible for Group Counseling services?

- All degree-seeking students currently enrolled at the TIET are eligible for group counseling services.

Can I trust that group counseling will be confidential?

- The TICC is ethically committed to confidentiality. That means that even your attendance in a group at TICC is kept private and confidential. The issue of confidentiality is an important one which is always addressed in the group immediately. Group members are asked to make a commitment to protect each other by agreeing not to divulge details which would identify you outside of group. While it is okay to share your own group experience with friends or family, it is not okay to discuss other members in any way. While we at the TICC cannot provide you an absolute guarantee of confidentiality since we cannot control every group member, our experience indicates that students respect each other's privacy, because they want their privacy respected as much as you do.
- Several issues do not remain confidential and are based on the issue of protection. If someone appears to be planning harm to self (suicide), harm to others, the counselor is legally bound to break confidentiality in order to provide individuals the assistance they need.

How much does it cost?

- There is no cost for services at the TICC.

What can I expect Group Counseling to be like?

- Groups can offer an intense, thought-provoking experience. The secret strength of group therapy lies in the unique blend of students who share their problems and challenge themselves together towards growth.

What do I do in a group?

Most people feel nervous about joining a group. It is not uncommon for people to worry that they will talk too much or not say enough, or that they will not fit in with the other members. Another concern is that the group will not be helpful. Here are some things you can do to maximize the chance that the group will be a successful experience for you:

- Attend!!
- Participate-the more willing you are to participate, the more likely you will benefit.
- Think about what you would like to work on and actively work on it. Ask the group for help.
- Don't reveal more than you are comfortable revealing. On the other hand, challenge yourself to take some risks.
- Use the group time to talk about your concerns. Many people struggle with whether or not to use the group time to talk about themselves. They worry that their concerns are not important enough or that others need more time than they do.
- Try new behaviors in the group and ask for feedback.
- Give others helpful feedback. This provides practice at being direct, honest, and assertive.
- Be patient. It will take time for the group to develop trust.
- Think about group in between group sessions.

Talking can help.....

Whether it is stress, sadness, relationship problems, or academic trials, sharing your concerns with another person can make a positive difference. Now, just imagine that the person you are talking to has experience in dealing with your issue and may know some solutions. Then talking may really help! And that's what Let's Talk is all about.

What is Let's Talk?

Let's Talk is brief consultation that is available to all students at TIET. It is confidential and completely free. Just walk-in because no appointments are necessary! Let's Talk is a place where you can talk about concerns and receive expert suggestions about solutions and resources or just have someone who listens well and can offer support. No topic is off limits, but common concerns include:

- Stress
- Sadness
- Difficulty adjusting to university life.
- Academic concerns
- Family problems
- Financial struggles
- Relationship concerns

How is Let's Talk different from counseling?

- It is a brief consultation (approximately 15 minutes)a
- There is no paperwork to complete
- No appointment is necessary
- It is free

What happens in a Let's Talk session?

- In Let's Talk counselor will carefully listen to your concern, will mostly likely ask you some brief questions, and will work to understand your goal for coming to Let's Talk. Once your problem and goal are clear, depending upon your needs, the counselor will offer you suggestions for addressing the concern. You are welcome to return to Let's Talk at another time, but the decision is up to you.

Who should visit Let's Talk?

Let's Talk is open to all current students. However, Let's Talk is best suited for the following people:

- Students who are not sure about counseling and are trying to figure out what it is like to talk with a counselor;
- Students who are not interested in on-going counseling but would like the perspective of a counselor;
- Students who have a specific problem and would like someone with whom they could talk;

- Students who have a concern about a friend and would like some perspective on what to do.

