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The Advocate

*A newsletter from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities
West Chester University*

OSSD Student Resources

Academic Coaching

Academic Coaches work with students on academic and life skills that affect their coursework and academic progress, like self-advocacy, time management, career planning, etc.

Math and Writing Tutoring

Our Tutors help students succeed in their math and writing emphasis courses with one-on-one attention and personalized study strategies.

Adaptive Technology

We offer many forms of Adaptive Technology, including: audio books, e-text, reading technology, dictation programs, notetaking technology, and alternative texts.

Proctoring Center

Students who receive testing accommodations may be able to take their exams in the Proctoring Center, our distraction-free environment.

Mindfulness

For our students with stress and anxiety, we offer guided meditations to help relieve tension and dispel negative thoughts.



Save the Date:

Single Class Withdraw

October 22th

Last day to withdraw from single classes. Talk to your Coach about any classes you're concerned about

OSSD Shadow Day

October 30th

A panel of Student Ambassadors answering high school student's questions.

OSSD Cultural Event

November 6th

Join us at the International Student Country Expo!

Exam Cram

December 4th

On the Wednesday before Finals Week, all OSSD Coaches and Tutors will be available in the proctoring center to help you study.



Reach Your Goals with a Planner!

Your planner setup can be the key to maximizing your productivity and increasing your overall satisfaction with life. Consider these 4 tips for having the most useful planner:

Make your planner part of your routine.

Spend some time with a planner each Sunday evening to put the week ahead into focus. It will provide a useful reminder about your upcoming classes, events and appointments so that you don't get taken by surprise.

Write your assignments down daily.

The **MOMENT** you hear of an assignment you should mark it down in your planner for when it is due. This goes for homework, tests, and other assignments. Write down the corresponding textbook pages and any other information the teacher tells you to include.

Set weekly goals and daily steps to reach them.

Each Monday, ask yourself: What do I want to achieve this week? How can I make that happen? What are the small steps I can take to reach my goal?

Keep it positive and make it fun!

Celebrating the completion of smaller steps towards a larger goal will help you feel better about the time you have spent and motivate you to continue. To customize your planner and make it fun, you can use highlighters, draw pictures, and add motivational quotes or notes.



**The OSSD is coming
to Ram Connect!**

Be on the lookout for us soon

Want to get more out of your notes?



The Livescribe SmartPen records audio while you write, converts handwritten notes into a digital format, and allows you to search and share notes across devices.

SmartPen Tips & Tricks:

- Any audio captured by the SmartPen microphone automatically syncs to what you are writing or drawing. Just tap or click your notes to listen to the accompanying audio.
- SmartPens only work with Livescribe Dot Paper. One free Livescribe notebook comes with your SmartPen rental through the OSSD. If you need more Livescribe Dot paper, you can purchase a notebook online, through the OSSD, or print it for **free** from: https://www.livescribe.com/en-us/support/wifi-smartpen/howto/print_dot_paper.html.
- SmartPen memory full? Archive your notebook onto the Livescribe phone or desktop app. This will save the audio recordings & notes to your app and erase them from the pen's internal memory.
- If you run out of ink in your SmartPen, stop by the OSSD for a free refill!

Sign up to rent a SmartPen & get SmartPen training through the OSSD. Email Lauren at LP919066@wcupa.edu to schedule a session, or stop by the OSSD during our drop-in tech support hours: Mondays 9am - 10:30am & Wednesdays 1pm - 1:30pm.



Tutor Tips



Math

Math can be a stressful and overwhelming, but it can also be exciting and enjoyable! Follow the following tips and tricks when completing homework and taking tests!

1. **Always use a pencil:** It is always wise to use a pencil so that you can erase and change any errors that are made and to keep your work organized.
2. **Show all your work:** Often, math problems have multiple steps. Always show all your steps to keep yourself organized in your head on the paper. Sometimes, professors will even give partial credit for work!
3. **Double check your work:** After completing your homework or test, always go back and double check your work. Don't lose points for those silly mistakes.
4. **Practice Practice Practice!** If you are struggling with a certain type of problem or concept, practice it! Your textbook might have additional problems.
5. **Don't memorize:** If you are in a class that has many equations and formulas, always try to understand them rather than memorize them.
6. **Learn from your mistakes:** Go back and see what you may have missed or gotten wrong on your homework and exam to learn from it so that you don't make the same mistake twice.
7. **Ask for help:** There are multiple places to receive help, including from your professor, peers, or the OSSD!

