

SPRING 2020

# 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

**March 24th**

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

### OSSD Cultural Event

**April 15th**

Come with the OSSD to Longwood Gardens! Free for OSSD registered students.

### Exam Cram

**April 29th**

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

### Last Day of the Semester

**May 4th**

After this date, it will officially be finals week!

# Stay Well This Season



The college environment has more than its share of stressors. With changes in temperature as we transition from winter to spring and the population-dense setting of campus, students can be particularly vulnerable to falling ill as coursework pressure intensifies during the semester. But never fear! You can use these tips to maintain your physical and mental health.

**Eat well.** Resist the urge to eat salty snacks and guzzle sweet drinks! Try switching to a whole grain, high fiber snack instead. Step away from the desk to eat so that you can have a moment to relax and notice your fullness levels.

**Exercise.** One of the first things we neglect when we become stressed is our exercise routine. However, exercise is proven to help relieve stress. Set a schedule and STICK to it.

**Get professional help.** If you are feeling that your stress level is overwhelming your ability to cope, reach out for help. Students at WCU are entitled to a semester of counseling on campus-use it!

**SLEEP.** Stress can make it difficult to sleep but staying up late to finish work typically leads to worse quality. Keep the same schedule on weekends as your do on weekdays.

**Move towards rather than away from anxiety.** Make a list in order of priority and take action! Even small steps towards completing a project or resolving a problem can help you feel more in control.

**Remember that you are enough.** Although passing your classes is the ultimate goal, remember: getting caught in the perfectionist trap is not worth the toll on your psychological mental health. Strip your to-do list down to essentials and give yourself time to recharge. Sign up for Mindfulness weekly at the OSSD.

Stress, Anxiety, or Depression:  
see the Counseling Center

Suite 241 of the Lawrence Center  
Triage is from 1pm to 3pm Monday - Friday



## Do You Have an Academic Coach?

Students registered with the OSSD have the opportunity to use a variety of our services, with one of the main services offered being Academic Coaching.

There are several well-known benefits of receiving Academic Coaching. These benefits include improving areas such as: time management, organization, motivation, study strategies, note taking, self-advocacy, and other areas. Students identify goals they would like to achieve when they first met for coaching, and then sessions from there are tailored to that student's specific strengths and weaknesses.

If you are currently registered with us, we highly recommend signing up for Academic Coaching. It's proven students utilizing coaching receive better grades and having more success achieving their goals.

**The numbers show that 64% of OSSD students who receive Academic Coaching have at least a 3.0 GPA or higher.**

A higher GPA is obviously a good thing to have and always to strive for, but that's not the only goal of Academic Coaching. Coaching is also intended to translate over into your future career and personal life outside of WCU schoolwork. If you are an OSSD student, please stop in our office and ask about receiving an Academic Coach!



# Tutor Tips: English



## Stay Focused for Better Reading Comprehension

Many students struggle to focus when it comes to reading textbooks and long assignments. Here are a couple tips to keep you reinvigorated while reading:

**Read in small bites:** If a textbook chapter typically takes you 4 hours to read, break it down into sizeable chunks of 1 hour. Come up with a “reading plan”, and do your best to stick to it.

**Give yourself enough time:** Determine how many pages you need to read first. If a chapter is 10 pages, you may only need one hour to read it. But if an assignment requires you to read 40 pages, give yourself four hours to read it.

**Take a break:** Be sure to schedule short breaks during your reading sessions to reward yourself. Taking short breaks is a good way to both reward yourself for the progress you have made, and come back focused for the next reading session.

**Manage interruptions:** First try to find a good place to study. The library, coffee shops, book stores, school lounges, empty classrooms, or the local park or community center are a few good options to consider.

**Deal with mental distractions:** If you have a thought or problem repeatedly popping into your mind, try developing an action-oriented strategy to deal with it. Putting your problem into words and writing down your strategy can help you to put it out of your mind.

## How to Make a Works Cited Page

If you’re taking a writing emphasis course, then there’s a good chance you’ll have to write a paper with a Works Cited page. If you’ve never done a Works Cited page before or are unsure of how to do one, here are some things you need to know:

### Rules for creating an MLA Works Cited page

- The Works Cited should start on its own page. Insert a page break after the last paragraph of your paper to start a new page.
- The words “Works Cited” should be at the very top of the page, center-aligned.
- Text must be double-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font, just like the rest of your paper.
- Citations must be in alphabetical order.
- If a citation goes onto a second line, that second line must be indented a half an inch. You can do this using the ruler at the top of the document. If you don’t know how, look it up on Google.

### Remember

- If you’re not sure the Works Cited page is 100% correct, take it to the Writing Center to have a tutor double check it for you.
- Purdue Owl can answer any questions you have about how to cite your sources:  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html)

Need help with an ENG, WRT, or writing emphasis course?  
Contact Veronica at [VM785925@wcupa.edu](mailto:VM785925@wcupa.edu) for tutoring



# Tutor Tips: Math



Math can be a tedious and difficult subject to learn as there are numerous different formulas and strategies for solving problems! To solve problems accurately, one should always take their time, show all their work, and double check their answers. Math is not everyone's cup of tea, and that is totally okay! There are numerous different resources on campus to help someone, including tutoring through the OSSD, LARC, the Math Department, and the online program SMARTthink.

