

# THE HIPPOCAMPUS

THE SMHS OFFICE OF STUDENT SUPPORT NEWSLETTER



## October 2023 Newsletter

Office of Student Support Website



*"Do one thing every day that scares you" - Eleanor Roosevelt*

We hope you are enjoying the start of Fall! We have a few events and reminders to share with you as the semester rolls along.

To schedule a virtual or in-person meeting, contact our office at [SMHSstudents@gwu.edu](mailto:SMHSstudents@gwu.edu).

In this edition of the newsletter, you can find the following:

- OSS and Resiliency & Well-being Center Events
- Academic Support Spotlight - Common Academic Writing Mistakes
- Academic Support Information
- Mental Health Spotlight - Mental Health Awareness Week
- Mental Health Resources
- Student Life Spotlight - Halloween!
- Student Life Resources & Events

---

# OSS and Resiliency & Well-being Center Events

OSS is excited to continue our partnership with the Resiliency & Well-being Center to bring you three wellness events in October and early November!

**Managing Test-Taking Anxiety - October 10th, 12pm (virtual):** In this interactive workshop you will learn about cognitive and behavioral strategies to ease your test-taking anxiety rooted in current theories and evidence-based practices. The link for the workshop can be found [here](#).

**Mind-Body Practice with Sound Bowls - October 25th, 12:15-12:45 (Textile Museum):** Mind-body practice with sound bowls will help you feel your body in a new way and calm your mind. Let the sounds of singing bowls carry you away, restore and recharge your energy and tune your body to a healthier and happier frequency.

This event requires advance registration due to Textile Museum space constraints. To register, please complete [this short form](#). Once you have registered, OSS will confirm your place.

**One Size Doesn't Fit All: Discover Your Learning Style - November 3rd, 12pm (virtual):** In this workshop you will discover different ways people learn and identify your own learning style. We will also discuss how to capitalize on this knowledge and use it in your studies and daily life. The link for the workshop can be found [here](#).

---

## Academic Support

---

### Academic Support Spotlight - of Academic Writing

### Four Quick Features



Putting a Lab Coat on Your Prose: Four Quick Features of Academic Writing

By: [Mark Gurarie, OSS Writing Coach](#)

If you've spent time away from school before returning for graduate study—like I did—you know it takes adjustment to get back into the swing of academic work. Part in parcel to this is adapting and developing your writing skills to the clinical, professional context. I often tell my students the job is to put “a lab coat on your language:” to develop a writing style that communicates your perspective and analysis, while appropriately addressing the field of study and relevant audience. Your work has to look the part!

There's of course, a great deal to keep in mind; grammar, sentence structure, voice, and more. There was a long enough gap between my undergraduate and graduate studies that even formatting standards had changed. It was not until I was in a graduate program (in creative *writing*, no less)—seven years removed from undergrad—that I learned that two spaces are no longer needed after periods. All those extra spaces!

Well, the sheer volume of writing you'll be doing—are already doing!—offers a constant opportunity to develop. No matter your specific course of study, it's critical to appreciate a few things. Perhaps the most important consideration for any piece of prose is *whom it's for*. Obviously, professors are reading your work, but in the academic context, your goals are to speak to fellow researchers, academics, and thinkers about the subject.

As such, academic essays and research papers generally adopt a formal voice, something a little different than what you hear in speech or read in newspapers, magazines, or blogs. But what does this mean? Here are some of the main features:

**Contractions are out:** Don't use contractions like “don't,” “can't,” “wouldn't,” etc. Write these things out fully. Generally, write organizations' names fully at the first usage, followed by the acronym in parentheses as in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). After that, you can just use the abbreviation.

**No addressing the audience:** Formal, scientific writing tends to be in the third-person (in terms of he, she, it, etc.), with first person (I, we) increasingly used when researchers describe methods or analysis. Unlike informal writing, which can be more personal, you shouldn't use “you” or address the reader (unless otherwise instructed).

