

**COUNSELING &
STUDENT SUCCESS
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Counseling Corner

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

SPRING 2014

LOOK FOR OUR FUTURE
WORKSHOPS ON:

- Career Choices
- Time Management
- Stress & Anxiety Reduction
- Career Discovery Group
- Career Choices
- Strategies to Deal w/Life
- How to be a Teacher's Pet
- Study/Test Taking Strategies

IMPORTANT NEWS

We are now also orchestrating a Project Success Program for the spring semester. If you have any questions about the Project Success program in general or about a specific semester please contact John Urgola at (973) 328- 5140 or projectsuccess@ccm.edu

THE DISRUPTIVE STUDENT & THE HIDDEN DISABILITY



Have you ever had a student in your class and wondered, “What in the world is this student thinking?” We know it can be common for students to be challenging in a variety of ways. For some students it could be a mental illness or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ie. Asperger's Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD), Autism, etc.), commonly referred to as a hidden disability; which can be a sole contributor for a student’s behavior and actions. In many cases the disability may mask who the student truly is causing them to look differently to a spectator. It is important to be aware that there is no magic wand to alter a student’s behavior overnight, especially if this student has behaved in such a way for most of their educational career. It can be easy to forget that high school students with certain disabilities had massive support, (in class aid, etc.) but support in college is different and less intensive which can be a culture shock for many students. “Bad” or unusual behavior is usually triggered by something we are not aware of that may be happening. Really heightened anxiety or experiencing over stimulation are a few possibilities for significant change in behavior. Although it may cause uneasiness to address some of these situations with students, taking the initiative to speak with the student about the concern is the first step in solving the problem. Speaking to the student usually creates more of a rapport in the student/professor relationship showing the student that their academic success is a primary concern. In some cases if one were to address a student about the “unwanted behavior” they are demonstrating in the classroom, the student may be more open to discuss their disability which could lead to a more positive outcome; ending or redirecting the unwanted behavior. It is important to keep in mind that other students may have difficulty divulging such personal information due to embarrassment or fear of being treated differently, which can impede change in the classroom.

If change is not observed once discussion about the student’s behavior has taken place, then one solution is to reach out to the Office of Counseling & Student Success. Our counselors can help identify strategies to help alleviate the unwanted behavior and create the classroom to become more cohesive. A recent example of a student causing a disruption in class would be if a student “acts out” when they receive bad news of a poor grade. One solution could be to give exam results back toward the end of class being mindful that giving back a test in the beginning of the class can have an adverse affect on the learning environment. If the strategies developed does not deliver the desired behavior in the classroom, then formal referral of the student to the office of Counseling and Student Success may be warranted. Utilizing the Retention Alert Program and requesting the counselor who already assisted with the behavioral strategies (if already working with a counselor) can help foster a team of supports to help the student as a whole. We can address this behavioral problem with the student and come up with alternatives to help them succeed in the classroom. Working with a student’s behavior is a process that’s continuously changing. Since some students adapt quicker and others can take longer, there is no way to know the time line. Whether it’s a longer or shorter process, our goal is to work with the student in hopes of seeing changes in behavior and in turn create a successful learning environment for our students.

Have Suggestions or Ideas for Student or Faculty Workshops?

Is there anything you would like to learn more about? Whether it's how to be heard in a classroom or learn more about psycho-education, we want to be able to offer workshops specific to your needs and interests.

Have an idea for student workshops? Let us know and we will try to accommodate these requests: (973) 328-5140/ counseling@ccm.edu

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!

Finals are almost here, creating potential for a stressful environment. Here are a few tips that can help:

1. Don't Forget to Breathe— The deeper the breath the more oxygen delivered to the brain and the the more relaxed you will feel.
2. Take a walk- It's getting warmer out so enjoy the fresh air by taking a walk to re-energize your mind and body
3. Make time for fun— Be sure to remember to take "ME" time to help prevent burnout and feeling overwhelmed.

Meet Our Newest Counselor Kaitlin Najjar!

Kaitlin has worked in higher education for the past 4 years, and serves as a Counselor in the office of Counseling and Student Success. Kaitlin earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Rutgers University, and graduated with a Master's Degree in Counselor Education from The College of New Jersey. Prior to working at CCM, Kaitlin worked as a Student Development Specialist at Union County College. During this time, Kaitlin applied for and is now a Licensed Associate Counselor in the state of New Jersey with the goal of earning the title of Licensed Professional Counselor in the near future.

Kaitlin takes on a holistic approach while working with students. She meets the student where they are developmentally, and assists them in achieving personal, social and academic success. She has experience working with building self-esteem and self-worth, assisting with establishing healthy relationships, drug and alcohol intervention and referral, anxiety and stress management, and crisis intervention. Kaitlin enjoys being outside, the Jersey shore, running, biking, reading, watching comedies and being with family and friends. Kaitlin is very excited to be working as a counselor at County College of Morris!



DID YOU KNOW...

The Office of Counseling & Student Success is also a referral resource center? We are aware of in-community resources that can help support those in various situations. If we don't have the answers we will channel the right avenues to get the answers and resources appropriate and available for the specific situation. Despite the situation you may come into account with, you can be assured that the Office of Counseling & Student Success will work with you and your student in finding resources that would be applicable to your/their specific needs. Below are a few common examples in which a referral would be helpful:

- If a student is in a crisis
- A student is currently displaced or will be in the near future, and is looking for homeless shelters, food kitchens, etc.
- A student is looking for a rehab facility
- If someone is looking for the nearest support group