

**Subject:** FW: UO's Commitment to Confidentiality of Student Counseling Records  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2015 at 4:49:15 PM Pacific Daylight Time  
**From:** Frances Bronet  
**To:** Stabile Carol, Crystal Dehle, John Bonine, Ibrahim Gassama, Renae DeSautel, Douglas Park

Thank you all for your extraordinary and collaborative work. We could not have done this without this entire team together.

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**From:** Provost <[provost@uoregon.edu](mailto:provost@uoregon.edu)>  
**Reply-To:** Provost <[provost@uoregon.edu](mailto:provost@uoregon.edu)>  
**Date:** Friday, March 20, 2015 at 4:16 PM  
**To:** Frances Bronet <[fbronet@uoregon.edu](mailto:fbronet@uoregon.edu)>  
**Subject:** UO's Commitment to Confidentiality of Student Counseling Records



## MEMORANDUM

March 20, 2015

TO: Campus Community

FROM: Provost Frances Bronet

RE: UO's Commitment to Confidentiality of Student Counseling Records

Last December, the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) obtained copies of therapy records maintained by the University Counseling and Testing Center (UCTC) in response to a litigation hold sent by a student's attorney. OGC then scanned the records electronically to preserve and secure them. No one at the OGC has reviewed the records. Subsequently, national debate has centered on how access to these records could impact students seeking counseling on university campuses. In response to these concerns, I am affirming that University of Oregon students will have the same level of strong confidentiality that they have in private, off-campus therapy.

In order to emphasize the university's commitment to the confidentiality of students' records I am announcing the following actions:

1. OGC has returned all records at issue so that they may be preserved and secured by the UCTC.
2. I am instructing all UO employees that they must rigorously respect the confidentiality obligations of therapists in UO clinics and counseling centers.
3. The university promises each student who comes to UO clinics and counseling centers that, consistent with law and ethics codes, in the future no records will be accessed by anyone not involved in their care, unless:
  - o the student signs a written release,
  - o a court orders release,
  - o the therapist needs to coordinate treatment with others,
  - o the therapist needs to prevent harm to the student or others,
  - o the therapist needs to provide anonymous, aggregate information to the Director of Affirmative Action to compile statistics regarding sexual assaults.

I will form a committee made up of licensed therapists, faculty, General Counsel, and staff

to propose new or clarified policies on how the confidentiality of medical and psychological records for any university departments that handle protected health information will be maintained and protected, and when records may be released. The committee will share a draft of these policies with the UO community in April 2015.

I am grateful for the advice and energy many members of our community have brought and continue to bring to this vital issue, and to our many members of the UCTC for their hard work, dedication, and care for our students.

I urge UO students to use our counseling and mental health services without fear that their counseling records will be disclosed to other parties or UO departments. In addition to the UCTC, I want students to know that other confidential support services are available in the following offices:

- the Student Health Center: 541-346-2770, <http://healthcenter.uoregon.edu>;
- the UO Psychology Clinic: 541.346.4954, <http://psychology.uoregon.edu/psychology-clinic>;
- the University Ombudsperson: 541-346-6400, <http://ombuds.uoregon.edu>;
- the Crisis Intervention and Sexual Violence Support Services 541-346-8194 or 541-346-6796.

Students can call a 24-hour hotline at 541 346-SAFE to speak with a confidential counselor who can explain options and connect students with resources. They can also access such confidential services at the following website: [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu).

I will resend this message to all students at the start of spring term.

Sincerely,

Frances Bronet  
Acting Senior Vice President and Provost