Writing

Don't know what to say when emailing your professors? This simple guide can help craft the perfect email.

First: Address your professor with a greeting and using their name. Professors appreciate when students are polite and respectful, so a greeting can go a long way.

Next: Make sure they know who you are. If you haven't emailed them much in the past or it's been a while, then you'll want to give your name and what class you have with them. This will help your professor remember you.

Then: Say something pleasant. The nicer you are to your professor, the more inclined they will be to help you.

Next: Explain why you're emailing. This is where you ask your questions or pass along whatever information you need to give them.

Then: Close the email on a grateful note.

Finally: Thank them, and then sign the email with your name.

**Need a
Math
Tutor?**

Contact Lauren at LC904459@wcupa.edu

Contact Veronica at
VM785925@wcupa.edu

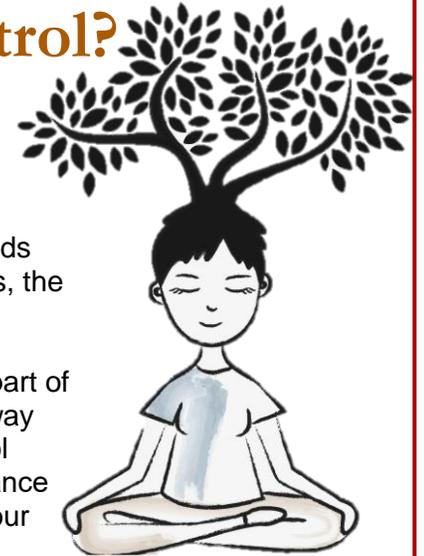
**Need a
Writing Tutor?**

Mindfulness: Is It Thought Control?

The short answer? No.

Students often begin a mindfulness practice to gain control over their thoughts. With the explosion of positive psychology around us, it is easy to see why one might think that meditation may enable us to train our minds into thinking happier thoughts. Although there is an element of truth in this, the reality is a little more complex.

Psychological theory links thoughts, behaviors, and feelings together as part of an intricate process. A practice of mindfulness focuses on changing the way we feel ABOUT the way we think. Medium's article "Stop Trying to Control Your Thoughts" by J.D. Andre eloquently sums up the practice of acceptance by stating, "If you accept that you can't control thoughts, you can focus your efforts on what you can do: you can strengthen awareness of them, and develop the skill of observing mind-made activity without getting caught up in it. In doing so, you learn to interrupt the process that leads to conditioned behavior and habitual actions and reactions" (2014). In the mindfulness meditation sessions at the OSSD we practice the process of decentering ourselves from our thoughts. By understanding that "we are not our thoughts", the emotional charge linked to our thoughts can eventually have less of an effect on our behaviors.



Ask about Mindfulness Meditation at the OSSD! Contact Kaitlin at KM916156@wcupa.edu for more information.

Feeling Stressed or Depressed?

The WCU Counseling Center is a safe place to go if you are experiencing stress, anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns. They offer various therapy groups and short-term individual therapy to address a variety of concerns, as well as psychiatric services. There is no problem too small for the Counseling Center, and the counselors are here to help.

Their counselors are frequently spotted around campus providing workshops and support at various events and classroom presentations. If you are around campus or the Counseling Center, you may also see Muddy Puddles or one of the other therapy dogs that are frequently providing pet therapy services to WCU students.

If you are interested in connecting with a therapist or psychiatrist outside of WCU, their clinical case manager is available to coordinate referrals. If you are interested in seeking services, you can come to **the WCU Counseling Center in Suite 241 of the Lawrence Center between 1 and 3 PM Monday – Friday** for a brief appointment during which a counselor will meet with you to determine how they can be helpful to you!

