

Counseling & Testing

News and Notes

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Welcome To Our Newsletter!

Julie Thompson, LPC

Welcome to our Idaho State University Counseling Services Newsletter. Our hope is to provide more services to more students as they work to achieve their academic goals here at ISU. This newsletter provides an opportunity to routinely share student-focused information that hopefully will contribute to personal resources needed to meet the challenges of being a student, a community member, and a healthy human being. Students are never just students, and are often juggling a variety of roles and responsibilities that can impact their ability to cope effectively, perform well and stay healthy.

Counseling provides opportunities to learn wellness strategies for dealing with the challenges that can exist in anyone's life. Licensed mental health and career counselors will be contributing such strategies and insights to this newsletter. It will address a variety of areas generally related to typical issues associated with student life. There will also be information on upcoming educational or informational opportunities, such as the Math Anxiety workshop being offered at the end of this month.

For students who are unfamiliar with the services offered by the Counseling Centers in Idaho Falls and Pocatello, we provide a variety of career resources, including resume review, career exploration and job search tools. We also provide personal counseling for students whose concerns exceed their best efforts to manage whatever

challenges they are experiencing. It really is an opportunity to check in on yourself while exploring potential for self growth and awareness.

We are here because of our students, and our primary mission is to provide students with whatever resources we can within our areas of expertise to ensure positive and successful academic outcomes. We look forward to serving you.

If you have specific questions about our services or mental health/wellness, contact us at 282-2130 in Pocatello, or 282-7750 in Idaho Falls. We can address your questions personally, as well as in an upcoming newsletter.

Math Anxiety Workshop

Does math make you a *Nervous Wreck*? Do you feel like you know your math and you get into the test only to have your mind go blank, your palms get all sweaty and your stomach jumps up into your throat?

You can conquer your fears and succeed in math! Attend this free workshop sponsored by ISU-IF TRiO Student Association .

DATE: Friday, January 30th

TIME: 10 am – 2 pm
(Lunch included)

PLACE: Bennion Student Union –
Multipurpose Room

COST: FREE!!!

**Space is limited so reserve
your place soon!**

Call Kris @ 313-6753 (leave a message with your name and phone number) or email hanskri2@isu.edu with your name and phone number.

Test Anxiety – Strategies to Calm

Julie Thompson, LPC

Stress, fear, tension, life or death, all touch on what it feels like to be in a state of anxiety. Most would agree that anxiety is one of those emotional places we try to avoid. Some people seem naturally inclined toward being able to manage anxiety well. For others it might feel as though they are constantly working at staying above the breakers, trying to ride the waves or their emotions so they don't end up crashing on the rocks.

Anxiety is a protective mechanism, hardwired in our brains for survival. Way back when, and I mean way back, (when we were still inhabiting caves, for instance), we required quick responses that kept us out of reach of our predators, whether they were saber-toothed tigers, raptors or simply other cave people that took no issue with

serving up their neighbors for the next sacrificial celebration.

When the anxiety defense mechanism was triggered, our ancestors were able to quickly exit the situation, defend their position or freeze, all protective responses that were supported by a sudden increase in heart rate, breathing rate, and muscle tension.

The problem with this amazing defense mechanism is that it is often not well-suited for today's world. Our saber-toothed tigers are no longer the predators crouched just beyond the shadows, but rather are the ambiguous predators: fear of failure, not making the grade, or not having enough time, money or social support.

Our brain has a hard time distinguishing between "life or death" anxiety and less threatening situations, such as taking a chemistry test. So we end up sitting at the desk taking the test that we thought we were well prepared for, and

suddenly we can't remember anything! Our minds go blank and we feel the threat of failure creeping in, which triggers all of the physical responses: increased heart rate, rapid breathing, tense muscles, sweaty palms. Suddenly we feel like we want to hit something, run away or just quit, but none of these are generally effective for the situation that is causing the anxiety.

The good news is that there are effective strategies that can counter stressful situations like test anxiety. So next time you are feeling stressed, strung out, and emotionally overwhelmed, try some of the anxiety remedies listed below. It can't hurt, and chances are it will help.

Remember, a little anxiety can actually help our performance and practicing these strategies can increase your ability to cope during stressful situations. If these problems persist, check in with one of the staff counselors at the Pocatello campus, 282-7750 or at the Idaho Falls campus, 282-2130.

Strategies for Effectively Coping with Test Anxiety

1. Be Prepared
 - a. Avoid cramming
 - b. Develop effective study habits
 - i. Follow a schedule.
 - ii. Combine visual, auditory and oral reviews; use flash cards, charts, pictures, taped lectures, recite material, etc.
 - iii. Consider your learning environment: lighting, sound, minimizing distractions, having healthy food and hydration available.
2. Learn to Relax
 - a. Breathe. Taking long deep breaths, close your eyes and imagine something soothing.
 - b. Progressive muscle relaxation. Start by tensing all of your muscles and then from bottom to top start relaxing your body, remembering to breathe while you progress from your feet to your head.
 - c. Meditation can be very effective. Educate yourself on different techniques.
3. Remember, it is not life or death!
 - a. This is not a reflection of your self-worth, or a predictor of your future in life or even in the class.
 - b. Reward yourself after the test no matter how you think you did. You worked hard and deserve a break.
 - c. Learn from the test so you can improve your performance next time. Teachers are different and have varied expectations; it is not unusual to struggle with the first test of the semester.
4. Don't forget the Basics.
 - a. Good nutrition, exercise, sleep and social/recreational pursuits are important. Balance is the key to health and high performance.
 - b. Leave time to relax after preparing for a test.
 - c. Plan to arrive early for the test.
 - d. Bring a magazine or something to read if waiting generates anxiety.

