

Virtual Threat Assessment Transcript

Ella Moreau Case, October 2025

Kacie: Hi Ella. Hi. Can you hear me okay?

Ella: Yeah, I can hear you.

Kacie: Okay. It's nice to meet you. Thank you for, for joining us today. My name is Kacie Rocco. I work with the care team here at the university. And meeting with us is my colleague Michael.

Ella: Hi.

Michael: Hello. Nice to meet you.

Kacie: So the two of us are here, um, completing the assessment together. Uh, the reason for that is just to make sure that we're not missing anything, um, important. And to ensure that we can offer, you know, the most opportunities to you, um, for support and resources that might be available. Okay.

Ella: Okay.

Kacie: Um, so a little bit about the CARE team, just so you kind of better understand what we do and who we are. Um, we work collaboratively, um, just to identify and support students on campus that. Maybe expressing some distress, um, that could potentially be engaging in concerning behaviors or facing challenges in their life, um, that could impact their wellbeing.

Ella: Okay.

Kacie: And so the purpose of this conversation today is really just to understand, um, your recent experiences and perspectives as well as to ensure, um, that you and everyone in your academic environment are feeling safe.

Ella: Okay.

Kacie: Okay. So I noticed you're drinking some, are you drinking something hot? Looks like, is it cool in there today?

Ella: Um, it's comfortable. Yeah, it's fine.

Kacie: What do you like to drink in the morning?

Ella: Black coffee.

Kacie: Black coffee? Okay. Do you, um, have you been drinking coffee a long time? I'm a, I'm a, a huge coffee lover. I think Michael is too. So.

Michael: Black coffee, For sure.

Ella: I guess? Yeah.

Kacie: Okay. Um. So tell me a little bit, uh, Ella, about yourself and just kind of some of your experiences, um, at the university, how you're doing.

Ella: Um, I'm in my third year. I'm in the mortuary program. Um, my grades are good, like I've been doing pretty well academically. But, um, the mortuary program I'm in has gotten difficult because I have an ongoing conflict with my professor, um, that I felt really invalidated and condescended to. Like disrespected in class by. Um, and I've tried to open this dialogue with him multiple times mm-hmm. And have not really received any effort or being met halfway.

Kacie: Okay. Can you help me understand a little bit about, um, the mortuary science program and kind of where you're at with that and really where your interest is in that particular field, so I can just better understand where you're coming from.

Ella: Um, yeah, I mean, so I am very interested in, um, switching more to green practices for, for funeral practices. Um, I think that's really important. The current system is very unsustainable, very harmful to the earth. It's very predatory to the people who are grieving. And these are things that have kind of been the crux of the issue, I think, in class.

Kacie: Okay. So when you say green system, just so I have a better understanding of kind of what that means and what that entails, um, help me understand what the green system really represents and what it is.

Ella: Well, there's a lot of different ways, um, that you can go about that. There's a human composting, which is basically when, um, the deceased is not embalmed. They don't receive any kind of chemical processing or treatment after death, and they can be used, um, essentially as compost to help grow like a tree or some kind of like memorial plant above them. Um, and that helps too with, um, repopulating forests. And not, you know, graveyards pick up a lot of space. And there it's a lot to maintain. Um, and that contributes to deforestation.

There's also, uh, cremation is a great way to go too. Low cost. Um, low risk, low impact. Mm-hmm. Things of that nature.

Kacie: Okay. How long have you been kind of studying, um, mortuary science? I know you said you're, you're in your third year, but how long has this been, um, an interest to you?

Ella: Um, I mean, I think I've always been pretty interested in like death and the afterlife. I think most people inherently are.

Kacie: Yeah.

Ella: To some extent.

Kacie: What's drawn you more towards the, the, um, idea of kind of green systems and how that can potentially, you know, um, be better for our environment and for the, for the wellbeing of nature?

Ella: Well, just the impact of not doing that, essentially. I mean, the kind of chemicals that are used in embalming treatments, um, they're extremely caustic to the earth. Like it's, and that gets in our water systems that gets into our plants. Like there's a lot of, it comes full circle, you know.

Kacie: Right.

Ella: It's not just harming the planet, it's also harming people's health.

Kacie: Yeah. Okay. So this is definitely something that you have experienced some, a lot of, a very strong interest in. It sounds like you have a lot of passion in this particular area. Um, you mentioned before kind of the idea and interest of death in the afterlife.

