# Welcome to Mitchell Hamline Counseling Services...

We look forward to working with you. In order to acquaint you with certain procedures and policies, the following information will be useful. Please read it carefully. If you have questions, please ask. Thank you.

**Counseling Service Fees:** Counseling Services does not charge for initial appointments for Mitchell Hamline students, staff or faculty. A $25 fee is charged for subsequent appointments. The remaining expense is covered by Mitchell Hamline.

**Appointments:** Appointments generally last about 50 minutes. It is expected that you will make every effort to keep your appointments. If you must cancel please give a 24-hour notice when possible. You may be charged without such notice.

**Data Privacy:** Counseling Services recognizes the extreme importance of confidentiality. Be assured that confidentiality regarding the information you supply will be respected. (Exception noted below.) Information which you furnish is classified as "private" according to the provisions of the Minnesota Data Practices Act. It will be used to help assess your problem, to determine treatment plans and goals, and to provide the services you need. In most cases, information that is gathered is only seen by your therapist. It may be shared with other Counseling Services therapists to enhance the quality of service you receive and to maintain professional accountability. Personal information about you will not be shared with any Mitchell Hamline staff, faculty, or anyone else without your written consent (unless to do so is specifically authorized by law or required by regulation). You should be aware that there are legal and ethical exceptions to confidentiality. Records must be released if a court order is issued. Cases of suspected abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults must be reported to the local police or welfare department. In an emergency, information may be released to an appropriate party in accordance with acceptable professional practices.

In most instances you have the right to review information about you which is maintained by Counseling Services, to request a copy of it, to contest its accuracy or completeness and to attach a letter of disagreement, if necessary.

**Emergency Service:** Counseling Services cannot provide emergency mental health services. If you are in need of such services, you may go to the Emergency Room at St. Paul Regions Medical Center (651-254- 5000) or the Crisis Intervention Center at Hennepin County Medical Center (612-347-3161). You may also call Crisis Connection (612-379-6363) or Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers 24 hour crisis line at (651-646-55590).

**Your Concerns:** If you have a concern or are dissatisfied with some aspect of the service you receive, please discuss it with your therapist. Most matters can be resolved in this way. For matters that are not satisfactorily resolved, a procedure exists by which you may obtain further consideration of the matter in question. Your therapist can explain the procedure to you if you desire.

**The Counseling Process:** Counselors do not give advice or make decisions for their clients; rather they ask questions and make comments to help you understand yourself more fully, make your own choices, and become more self-reliant. The counseling process may entail emotional pain, stress, and life changes. Although counseling helps most people, it is not always or completely effective.