

Mental Health and Stress Management During the Changing Times/COVID-19: MANAGING YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

We all respond differently when we find ourselves in stressful situations. Due to the well-known pandemic distress, COVID-19 (Coronavirus) can cause overwhelming thoughts of uncertainty as well as anxiety. Students all over the world are dealing with sudden changes to their normal routine, schedules, such as having to leave their campuses suddenly in March 2020.

Staying Connected with Us During the Coronavirus Pandemic

Grambling State University is committed to the mental health and safety of all the members of the campus community; as such, we are currently operating remotely for semester in support of social distancing.

Counseling Services staff will be regularly checking email (willish@gram.edu) as well any voicemail sent. You may contact us (318- 274 -3277) Monday through Thursday 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM and Friday & 7:30 AM until 11:30.

Students should use email or voice mail to schedule an appointment, or to ask to speak to a therapist to address questions. Personal concerns will be addressed with a mental health provider by phone or video chat/Teams, and ZOOM, but not by email. Please include a name and phone number where you can be reached.

For all emergency and urgent situations (i.e., thoughts of hurting yourself or others, feeling an imminent risk to yourself), DO NOT leave a message, call GSU Police Station at 318-274-2222 or call 911.

By contacting Student Counseling and Wellness Resource Center (SCWRC) or scheduling a phone or virtual appointment, you are consenting to receive a response and/or services from SCWRC electronically or digitally.

Due to Louisiana regulations and licensing board statutes, staff might be unable to provide clinical services to you, depending on where you currently reside. In these cases, we will help you to identify resources in your area. Please reach out to campus or local resources for help if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

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Identifying Warning Signs of Distress – A Self-Checklist*

- Excessive worry, fear, and/or feelings of being “stressed” or overwhelmed.
- Persistent sadness, tearfulness, and/or loss of interest in pleasurable activities.
- Feelings of hopelessness and/or dread about the future.
- Unexplained physical symptoms, such as an upset stomach, increased heart rate, nausea, fatigue, etc.
- Increased anger, irritability, agitation and/or disruptive behaviors.
- Inability to concentrate or focus.
- Significant changes in sleep, appetite and/or self-care.
- Social isolation or withdrawal.
- Fear or avoidance of public spaces.
- Thoughts about death, dying and/or suicide.
- Impulsive, reckless or risky behaviors (substance abuse, self-injury, etc.)

It is ordinary and appropriate to experience fear during situations like these. It is also important to know how to manage overwhelming anxiety and keep perspective as the situation unfolds. Here are some resources and tips that may be helpful:

Care For Your Coronavirus Anxiety

Helpful Resources for COVID-19 Anxiety

[Put the Counseling Center webpage and Intake form Here](#)

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has guidance on managing mental health and coping during COVID-19. Recommendations include taking actions that can help you de-stress and shift toward a more productive way of living.

CDC Guidelines to Manage Anxiety and Stress

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Things you can do to support yourself:

- Acknowledge your emotional responses. Give yourself time to reflect on these and think about how you might be coping with your feelings.
- Develop and maintain regular routines and activities such as exercising or studying at regular times during the days.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories. It can be upsetting to hear about the crisis and see images repeatedly.
- Connect with others. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships.
- Maintain a sense of hope and positive thinking.

Resources:

GSU SCWRC is dedicated to helping students have the best experience while here at GSU. Our offices will follow the recommendations of university administration, and so will be open when the university is open. If you studying in another state and working online during these next few weeks, we encourage you to find a provider close to your current location, with whom you may stay in treatment if remote learning continues throughout the rest of the semester. The link below will help you identify treatment facilities and community therapists in your area.

Find Treatment in Your Area

<https://www.opencounseling.com/public-mental-health-la#two> and please continue to check your GSU email for updates to university policies and recommendations.

***If you or someone you know is experiencing a medical or psychological emergency, and you are ON CAMPUS, contact Public Safety at 318-274-2222.**

***If you or someone you know is having a medical or psychological emergency, and you are OFF CAMPUS, dial 911 or go to your local emergency room.**