**No shortcuts:** Alongside work at GW, I am a freelance writer for several popular health websites with a broad audience. The language for that work is simpler and more informal. Which is why I don't always need complete sentences. And I can start them off more readily with contractions like “and,” “but,” etc. There's nice punch to writing like this, but it wouldn't float in an academic context. No shortcuts; make sure every sentence has a subject and verb.

**Focus:** Academic writing, in many ways, is an expression of a thought process: an articulation of your analysis, your ideas, those of others (ahem, with citations!), and so on. Fundamental to this is *organization*: ensuring that your writing has a clear beginning, middle, and end; doing work to be clear about your overall aims, and making sure each paragraph develops one topic and/or idea (not multiple).

Ultimately, no matter the kind of writing you do or your skill level, coming up with compelling, research-driven writing is a demanding task. It takes research, pre-planning, drafting, and relentless editing. Certainly, if your academic writing skills feel rusty—or if you feel need any kind of support with them—live sessions with coaches (like me!) at the Office of Student Services (OSS) can help.

---

## Academic Support Information

**CV Support:** We have a dedicated faculty advisor with whom you can schedule appointments to review and revise your CV. To schedule an appointment, email [OSS](#) with your request and attach any resume or CV documents you may have. If you have never created a CV before, we are happy to work with you and share our template.

If you are looking for instant feedback, OSS offers drop in hours on Tuesdays (12-4pm) and Fridays (12:30-4pm) in Ross 112-B.

**Learning Support:** Our dedicated learning specialist, Terri Edwards, is available to meet with students to discuss active learning strategies, study strategies and scheduling, test taking strategies, and more. To book an appointment with her, please use her [Calendly link](#).

**Peer Tutoring:** If you would like to work with a peer tutor, email [OSS](#) to learn more about peer-led academic support.

**Small Study Groups:** Consider adding small group studying into your academic schedule. OSS assigns students to a study group of 2-5 students; the sessions are facilitated by a student who commits to that role. Groups may choose to meet in person or virtually. Contact [OSS](#) for more information to be a facilitator or participant.

**Writing Coach:** Coaching sessions help students build their writing confidence and develop vital writing skills for writing assignments, personal statements, and professional writing. To receive a referral to the writing coach, please email [OSS](#) directly.

**Himmelfarb Writing Center:** A representative from the GW Writing Center will be providing in-person consultations at the Himmelfarb Library this semester! They will be onsite every Tuesday from 4 pm - 6 pm, beginning October 10th. They can help you with a variety of writing assignments from research reports to cover letters to CVs. The Writing Center table will be located adjacent to the first floor Circulation Desk. The service is free.

Walk-ups are welcome, but appointments are preferred. To make an appointment, visit the [Writing Center website](#). If you are a first-timer, you'll see a link on the page that lets you register for an account. If you are an online student, or would simply prefer a remote consultation, you'll see an option to request a virtual consultation.

---

## Mental Health

---



## Mental Health Spotlight - Mental Health Awareness Week

October brings a host of meaningful observances that touch upon various aspects of our lives. OSS is here to support you through every challenge and celebration. This month, with our partners at Talkspace, we're recognizing several important events that are close to our hearts.

**Mental Health Awareness Week:** October 2nd through 6th is Mental Health Awareness Week. It is a time to raise awareness of mental illness, its symptoms, and prevalence in society. Know you're not alone.

If you are looking for ways to raise awareness, break stigma, and promote understanding, consider reaching out to friends, family, or coworkers who may be struggling. Offer your support, a listening ear, or assistance in finding resources if needed.

You could also consider more formal advocacy routes, such as volunteering with mental health organizations or contacting your elected representatives.

Other key observances in October include:

**World Mental Health Day:** October 10th is the World Health Organization's annual World Mental Health day to raise global awareness and action on mental health. [This year](#), the theme is **Mental Health is a universal human right**.

**National Coming Out Day:** October 11th is National Coming Out Day, a time to celebrate LGBTQ+ individuals and show support for those who may still be on their journey. If you are struggling with the decision to come out, [Talkspace has some guidance](#) that may be helpful to you.

**Domestic Violence Awareness Month:** [October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#), which highlights an opportunity to support survivors and share resources. If you or someone you know is affected by domestic violence, please seek help and support.