Please Remember:

Let's Talk is for consultation about a specific problem. Most students come to Let's Talk only once or twice. It is also a place where students are able to have questions answered about formal counseling. Counselor can help you determine whether formal counseling would be useful for you.

iv). Off-Campus Referrals:

- Students are referred to Psychiatrists when the problem requires more intensive and specialized treatment with the help of medicines.

v). Student Mentorship Initiative:

- In a proactive effort to support and guide university students of first-year, the university came up with Student Mentorship Programme aimed at promoting academic success and well-being.
- The Programme enables selected faculty to serve as mentors and to remain in close and consistent contact with the students (batch of 25 each) throughout their period of study on campus. The purpose is to cater to their academic and intellectual needs and help them make a successful transition from high school to tertiary education.
- The students get a faculty mentor in the very first year itself, as a lot of fresh entrants struggle with the volume of work involved in their first-year because it is different from the work they were used to at school. So in lieu of that they need a more holistic approach that will look at all aspects of their development and help them successfully bridge the gap between high school and university.
- The mentors along with Thapar Institute Counseling Cell (TICC), Centre for Training & Development (CTD) and Wardens of hostels emphasize in coordinating and providing support for academic success, identity development, emotional health, leadership development, belonging and community consciousness.

III. GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY/STAFF:

Identifying a Student in Distress

University life can be very stressful for a variety of reasons. Competition and pressure to meet expectations of success may leave our students feeling unprepared for the emotional turmoil of higher education. Some students cope well, while others find that the pressures of university life

interfere with their learning.

Your Role as a Faculty and Staff Member

It is important to know that many students first seek guidance from those most available to them (faculty and/or staff members). Below are some guidelines for identifying students in distress:

- Excessive procrastination and very poorly prepared work, especially if this is different from the student's previous work performance.
- Poor class attendance
- Dependency (i.e. the student that hangs around or makes excessive appointments during office hours)
- Falling asleep in class and/or marked changes in energy level
- Poor personal hygiene or changes in personal hygiene
- Impaired speech or disjointed thoughts
- Repeated requests for special considerations (i.e. deadline extensions)
- Threats to or about others
- Excessive weight gains or loss
- Expressed suicidal thoughts (i.e. referring to suicide as a current option)
- Behavior which regularly interferes with effective classroom management
- Frequent or high levels of irritable or aggressive behavior
- Inability to make decisions despite your repeated efforts to clarify or encourage
- Bizarre behavior that is obviously inappropriate for the situation (i.e. talking to someone or something that is not present)
- Students who appear overly nervous, tense, or tearful

Guidelines for Making a Referral

- Talk to the student, privately if possible.
- Express concern; be as specific as possible in stating your observations and reasons for concern.
- Listen carefully to everything the student says.
- Repeat the essence of what the student has told you, thus communicating your desire to understand.
- Avoid criticizing or sounding judgmental.
- Consider the use of the Thapar Institute Counseling Cell as a resource and discuss this with your student. Suggest that the student call or come to the TICC to make an appointment. Provide them with the TICC phone number (+91-8872739998) and location (G-BLOCK, ROOM NO- 105) at that time. Sometimes it is more effective to assist the student by calling for an appointment while the

student is present. When you reach the TICC identify yourself as a faculty or staff member and let the student make an appointment.

- If you are concerned about the student's safety, it may be necessary to walk the student to the counseling center.
- If the student resists referral and you remain uncomfortable about the student's situation, contact the Thapar Institute Counseling Cell and discuss your concern with a counselor.

*** If you feel the situation is an emergency or that it is urgent enough to require immediate attention, please do the following: identify yourself as faculty or staff, the student needs to be seen immediately or personally speak to a counselor.

IV. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:

Starting college is a time of transition for both the child and the parent. The child is adjusting to increasing independence, while the parent is adjusting to decreased involvement in their child life. This transition involves changing the relationship from adult-child to adult-adult. Below are some suggestions that may help you negotiate this process.

Transitioning to an Adult-Adult Relationship

To keep communication open, it may be helpful to...

- Stay in touch
- Show interest
- Be a good listener
- Keep an open mind
- Be encouraging

Stay Informed by

Understanding the campus resources that are available for your child and encouraging them to take advantage of these resources. It may be necessary to become more involved when sad telephone calls home outnumber the other calls.