Can you share with me a little bit about some of that and kind of where that's, um, you know, growing and, and how you're kind of relating that to your experiences now in life?

Ella: Um, I mean, I just, I think that that's something that everybody is' inherently interested in 'cause we don't really know and, you know, something that we all experience, it's something that we don't really talk about as a culture and you know, what happens after death is kind of the big question for everyone. Like, yeah.

Kacie: Where do you have an opportunity to kind of have some of those discussions and talk about, um, some of those things that, you know, seem to be something that everybody thinks about?

Ella: Um, mainly online, you know? Mainly online. My social media groups.

Kacie: Okay.

Ella: That's been a way to access common minded community more so in real life.

Kacie: Uh, what kind of groups have you found? What kind of social media, um, you know, representation do you like to participate in?

Ella: Uh, I mean, I'm in a lot of like eco burial, um, social media groups, forums, just, you know things related around exactly what we're talking about.

Kacie: Okay. Have you made, um, posts on there that are, you know, kind of representative of your ideas and, and passion around your beliefs in this system?

Ella: Uh, yeah. I mean, I post pretty frequently.

Kacie: Okay. What kind of feedback do you get from those particular posts?

Ella: Mainly positive just because like orienting myself in common-minded groups, but, um, okay. I do know that some of the things that I post have been cited for concern.

Kacie: What, what would you say are some of those more concerning, um, posts? What do they represent or what do they really kind of touch upon that potentially could be seen as concerning?

Ella: Um, well, that's the thing. Like, I don't really know why I'm being called here today, so.

Kacie: Okay. Okay.

Ella: Like, I would like to know what's the things they have a concern.

Kacie: Are there things, um, from your perspective, kind of understanding, um, coming into this meeting and you're saying that you're not really sure what's happening, has anybody expressed concerns to you directly?

I know you mentioned earlier having some. Um, opposing points of views and difficulties with a professor. Um, is there anybody else that you have interacted with or have gotten feedback from

in your life that has, you know, created some, um, awareness that people are concerned about things happening for you?

Ella: Um, well, I mean, I've been in a group chat with other students in my program.

Kacie: Okay.

Ella: Who, um, also have felt some pushback from that professor as well. And I've been trying to mobilize, um, making statements with me to the dean and, um, the feedback I've kind of gotten on that seems to mainly be that people don't really wanna make waves and some conflict avoidance.

Um, I, I mean, I'm aware of the fact that I come off as very assertive, and that can make people defensive, you know?

Kacie: Okay. And so when you say that people have kind of agreed with you or feel that they're on the same page, what's that been like? Has that been something that they've, um, shared with you directly or is it something that you've communicated with them about, you know, in, in, in these particular social media posts and in classroom discussions.

Ella: It's mainly been classroom discussions in the group chat. Um, yeah.

Kacie: so some of that feedback, um, you are, you are seemingly feeling that people are on the same page as you as far as wanting to, kind of challenge your professor or help me understand what the, what your experience with your professor is right now.

Ella: It seems that there's been some common experience of feeling disrespected or invalidated. But the call to action has not been met. Because I think that people are afraid to make waves, whereas I have been more vocal.

Kacie: Okay. So call to action and feeling invalidated. Um. Where, what's the call to action? What is kind of some of your idea of what that looks like and what that means?

Ella: Well, like I was saying, it was trying to issue statements to the dean.

Kacie: Issue statements to the dean in which way? What kind of statements, what are you hoping to, to share?

Ella: Personal testimonies with the other students who have experienced that same invalidation and behavior.

Kacie: Okay. Um, have other students. In addition to you stated that they felt invalidated. Has anybody approached the professor directly and kind of had these discussions?

Ella: Um, yeah. Other people have stated in the group chat that I was citing that they have felt invalidated. I do not know if other people have approached that professor, but I'm under the impression of not just because it seems like the general consensus is not wanting to make waves.

Kacie: Okay.

Ella: Um -

Kacie: So there's - Go ahead. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to cut you off.

Ella: No, it's okay. I feel like I'm the only one that has really taken that initiative and like I'm saying, has not been received or returned. Like I have tried multiple times to open this dialogue and it hasn't gone anywhere.

Kacie: So you feel very strongly about your feelings and, and the way that things have been occurring in class. Where are some of that invalidation or where do you feel, um, your professor's perspective is on as opposing to your own?

Ella: Um, well, he seems really concerned with tradition for the sake of tradition. And when I've tried to challenge his perspective or speak on different options that are more sustainable, I've been called naive.