---

## Mental Health Resources

**Talkspace:** As educators of our future healthcare professionals, we know how important mental health is and are pleased to offer all SMHS students a **free** subscription to Talkspace. Talkspace offers unlimited text messaging and four 30-minute video sessions a month with a licensed therapist and is a convenient, clinically effective, and confidential service. You will be matched with a therapist that suits you and your needs via a special algorithm. To register, go to [www.talkspace.com/gwu](http://www.talkspace.com/gwu) and input your GW email address. [Medical Residents should **NOT** use their MFA email address] After you are registered and matched with your therapist, you can schedule an *optional* 10-minute live video introduction session. Students who experience difficulty registering should contact [partners-support@talkspace.com](mailto:partners-support@talkspace.com) and cc Alex Velto ([alex.velto@gwu.edu](mailto:alex.velto@gwu.edu)).

Please note that after **a year** of using the platform, you will need to revalidate your account. Go to the 'Check my coverage' feature found in your Talkspace app settings - and follow the prompts provided. If you prefer to remain connected to your current therapist, you will have to reach out to [partners-support@talkspace.com](mailto:partners-support@talkspace.com) to validate instead.

**Student Health Center:** The [Student Health Center](#) (formally CHC) is open and operating to assist students seeking medical, psychiatric, counseling, and psychological services. Physicians and counselors provide in-person treatment in the office, and virtual appointments are offered during regular business hours. Call 202-994-5300 to schedule an appointment.

Hours:

Monday – Friday: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm (ET); extended hours until 7pm on Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Saturday: 12:00 pm-4:00 pm

Sunday: 12:00 pm-4:00 pm on the Mount Vernon Campus

**Resiliency and Well-Being Center:** OSS frequently collaborates with the GW RW&C on matters related to individual and group well-being. The R&W Center takes an evidence-based, whole-person [approach](#) in the health and wellness (well-being) services it provides to the GW medical enterprise—SMHS, GW MFA, and the GW Hospital. The R&W Center provides individual, departmental, and institutional-level [services](#).

Additional Resiliency and Well-Being Center workshop information in September can be found [here](#).

---

## Student & Community Life



---

## Student & Community Life Spotlight - Halloween!

While the roots of Halloween trace back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, Halloween today is an holiday enjoyed by many around the world, and SMHS is no different! Below you can find the various events set up by OSS and the Student Wellness Committee to get the full Halloween experience:

**Student Wellness Committee Movie Night:** The Student Wellness Committee will be showing *Halloweentown* in the Ross Hall student lounge (Ross 109) on 10/31 starting at 6:00pm. All SMHS students have access to the lounge, and movie theater snacks (popcorn, candy, soda) will be served. Costumes are encouraged, but not required!

**Trick or Treat with OSS:** Stop by Ross 112-B any time on 10/31 for Halloween candy! We promise there won't be raisins.

**Halloween Costume Contest:** Starting 10/25 and running through 11/1, you can submit a picture of yourself in costume to OSS for a chance to win a gift card! To submit, either stop in to Ross 112-B or submit a picture through a webform. More details, including the webform, will be distributed later in the month. Winners will be recognized in the November newsletter.

---

## Community Engagement and Events

**Student Wellness Committee:** Student-led organization with membership available to all students. For information on how to join the Student Wellness Committee, or to send suggestions/ideas for wellness events, please send them [an email](#) or follow them on Instagram at [@bewellgw](#).

**OSS on the Move:** The week of October 2nd, OSS will be set up in various locations around GW. Come find us for candy and giveaways! Our locations are below:

- October 3rd: 2000 Penn, 12:00-1:30pm
- October 4th: Occupational Therapy Suite, Watergate Building, 3:00-4:00pm
- October 5th: Virginia Science and Technology Campus, Discovery Hall, 9:00am-3:00pm
- October 6th: 2000 Penn, 12:30-4:00pm (regular Friday CV drop-in hours)

Come visit us all other times in Ross Hall 112-B.

**Office of Student Support Website**

[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™  
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.  
View this email [online](#).

2300 I St NW | Washington DC, DC 20052 US

This email was sent to .  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.