It is reasonable to become concerned about your child if he/she:

- Experiences significant weight gain/loss
- Experiences frequent illnesses alcohol consumption. Often times, students exaggerate their peers' use of alcohol. They tend to act on what they perceive to be the norm. Make this an ongoing discussion as opposed to a one-time lecture. Look for and create "teachable moments,"

by using TV news or newspaper articles that deal with substance use. University policy on alcohol consumption/substance abuse (<http://www.thapar.edu/images/pdf/ANTI%20DRUG%20POLICY.jpg>).

Avoid normalizing inappropriate alcohol consumption: Avoid telling tales of drinking exploits from your own college years. Entertaining students with stories of drinking back "in the good old days" normalizes what, even then, was abnormal behavior.

- Avoid contradictions between your words and actions.
- **Encourage volunteerism:** Encourage your children to volunteer in the community. Volunteerism not only structures free time but also provides students with a chance to develop skills and gain valuable experience.

V. OTHER ACTIVITIES OF TICC:

- **Green Mindfulness:** It is an activity which uses gardening/plants to create a space for students to come socialize, meet people, relax and develop introductory mindfulness skills. The goal of this group is to have students be present in the moment with the help of a plant based activity. Students are encouraged to pay particular attention to their five senses and how engaging them through the activity can help them be present, reduce their stress level in the moment and increase their feelings of calmness.
- **Developing Healthy Relationships:** It helps students maximize their personal relationships with friends, partners, and family members.
- **Mood And Anxiety 101:** An educational session designed for students who want to learn more about how they can better manage their own mood and anxiety symptoms. Learn about how and why the body reacts the way it does to stress and learn a variety of effective coping strategies, including relaxation techniques, cognitive techniques and behavioural techniques.
- **Anxiety And Depression 102:** Using cognitive & behavioral approaches, it is designed to support participants to explore various ways to cope with the symptoms of anxiety and depression. Participants will also have opportunities to discuss and explore what strategies work best for them and why. Brief homework assignments will be provided to support participants to practice activities introduced in each class. Pre & post-assessment tools will be used to help monitor progress.
- **Study Skills:** Sessions are available to help you make your academic work more effective and rewarding. In the past, students have worked on reading and studying skills, time management, oral presentations, organizing knowledge for writing papers and essays, and test anxiety.
- **Improving Health: Chronic Disease Self-Management Program:** For students with chronic disease (including mental health). The program is based on the assumption that individuals with chronic disease share symptoms and daily challenges associated with their disease. Each session covers different topics related to better self-management. The goal is to give people the skills to

better self-manage and to take control of their health.