Which I think is insulting and condescending. Um, recently I sent him an email requesting clarity on a paper that I wrote, which I didn't agree with my grade on, and never received any communication from that either. So it's just, it feels very personal at this point.

Kacie: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about the details, um, maybe in some of those email communications? What are some of the things that. You're trying to express to your professor and help him kind of see your perspective on?

Ella: Well, I've been very clear and assertive that I feel disrespected, I feel talked down to and invalidated. I've cited examples in my emails to him to support this claims. And again, just no return to communication.

Kacie: Okay. What are some of those?

Ella: I feel like –

Kacie: You feel like what?

Ella: I feel like I've been very explicitly clear about what my experience is and challenged him on it. I just - There hasn't really been a dialogue.

Kacie: Okay. So the, the, a lot of the communication has kind of existed strictly in writing form, right? Through these emails, um, conversations in class. You're feeling which way about things when you're sitting there during lectures? What's happening for you in those moments?

Ella: Well, that's kind what I'm talking about. That's the space where I actively feel condescended to.

Kacie: Mm-hmm.

Ella: And then when I try and call that behavior out, I'm not followed up with.

Kacie: Okay. What would followed up with look like for you? What would you, what are you hoping to kind of gain or kind of what's your goal in, um, communicating your concerns to your professor?

Ella: Well, returning my emails would be a great start.

Kacie: Okay. So up until now you haven't received communication back?

Ella: No, I have not. Yeah.

Kacie: Okay. Okay. Um, with kind of sharing your perspective in class, um, where does some of that come from? You know, as far as what you want to share openly with others and with your professor versus maybe what some of, um, what you keep private? Are the things that you're sharing, just everything that you're feeling and how you're feeling about the industry, um, and kind of how you perceive the challenges that people maybe, that don't agree with you? Um, how do you sit with that? How do you deal with that?

Ella: Well, I mean, I feel like I'm very educated in these subjects. And very firm in my position on them. So I'm able to support my claims. And that's the thing, it's like when I challenge somebody, like my professor who has more traditional ideals, I don't really feel like they're responding in any kind of like, um, what's the word I'm looking for? I don't feel like they're backing their claims. I just feel like I am being attacked by character.

Kacie: Okay.

Ella: Like being, telling somebody that they're naive for their belief and then not offering any kind of rebuttal that's based in reality or fact just kind of feels like a character attack to me.

Kacie: Okay. Is it, are there, are there, um, experiences in life where you felt, you know, censored or dismissed before? That this is kind of, um, reflecting a little bit or that you're feeling that you're not being heard or respected in your, your point of view?

Ella: Um, I mean, like I said, I, I'm aware of the fact that I have an assertive personality and that can be intimidating to people, so, sure. I guess I felt that pushback before. But never to the escalation that I feel it now to where it is actively affecting my grades, affecting my mental health and -

Speaker: Okay.

Ella: You know, feels like honestly harassment at this point.

Kacie: So it's, it's affecting your mental health. It sounds like. You just, um, mentioned. Can you share with me a little bit about what that experience is like for you? What are you feeling and how is it, uh, you know, kind of impacting your, your day to day functioning?

Ella: Um, well it's very isolating. Mm-hmm. And it is definitely affect my motivation to wanna go to class or participate in class. Um, it's felt a little futile, you know.

Kacie: It impacted, um, or how has it impacted, you know, your participation in your academic life and maybe outside, even in your personal life? How, what are the impacts that you're experiencing?

Ella: Well, I mean, my grades are still great, like I'm still succeeding academically. But, um, like I said, there was this issue with the paper that I was never followed up with and I feel was graded unfairly. Um, and as far as like other areas of my life, I mean, I feel a little more withdrawn mm-hmm, then I guess I did before.

Kacie: Okay. Can you expand on, on that for me a little bit? How are you feeling, you know, a little withdrawn, or what areas would you notice that happening for you?

Ella: Um, well, as my social interaction has just been online, so. I've kind of just, um, that's been where a lot of my outlet and my community has been rather than in real life, and I feel like I've kind of just withdrawn more into that, if anything.

Kacie: Okay. So it sounds like, you know, it's been hard to really make, um, or feel supported with your in-person interactions and kind of having that day-to-day experience of, um, people who are hearing and listening to the things that you're feeling passionate about. Um, and kind of, so I'm hearing you be a lot of presence online with these social media accounts.