Some things to remember when tackling math problems:

If applicable, always start solving a problem by writing the formula you will be using above your work.

Sometimes, there is more than one way to solve a problem to get the same answer, and that is okay. Solving a problem using multiple strategies is an excellent way to double-check your work.

Think about the problem logically when solving it by asking yourself: Does this answer make sense? This strategy is especially helpful when doing word problems.

If applicable, always draw a picture and label everything to help keep you organized.

When using a calculator, make sure that you are inputting everything correctly. Remember that there is a distinct difference between  $(-2)^3$  and  $- (2)^3$ . Parenthesis matter.

Contact Lauren at [LC904459@wcupa.edu](mailto:LC904459@wcupa.edu) for math tutoring!



## Struggling to be Productive? Try FocusMate!

Even when we have our research out, our books open, or make our way to the library, it can be hard to actually work on what we have set out to. That's where FocusMate comes in.

FocusMate is a website that pairs you via webcam with another individual who is trying to work. This free service gives you 50 minutes of time with a virtual stranger so that you can both motivate each other to stay on task. You announce your tasks to the person you are paired with, co-work silently, and check back in at the end of the session on what has been completed.

See what accountability can do for you by checking out FocusMate.com!

**The New SmartPen is here!**

Captures everything you hear and write and instantly digitizes it into the Livescribe + app.

Stop by Tech Drop-In hours Mondays 11:30am-12:30pm & Wednesdays 1pm-1:30pm or email Lauren at [LP919066@wcupa.edu](mailto:LP919066@wcupa.edu) to try it out for yourself.



# Managing Your Email Inbox Effectively

If you've ever felt overwhelmed by your inbox, you're not alone. Students receive more than 20 emails per day. Learn how to effectively manage your inbox and set yourself up for success!

- Choose specific times of the day to check your email, then stick to it.
- Use folders within your inbox to organize your mail and keep your inbox clear.
- Any email that you can read and respond to in two minutes or less: do it as soon as you see it.
- If there's an email you need to respond to, but can't get to it right away, flag it so you don't forget.
- Make sure you're responding to all necessary emails within 24 hours of receiving them.
- Emails from professors: follow up and acknowledge that you received and read it.
- Exercise that delete button every now and again with an inbox-spring-cleaning.
- When certain emails are no longer relevant, feel free to delete them. You can always find them again in the trash.



## A Message from Exploratory Studies

Are you struggling in your major? Are you unsure if the major you are in is the right fit for you? Are you completely undecided on which major to choose? If you said yes to any of the above questions, follow the steps below!

**Step 1:** Take a look at all the majors offered at WCU by using the online catalog.

**Step 2:** Determine which major(s) you would not like to pursue.

**Step 3:** Use the online catalog to review the course specific requirements for the majors you would be interested in studying.

**Step 4:** Visit the Career Development Center in 225 Lawrence Center.

**Step 5:** Visit department websites and review handbooks or career information that is available.

**Step 6:** From completing the above steps, you should be able to narrow down the majors of interest to 1-3.

**Step 7:** Finally, schedule an appointment with an advisor in Exploratory Studies. You can schedule an appointment by calling 610-436-3505 or stopping by 222 Lawrence Center.

**Exploratory Studies advisors are faculty members whose job is to help students explore majors and to guide students regarding course selection and grade requirements for those majors. We recognize that choosing a major and career direction is an important step in life, and making this decision is a complex process. Let us help you!**

## Proctoring Center Success Tips:

- 1) Be sure to schedule your exam as soon as possible, but at least one week before the exam date.
- 2) Study, Study, Study! Be sure to schedule time over the week and do not cram the night before.
- 3) If you need help with study skills come meet with an Academic Coach.
- 4) If you need help with math or writing come meet with our Math or Writing Tutors.
- 5) Make sure to get a good night of sleep before your exam.
- 6) If you have extended time for accommodations use it and do not rush yourself.
- 7) Make sure you know what materials you will be allowed access to during the exam, such as, a note card or calculator.
- 8) Make sure to know if you are picking up the exam or if your professor is dropping it off.
- 9) Make sure to know if you are dropping the exam off or if your professor is picking it up.
- 10) Don't forget to try your best!

## Proctoring Center Spring 2020 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



# 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 Mataboni  
Liubov Patokina  
Lauren Powell

## **Writing Tutor**

Veronica Mataboni

## **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

705 South New Street  
223 Lawrence Center  
West Chester University  
West Chester, PA 19380  
610-436-2564 (phone)  
610-436-2600 (fax)



<https://www.wcupa.edu/universityCollege/ossd/>