For more information and a full listing of our services, please visit us on the WCU Counseling Center webpage.



Join the Ambassador Program!

What makes the OSSD special is knowing how much our students take away from our services, whether it be meeting academic goals, improving independence, self-advocacy, or overall confidence. Watching our students achieve these goals makes what we do all the worthwhile.

Our Ambassador program features some of our enthusiastic undergraduate students who are great examples of what the OSSD can do for students. These students help assist us in outreach programs and events with local high school students, who are also diagnosed with a disability. At the events, our students share valuable and personal insights about how the OSSD has helped them achieve their goals and assisted in the making the transition from high school to college go more smoothly.

Our ambassadors also assist us in our annual Transitional Day located in Sykes Student Union, usually at the end of October. This is a larger scale event where several local high schools are invited to attend, and our ambassadors form a panel where they answer any questions the high school students or faculty may have. If you are registered with the OSSD and this sounds appealing to you, please reach out to us to sign up via ossd@wcupa.edu!



A Message from the Career Center

Your career development is important to us!

The Twardowski Career Development Center is a welcoming and open space for students of all majors and all class years. It is never too soon to come to the Career Development Center; the earlier you start engaging in your career development, the better! We strive to inspire and empower you as an individual throughout your career development process. We are here to support your evolving career aspirations. Whether you are exploring a major or minor or considering career options, we have the resources to assist you.

We can help with:

- Exploring majors and careers
- Searching for jobs and internships
- Applying to graduate school
- Interview prep and mock interviews
- Resume and cover letter reviews
- Networking and LinkedIn assistance

How we help:

- 30-minute appointments (in-person or via telephone)
- Drop-in Hours: Monday-Friday from 1pm-3pm
 - No appointment needed – first come, first serve basis
- Special events (networking events, job fairs, panel discussions, etc.)
- *Handshake*: your one-stop-career-shop as a WCU student. Use *Handshake* to schedule an appointment with a career professional, have your resume reviewed, learn more about job and internship opportunities, and much more. (wcupa.joinhandshake.com)



For more information, please visit our website (wcupa.edu/cdc). We are happy to support your career development – now, as students, and in the future, as alumni. Happy Fall semester!



Proctoring Center Fall 2019 Hours



Day	Open	Close
Monday	8:00AM	4:00PM
Tuesday	8:00AM	4:00PM
Wednesday	8:00AM	1:30PM
Thursday	8:00AM	4:00PM
Friday	8:00AM	4:00PM

Attend the OSSD's Fall 2019 Cultural Event!

Every semester, the OSSD attends a cultural event with a select group of students. This semester, students along with the OSSD's graduate assistants will be attending the **International Student Country Expo on November 6th in Sykes Student Union ballroom.**

West Chester students who originate from other countries have a chance to showcase their countries of origin through a table top display. If you have never been exposed to other cultures, or if you want to learn more about them, this is a great way to do that with other peers from the OSSD.

If you are interested in attending the cultural event this semester, please reach out to your academic coach. If you do not have an academic coach email Olivia at OL805353@wcupa.edu

WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

OSSD Cultural Event

**International Student Country Expo
November 6th 2019**

Email your coach to sign up!
No coach? No problem! Email Olivia at
OL805353@wcupa.edu

Meet us at the OSSD at 11 am!

Meet the OSSD Staff!

Director

April Jackson
610-436-2517

Assistant Director

Sharon Watson
610-436-2775

Administrative Assistant

Linda Laskaris
610-436-2564

Academic Coaches

Michael Horvath
Kaitlin McCoale
Veronica Mattaboni
Olivia Laskaris
Liubov Patokina
Lauren Powell

Writing Tutor

Veronica Mattaboni

Math Tutor

Lauren Cooperman

Mindfulness Instructor

Kaitlin McCoale

Proctoring Coordinator

Amanda Martin

Proctors

Liubov Patokina
Kaitlin McCoale

CART Captioner

Susan Durkovic

Technology Assistants

Bryan Jones
Lauren Powell

Contact us

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