Um. Have there been things that you've shared online that could potentially be, um, indicative of struggling, of stress that you're feeling? Or you, you know, you kind of mentioned assertiveness in your personality, so any of that in your social media posts that maybe would indicate some concern for people?

Ella: Um, I mean, I have somewhat talked about my frustrations with this professor and with this class. Yeah, I mean, I've been open about that.

Kacie: Okay. What are some of the things that you've said?

Ella: Um, let me find, I have these examples that I brought with me. Well, I, so I made a post about the funeral industry not being in the business of helping and that they put on a show of compassion, but at the end of the day, it's really just another greedy corporate grab. Um, that's kind of related to the things I've been in conflict with, with my professor, and I can understand how like that tone comes off as aggressive, but I don't feel like it's inherently threatening.

Kacie: So not inherently threatening in, in the perspective of saying things directly, you mean to people? Like that it couldn't be perceived as potential harm or thoughts of wanting to hurt other people.

Ella: I don't think that being assertive is inherently threatening and it kind of feels a little bit like tone policing to be put in a situation where I have to defend that, to be honest.

Kacie: Yeah. Yeah.

Ella: Like I haven't made a direct claim of like, I am going to hurt this person. Of like active plans of like hurting this person or myself. You know, I feel like having –

Kacie: Have you ever had those thoughts before, of hurting other people out of frustration or kind of dealing with the anger?

Ella: No. I mean, I've said things in anger, venting, like I feel like most people do, but I've never had an active plan or drive to actually commit violence.

Kacie: Okay. Towards other people. What about towards yourself? Any concerns, um, that you've experienced about harm to yourself? Have you had thoughts of not wanting to be alive?

Ella: No, I, I'm not in crisis.

Kacie: What would, what does crisis feel like? For you. Have you been in crisis before where you've been able to kind of recognize that this is not something that you're in crisis about?

Ella: Well, I mean, I've gone through depressive spells. Sure. But I also don't even feel like that is necessarily indicative of crisis. I mean, I feel like crisis isn't, as I am describing it would be like with actual suicidal intent, and that is not a thing I'm experiencing.

Kacie: Okay. Um, with your depressive, um, experiences in the past, what's that been like? How long ago was, was that experience for you?

Ella: Um, I guess a couple of years, um, since I was like in an actual depressive episode, although feeling more withdrawn lately could be indicative of that coming back. But, it's not a thing that I am very concerned about. Like I don't feel at risk, I guess is what I'm saying.

Kacie: Okay. And sometimes these things can kind of, you know, progress over time and, um, I'm wondering, you know, from your perspective, like what, what, what were some of those warning signs that you noticed when you were in those depressive states previously, um, that could be concerning? Or an idea that maybe, you know, because you're saying like some of the isolation and some of the withdrawal, um, that you're experiencing now, just being aware of that. So what, um, is any of this kind of something you've experienced before and where that's led for you?

Ella: Um, yeah. I mean, I could see withdrawing as being part of that, just apathy in general, you know. Okay. Feeling withdrawn. Feeling apathetic. Feeling unmotivated. And I still, I feel like I still have the passion, the motivation, especially like, in the program and with my beliefs, and I've still been expressing that, but it has been a little disheartening, you know, to be stuck in a space where I feel invalidated consistently.

Kacie: Yeah. Yeah. Um, what, what are ways that have felt helpful when in the past to cope with some of those feelings that maybe potentially could be helpful for you now?

Ella: Um, I would be open to receiving counseling resources.

Kacie: Okay. Have you been in counseling before? Have you ever participated in therapy?

Ella: Yeah, yeah, I have.

Kacie: Okay, and what's that experience been like for you? What have you found, you know, to be helpful or maybe something different that you need.

Ella: Um, it's been a mostly positive experience, you know, just being in an environment that can actively, um, offer me coping mechanisms that I might not as easily find on my own.

Kacie: Okay. What are some of those coping mechanisms that have, um, you know, historically been helpful for you?

Ella: Um, finding community. I mean, honestly, my involvement online is part of that.

Kacie: Okay. Um, what about, um, in-person community? Where, where are you able to kind of find that self?

Ella: Um, that is not really a resource I have as, um, well established in my life at the moment.

Kacie: Okay. Is that feeling challenging, um, both inside and outside the classroom to kind of find that that community.

Ella: Are you asking me if it's difficult in both environments?

Kacie: Yes.

Ella: Um, yeah, I could say so. I think that, I think that's accurate.