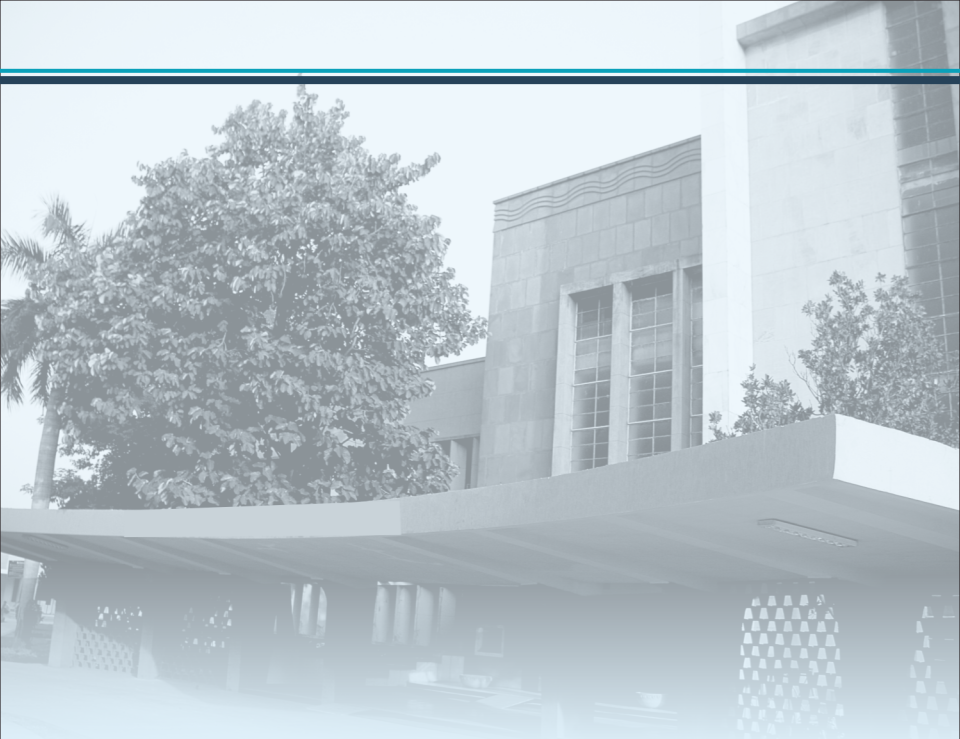
- **Emotional Skills Group:** A series of individual and interactional group sessions in which main emphasis is to master on emotions. Use emotions while thinking. Emotion is always energy in motion. The main emphasis is on self-management, self-awareness, responsible-decision making, relationship skills and social awareness.
- **Cognitive Skills Group:** A series of educational seminars for students which builds on the skills learned in Mood and Anxiety 101. An opportunity for students to learn more advanced cognitive strategies to help them best manage their emotional health, important relationships and academic productivity. Topics covered include Effective **Self-Talk**; Challenging Dysfunctional Core Beliefs; Effective Communication Skills and Procrastination-Busting.
- **Four Pack (Addictions Harm Reduction):** A series of individual and interactional group sessions during which participants have an opportunity to learn about the consequences of addictions and develop strategies for reducing harm that can arise from engaging in addictive behaviors. Appropriate for any student who is concerned about their use of alcohol, drugs, gambling or the internet.
- **Stress Free Zone: Stress Free Zone (SFZ)** is a space where students can learn and regularly practice evidence-based, mind/body stress reduction skills. These skills are primarily taught through mindfulness meditation, a form of attention training which involves an intentional, non-judgmental observation of the present moment.
Stress manifests in many ways. In the body, stress can be experienced as tight muscles, headaches, increased heart rate, and heat. In the mind, stress can be experienced as racing thoughts, worrying, sadness, irritability, even anger.
SFZ mindfulness services teach skills for working with the mind/body system in ways that not only help us feel better in the moment but also help increase awareness of mental habits that keep us locked into reactive, unhelpful behaviours. With increased awareness we can begin to break those habits and experience some freedom from them.

Why Mindfulness?

The research-supported benefits of a regular mindfulness practice extend beyond stress reduction and include:

- Decreased anxiety
- Decreased stress levels
- Decreased depression
- Decreased emotional reactivity
- Improved relationships
- Improved concentration
- Improved working memory

- Increased sense of wellbeing
- Ability to cope with pain—physical and mental
- Increased body awareness
- Increased compassion for self and other
- **Beyond Labels:** A group for lesbian, gay, bisexual. Designed for individuals who want to talk with supportive others in a private location who share their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or related interests or concerns.
Cope and Thrive: This group is a workshop format that teaches you skills to communicate more effectively and improve your interpersonal relationships. You can learn mindfulness and relaxation; assertiveness and setting boundaries; emotion management and coping; and making adaptive behavioural decisions.
- **Phoenix Rising:** A therapy group for students who are survivors of sexual trauma experienced in childhood or as adults. The goal of this group is to provide a healing, empowering, and safe space for survivors to process the impact of trauma, and to discuss and receive support around a range of issues including relationships, intimacy, sexuality, safety, mind-body awareness, balance, communication, and trust.
- **Women's Group:** This small group is designed for graduate women needing a supportive space to explore unique challenges in managing life with many (often competing) demands and roles. Themes may include: relationship difficulties, self-esteem concerns, navigating emotions, and striving for life balance. Members are able to share their stories/experiences, as well as receive support and feedback from other women in a private environment that is safe and empowering. The group is open and welcoming of women who are diverse across all social identities.



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HOURS and APPOINTMENTS

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