Purpose
This pamphlet was collaboratively created to support the mental health needs of the BIPOC of Auburn University. By providing the readers of this pamphlet with helpful information, we hope to empower them to seek services if and when they choose to do so.

Disparity in Care
The mental health needs of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) continue to be unmet. In addition, BIPOC continue to experience both institutional and individual racism, which affects their mental health and in turn, their quality of life. As a result of racism, the health trends of BIPOC display the disparities of medical and mental healthcare.

What is therapy?
Therapy can be referred to as counseling or psychotherapy. However, they all converge on the same message: collaborative treatment built on a foundation of the relationship between the client and counselor. Based on the availability in your area, financial considerations, or other personal needs, you may meet with a social worker, counselor, psychologist or even a psychiatrist who provides therapeutic services. Therapy is a confidential space where clients are met in a nonjudgmental, supportive manner to focus on their goals.

Multicultural Competency
Regardless of the type of mental health professional who provides therapeutic services, each must abide by certain guidelines. Multicultural guidelines can be found across disciplines (i.e., social work, psychology, and psychiatry). These guidelines raise awareness, provide knowledge and skills, so that racial, cultural, and gender influences are under consideration when working with BIPOC. However, mental health professionals, similar to any other group, are not immune to internalizing biases, stereotypes or values which can be a disservice to their clients. Currently, there is no gold-standard training or certificate which recognizes professionals who are culturally competent versus those who are not.

First Session
The first session is what many consider to be an intake, an extended session where the clinician collects information about the client to determine the client’s goals, past involvement with therapy, and whether or not the clinician is trained to provide the services the client is requesting. However, this session as well as subsequent sessions, are also a time when clients can determine whether or not this clinician is a good fit for their needs. Below we have listed some potential questions to ask a prospective mental health provider.
General Questions to Ask

- What’s your training?
- How long have you worked as a therapist?
- What types of therapy do you think might help me? Why?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to treatment, including medication?
- How does the type of treatment you recommend work?
- What are the chances that treatment will succeed?
- How soon should I start to feel better?
- What are your thoughts on assessment?
- What should I do if I don’t feel better?
- How much will treatment cost?
- What are your thoughts on out-of-session assignments?
- What if I want to change the treatment approach?

Diversity Specific Questions to Ask

- How do you define diversity?
- What experience do you have working with people who identify as (insert facet of identity here)?
- What assessment tools do you use to understand diverse clients?
- How do you deliver effective treatment to people of different backgrounds?
- What does cultural competency mean to you and your therapy practice?
- How do you conceptualize oppression in the United States in regard to mental health?

Culturally Competent Therapists

- **Asian Mental Health Collective**
  - asiannhc.org
- **Black Mental Health Alliance**
  - blackmentalhealth.com
- **Therapy for Black Girls**
  - therapyforblackgirls.com
- **Therapy for Black Men**
  - therapyforblackmen.org
- **Therapy for Latinx**
  - therapyforlatinx.com
- **Native American Therapists**
  - psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/native-american
- **Auburn University Marriage and Family Therapy Center (AU MFT Center)**
  - 334-844-4478
- **Kerri Baharanyi, LICSW, PIP**
  - Soul Affirming Counseling
  - 334-539-8051
- **Madalyn Caldwell, Ed.S., LPC**
  - Anchor of Hope Counseling Center
  - 334-231-6687
- **Michelle Crumby, LPC, LLC**
  - 334-521-5045
- **Sheila Holmes, M.Ed, LPC, NCC**
  - Revision Counseling Center
  - 334-384-8158
- **Evelyn A. Hunter, PhD**
  - Auburn Psychological Wellness Center
  - 334-219-0425
- **Angela Nelms-Griffin, MS, LMFT**
  - AU MFT Center
  - 334-319--3524

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