Kacie: With the assertiveness around, um, you know - you've said a couple times your assertiveness, uh, sort of personality. How does that display in the classroom? Where do you, um, how do you see yourself kind of expressing your points of view and how that represents, how, how is that represented, you know, to other people?

Ella: Um, I mean, it's mainly come out in classroom discussions.

Kacie: Yeah.

Ella: And especially when my professor is talking about more traditional practices, me just challenging the fact that why is that tradition when we have better options available to us, you know? Um, is that what you're asking? I'm not sure if that was clear.

Kacie: Trying to understand kind of, you know, from, from, um, coming from an a, a description of a being an assertive personality, um, how that translates to the things that you're trying to share, your beliefs that you are trying to help people understand and maybe where that's, um, feeling challenged in the classroom and talking about, you know, your, your difficulties with this particular professor that you're feeling invalidated by.

Ella: Yeah.

Kacie: Um, and how that's, how that's coming across.

Ella: Well, for example, we were having a class discussion the other day where I was challenging him on traditional funeral practices. And he called me naive and dismissed me with no real further discussion than that. So that would be an example of feeling invalidated and disrespected. And, you know, not having the dialogue met.

Kacie: And during that discussion, um, 'cause it's sounding like you, there wasn't much, um, follow up to that. There was a comment maybe that was made after something that you participated or that you offered, um, as a point of view.

Ella: Yeah. And then moved on.

Kacie: Okay. Have you ever tried to approach the professor and, and talk to them, um, about, you know, some of your concerns and feelings that you're having in the classroom?

Ella: Yeah. I've sent multiple emails, um, and none of them have been returned. Like I've tried repeatedly to open this dialogue and cited my concerns and my frustrations.

Kacie: Okay. What would it be like for you to, for this to continue if, if the professor was not communicative or didn't respond, what would happen then?

Ella: Well, I mean, the thing is, is that I'm kind of stuck because I have to take this program to be certified. Like this is not an elective option to me. So I kind of just have to deal with it either way. But it's becoming really, really difficult to do that. And very stressful.

Kacie: And stressful it sounds like. Um, and what happens when things are feeling particularly stressful, you know, how do you deal with that? How do you manage it?

Ella: Well, I feel like I've kind of been going into a little bit of a shutdown, if anything lately over it.

Kacie: Yeah. Okay. So you've, you've mentioned, um, feeling withdrawn and isolated and shutting down. Um. And, and obviously we want, we want you to be in a place where you can feel, um, that you have the support of, of people and of, um, resources on campus. And so what are, what is your goal or kind of what are you hoping to accomplish? Um, you know, challenges with maybe the, the professor and different points of view. If that continues or if that continues to feel like a challenge in your course, um, where does that leave you and how do you, how do you want some help for that?

Ella: Well, I would just like there to be some accountability, I feel like more than anything for the way that he has dismissed me and I feel like also other students to some extent.

Speaker: Okay.

Ella: But other than that, I mean, like I said, I do feel a little stuck because I have to change the program, so.

Kacie: What would accountability look like?

Ella: Um, changed behavior, honestly. Okay. Just a recognition of mm-hmm. The mode of behavior that has persisted up to this point. And a commitment to change behavior.

Kacie: Mm-hmm. Okay. Commitment to change behavior on the, um, professor's behalf.

Ella: I, I mean, I guess that's what I'm discussing. Yes.

Kacie: Mm-hmm. And are there behaviors or modifications that you can you see yourself making in this process? Or are those things that, um, that you feel are not something that you want to consider?

Ella: Well, I mean, I don't feel like I should be put in a position where I'm not allowed to challenge somebody's beliefs, you know, especially in an educational environment. As a professor, an educational professional, you should be able to back your claims without just invalidating your students for disagreeing with you, and then side-stepping it. You know?

Kacie: Yeah.

Ella: Like it's supposed to be an exchange of ideas.

Kacie: It sounds like it feels very frustrating for you when you're trying to share a perspective and it's not being met, um, in a way that you want it to be. What would it look like for you to, to get the response that you want? What are you hoping for?

Ella: Um, more than anything, I'm just hoping for a dialogue, you know, like. Is that, um, am I understanding?

Kacie: Yeah. A dialogue, uh, between you and your professor, between you and other people, your peers, you know, is it, is it being felt like, what does validation feel like for you?

Ella: I feel like validation would just be not being inherently called naive for having a dissenting opinion. You know? And that's what I mean by dialogue. It's like if I make, if I disagree with something and I make that clear, that's an opportunity to have a dialogue about it and either back up your claims and teach me something, I don't know or consider other options and other alternatives.

Kacie: Yeah. Have you had challenges like this before with other professors or in any of your other courses? Is this something that you're seeing um, in other areas?

Ella: Um, I mean, like I said, I'm, I can be aware of the fact that I come across as assertive and that I can put people on the defensive. So sure, like I felt those same pushbacks in other areas of my life, but never to this extent, not to the point that I feel like it's affecting my academics, my grades, and also my general wellbeing, you know?

Kacie: Okay. Um, intensity. It sounds like the intensity is feeling a little bit, um, more escalated than it has previously before.

Ella: Yeah. Correct.

Kacie: Um, how do you, uh, perceive things, your wellbeing overall, kind of, um, getting better or progressing in a way that feels validating in the classroom. Also, um, you know, taking care of yourself in, in your life as a whole?

Ella: I'm sorry, can you repeat that for me?

Kacie: Yeah, sorry, it was a little, it was a little choppy, that question. Um, how do you see yourself kind of progressing forward? Um, if things were to stay the same right now, how do you see yourself progressing forward so that this particular situation is, is not impacting your wellbeing, um, as substantially as it is currently.

Ella: I feel like for this to not be impacting my wellbeing as substantially, I would just like there to be some accountability and change behavior. I just don't feel like as a student, I should feel inherently disrespected and validated in the classroom, and if that behavior is to persist, I don't really see an option where I'm not being impacted by it. Does that make sense?

Kacie: Absolutely. Yeah, it does make sense. Thank you for sharing that. I appreciate, um, you know, you being honest about where you're feeling and how you're feeling these things. Um, I just wanna touch base back a little bit on, you know, your interaction with, with other people. And you, you mentioned earlier talking, um, with, in a group chat about how other people feel and that they're feeling the same way as you, but not speaking up. Um, and so I'm just trying to

help you, um, or help understand where you're kind of getting some of that, um, support or idea that maybe people are feeling the way that they're feeling.

Ella: Yeah. Um, I had a group chat discussion semi recently, where, um, sorry, let me find it. I brought this with me too, if that's okay.

Kacie: Students bring up their phones all the time to show me group chats, so it's completely. Completely fine.

Ella: Yeah. I mean, so I've had this, I don't wanna call anybody out by name. Just to protect their privacy. But I was in this group chat discussion and people did also make comments like they didn't love the class either, that they felt like he seemed irritated when people pushed back or challenged him. Um. And people just in general expressing some of the same feelings of feeling restricted and using their voice and invalidated, but also fearing that it would blow up if they said something about that, whereas I've been very vocal.

Kacie: Okay. So your, um, display of how you want things resolved tends to be a little bit more pronounced than some of your cohort. Um, and does it feel, I mean, how does it feel for you to not have that same level of participation, um, that you are hoping, you know, from your peers?

Ella: Um, it's frustrating. It's also isolating. I feel like that's a lot of where I'm also coming from that.

Kacie: Yeah. I hear you saying that a lot. The isolation piece feels pretty prevalent.

Ella: I mean, as an individual, I feel like it's a lot easier for me to be dismissed or ignored. I feel like if more people who also have similar concerns were to add their voice to this, then like it would maybe get a little more attention or be taken seriously. So it's felt a little helpless to be honest.

Michael: So Ella, I just wanna jump in if that's okay. And thank you for being so open with Kacie. Um, when you're feeling this helplessness and you said you're feeling isolated, is there anyone that you feel like you can reach out to or anything you can do to kind of get yourself more motivated or unstuck, if you will?

Ella: Um, I mean, like I said, I'm very active online. Like most of my community support is in those avenue, those venues. Um, I don't feel like I have a lot of in life support, honestly. That is something that is kinda lacking for me.

Michael: Okay. And I know you said that you would be open to counseling if you know Kacie were to, or if we were to help you get set up with that. Um. Oh, if for example, Kacie asked you if things weren't to change as far as the classroom, right, if the professor continues this way, you feel like you'd still kind of be stuck. So when would be the time where you feel like it's, you need to get help? Like what would you be experiencing in that moment where maybe you should reach out to somebody to get more of a crisis help, like you had said earlier?

Ella: Well, I'm not sure. I mean, I don't feel like I'm in crisis at this point. Like I don't have thoughts of harming myself I, or active plans to harm myself or anyone else. So it's just not really relatable to me, like at this point in time, and I'm not honestly really concerned about it reaching that level either.

Michael: Okay.

Ella: But it is, I mean, I do feel like this is an unsustainable situation, but I'm not worried about it coming to the point of a call to violence.

Michael: Okay. Well you said it feels unsustainable, but, and earlier you did mention how it's time to make waves and that you felt like you did that by contacting the dean, but you haven't really heard back. So how else do you plan on making waves then?

Ella: I did not contact the dean. I contacted my professor and haven't heard back.

Michael: Oh, sorry, professor.

Ella: Yeah.

Michael: Um, you didn't hear back from your professor?

Ella: Yes.

Michael: Sorry, I mis – My apologies.

Ella: I've contacted him multiple times about this, and he hasn't returned that dialogue.

Michael: Right. But you, you had said that it's time to make waves, so how else do you plan on making waves?

Ella: Well, I don't know. I mean, I was trying, I was trying to contact the dean with a group of other people so that we could all bring our concerns up, but that didn't really pan out, and I'm not sure that I'm really feeling very, um, hopeful about just doing that as an individual and it going anywhere either. So I'm not really sure what else to pursue at this point in time.

Michael: Okay. Well, I'm sorry to feel like you're, you're not having much hope in this situation if you were to go yourself. Um, but if you are this concern, why not present it yourself to the dean? Like if that is, if you feel like that is the next step,

Ella: Well, what do you feel like the next step is? Like what do you feel would be a pragmatic solution?

Michael: Well, my concern is that you said that you're, you're expressing these things online and you don't like, have much support in the classroom.

Ella: Yeah.

Michael: So, and if there is anything you could adjust on your end in the class, right? If you're saying that you try to approach your professor on these things, you try to have this open dialogue and you feel like you're not quite getting that back and you've had that experience in the past. So what would be the negative on your end if maybe you just didn't try to have these conversations with this professor, this particular professor.

Ella: Well, I guess I do have concerns about if I just contact the dean independently by myself, that that is potentially going to set me up to be targeted more, rather than if I was able to do that with a group of people and have more community support backing me, like I am a little bit

worried about that backfiring and just, um, putting me in a position where I'm being used as an example, if that makes sense.

Michael: Mm-hmm. If you don't engage with him, what, how do you think you would still be made an example of like, has that occurred?

Ella: I engage with the dean, or -

Michael: Sorry, if you don't engage with this professor during class, how are you still being made an example of like, has that occurred in some way that we haven't discussed?

Ella: Um, I'm not sure that I understand the question. I mean, I think that it would be really unfair for me and my educational experience to just be expected to not engage in a class to just keep the peace, you know, like, I don't feel like that is a reasonable thing to request of a student at all.

Michael: I'm sorry. I mean, um, there's certain things that you want to challenge him on, you said to have dialogue with, but it seems like that that isn't quite happening. So what would be the negative on your end if you didn't initiate those dialogues?

Ella: Well, feeling silenced I think is how that would be the negative of how that would feel.

Michael: Is there any other avenue where you could get your expression out, do you think?

Ella: Um. I mean, I do express these things online and in the communities that I'm involved in, but I also feel like it's an inherently expected of my educational experience to be in exchange of ideas and ideals and the idea that I shouldn't feel comfortable or, um, what's the word I'm looking for? That I shouldn't be able to just bring this up in class, I think is inherently really problematic. You know, because the whole thing about the educational experience should be learning from each other and sharing ideas and those ideas being challenged sometimes. And if you have a firm enough position in your ideals, you should be able to support them.

Michael: You said that you, you had these views in other classes and you tend to challenge professors or have these discussions in other classes and what have you maybe done in these other classes that you haven't quite applied to this class that might be helpful?

Ella: I don't, I don't really know how to answer that. I don't really feel like I have done things differently.

Michael: Okay. Okay.

Kacie: Ella, with this particular professor, 'cause it sounds like this is happening really with this one particular professor that you're feeling, um, kind of invalidated in this particular class. Um, have you had experience with, with them before? Have you ever taken this professor's courses previously in your, um, in your time here at the university or you know, in general, you know, kind of what are your feelings about this particular professor that maybe are feeling different?

Ella: Um, I don't have prior experience with him, so this is the first time that I've been in his classroom. Um, I mean, like I said, my, my experience with him is mainly feeling dismissed and invalidated. Um, I feel like he's had a lot - He felt very arrogant to me and very condescending.

Kacie: What are some of the experiences that you do in class? I mean, what, uh, is the class, is the class mostly lecture based? Are there experiences, um, that you do in the classroom? Um, you know, kind of what's the, what's the overall picture of what that class entails?

Ella: Um, well, it's definitely a mix of both, but I feel like, uh, where these issues have come out more than anything have been in lecture situations. Yeah.

Kacie: Okay. And is it relevant to like one particular topic that you're feeling challenged by this, this professor on?

Ella: Um, I mean, it's, I guess it's mainly between a few, it's mainly the commercialization of the funeral industry. And also the inherent environmental risk of traditional funeral practice.

Kacie: Mm-hmm. So that whole system, I mean, expands beyond just the professor, right? And so there's a, there's a larger picture here. Um, and so I'm kind of wondering, you know, after you move out of this particular course how does that sit with you? Or how do you see yourself kind of managing the, um, different perspectives from the, from the industry as a whole, um, and moving forward so that you can feel successful and you can feel that you're making, um, you know, an impact in a way that that feels aligned with your beliefs?

Ella: Once I'm certified, I can open my own practice and essentially offer, not offer whatever I want, so.

Kacie: Okay.

Ella: I have a lot more autonomy in that situation than I do where I'm at right now.

Kacie: Yeah. How long does that take to, to certification? How long is the program?

Ella: Um, I'm in my third year. I have one left.

Kacie: Okay. Okay. So you still have some time to, you know, kind of work through some of the, um, differing point of views from, um, from people in the industry or where people that you're kind of collaborating and working with on a daily basis.

Ella: Mm-hmm.

Kacie: Um, and bringing into that kind of assertive personality that you've mentioned a couple of times. Um, are there things that potentially, through that assertiveness could be, um, perceived as, um, concerning or threatening to people that are making it difficult to, um, to feel supported by, because they're feeling a little bit maybe separate from, from your, um, perspective.

Ella: Well, I mean, I think that I don't even necessarily need to feel supported in the sense that I'm agreed with. I would just like to not feel inherently invalidated. Especially by somebody who inherently does have power over me as well, as a professor, you know, it's not really an equal playing field where I'm coming from.

Kacie: So validation is really, really important to you. And, and that's, um, feeling like that's where. You're gonna feel supported is being able to have those, um, conversations, um, in a validating and way that you're being heard.

Ella: Yeah, I, I think that's correct. I would agree with that.

Kacie: Okay, So I wanna just kind of make sure, clarify, um, if there's anything else that you feel you want us to know or that we didn't ask, um, during this meeting that would feel helpful, um, for us to understand?

Ella: Um, I feel like I've been pretty clear and I feel like from this back and forth, you do kind of get where I'm coming from. I guess, um, the main thing that I would just like to see, like I said, is accountability and some kind of commitment to change behavior. And any guidance for resources that I can access at this point to try and pursue that. Because I, I'm kind of outta options, I feel like, like I don't really know where to go from here.

Kacie: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Okay. And so the highest you've been is, um, uh, talking to your professor. You have not spoken to anyone outside of that, correct?

Ella: I have not, no.

Kacie: Alright. Um, what I'm hoping to do, and, and I really do appreciate, we both appreciate your openness today, um, and your willingness to share your perspective. Um, so the next steps is that we wanna kind of just review a little bit about what we talked about today, um, as a team. Um, we do wanna provide you with some additional supports and resources going forward so that you do, you know, know your options, know your, um, access to, to help and support in this particular area and things that you need.

Um, you did mention kind of being open to, to therapy and I think that that could be a really, um, invaluable process for you to participate in, especially 'cause you're talking a little bit about, you know, that isolation and the ability to feel, um, understood and the idea of kind of withdrawing. Obviously we want you to feel that you're, um, supported right now. So having that, um, somebody to talk to and kind of working through some of the process and experience day to day might be helpful.

Um, so we do have some options that we can provide to you to help you. Um, and we can assist in, you know, getting you connected to those resources. Um, and then I would like to schedule a meeting maybe for next week, just to kind of check in, follow up and see if there's anything additional, um, that we can touch upon.

Ella: I would actually really appreciate that. Yeah, just um, the effort to follow up with me and, you know, check back in is actually really helpful. Thank you.

Kacie: You're very welcome. Well, thank you so much for, again, for meeting with us and, um, and being open and sharing today. Thanks.