ISU Counseling and Testing Center

It's Time to Search for Summer Internships

Jordan Doman

It is hard to imagine that while we are in the middle of our winter snow storms, it's time to start thinking about searching for summer internships. Granted, any time is a good time to search for an internship, but many companies will be searching for summer interns very soon, if they haven't started already. In an effort to help you cash in on the opportunity to find an internship, Counseling, Testing, and Career Services has a few suggestions for why you should participate in an internship, as well as how you can begin that process.

First we need to establish why it is important to participate in an internship. Internships offer an excellent opportunity for students to obtain hands-on experience in a field that they are pursuing as a career. In addition, internships are often enriching and challenging experiences that for many students function as a stepping stone to obtaining full-time employment at the close of the internship. Another reason to participate in an internship is because it will enhance your resume and boost your marketability.



Also, did you know that you can get college credit for participating in an internship? Many departments on campus provide students with the opportunity to earn credit for participating in internships. All you have to do is contact your department internship coordinator and they can provide the details. If you need help identifying a departmental contact for internships, contact the Career Center and we can help you identify who you need to talk to.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) approximately 70% of interns are offered full-time positions after completing their internship. Who wouldn't want to walk out of college with a 70% chance of getting a full-time position simply because you participated in an internship? Plus, an additional bonus according to NACE is that approximately 46% of employers surveyed say they offer higher starting salaries to new college hires that have internship experience. A better chance for full-time employment plus a higher starting salary...that sounds great! Where do I sign up?

That is where the Career Center comes in. We have a program called the "Internship Program." You may have heard of it before; but if you haven't, let me provide a basic overview of how the Internship Program works.

The Career Center actively seeks out specific internship opportunities for students. After some initial ground work to determine the type of internship a student desires, the Career Center staff seeks out specific internship opportunities based on that individual student's interests and qualifications. We search for what you want to do. This provides the participating student with an opportunity to take part in an internship within the field that they are interested in, and not just some random internship.

To participate in the Internship Program, contact the Career Center (282-2380) to schedule an informational meeting on the Internship Program. At that meeting we will discuss the steps involved for full participation in the program. You will also set an appointment to meet with a career counselor to have your resume critiqued and approved by the Career Center.

The Internship Program is a valuable benefit to students who want a head start in their job search, and while there are many ways in which a student can obtain an internship, why not let the Internship Program and Career Center give your internship search a boost?

Career Corner

ISU Career Center Mission

The Idaho State University Career Center will support the educational mission of Idaho State University through aiding students in all stages of career development. The Career Center will help students take responsibility in learning about themselves and how this information relates to a career choice, career information sources, available experiential learning opportunities, and job search information. The Career Center will also act as a campus resource for career issues and maintain relationships with employees.

The Idaho State University Career Center is located in the Museum Building, Room 440, in Pocatello. Phone (208) 282-2380 for more information or to schedule an appointment. Career services and counseling are also available in Idaho Falls in the Bennion Student Union, Room 223. Phone (208) 282-7750 for more information. Career Center information can also be found on the Internet. Go to <http://www.isu.edu/career> to learn more.

The Career Center can assist you in exploring career options and choosing a career that is right for you. We can help you with job search skills and building a winning resume, and teach you how to interview like a pro. We provide information on career fairs, and can help you to obtain an internship or student employment. We also have career resources available for checkout. Stop in and let us help you find the career of your dreams.

Meet the Staff

Pocatello Counseling & Testing Service

Clinical Staff

Donald L. Paulson, Ph.D., LPC, NCC; Director
Paula Seikel, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist; Training Coordinator/Clinical Coordinator
Rick Pongratz, Ph.D., LPC, Licensed Psychologist; Group Coordinator
Hillary Locke, Psy.D., LPC, Licensed Psychologist; Outreach Coordinator
Jane Coe Smith, Ph.D., LPC, Student of Concern Coordinator

Administrative Staff

Karen Behning; Administrative Assistant I
Matt Harris, M.Coun., LPC, NCC; Testing Coordinator
Ann Smith; Administrative Assistant II

Counseling Interns

Janae Harman, B.S; Counseling Intern
Mike Mariska, M.S, NCC; Counseling Intern

Pocatello Career Center

Troy Kase; Director
Lance Erickson, LPC, NCC; Career Counselor/Counseling Coordinator

Idaho Falls Counseling & Testing Service

Clinical Staff

Julie Thompson, M.Coun., LPC; Interim Coordinator/Counselor
Lindsy Bennett, M.A., LPC; Counselor

Administrative Staff

Deb Chadwick; Administrative Assistant I

Counseling Intern

Jordan Doman, Counseling Intern



Pocatello Staff

Idaho Falls Staff

Counseling Q&A

Q: Why do people go to counseling?

A: Some common concerns are:

- confusing and distressing feelings
- low self-confidence
- depression
- anxiety
- stress
- substance abuse
- problems with eating and body image
- relationship issues
- academic performance
- adapting to college life and stressors

Q: What kind of counseling is available?

A: Counseling, Testing, and Career Services in Idaho Falls offers both personal counseling and couples counseling. We also offer career counseling, including career

exploration, resume review, and mock job interviews. The Counseling and Testing Center and the Career Center in Pocatello offer the same types of services.

Q: Who are the counselors?

A: Our counselors have had training and experience specific to working with college students.

Q: How do I make an appointment?

A: Come to Counseling, Testing, and Career Services in Idaho Falls (Room 223, Bennion SUB), or to the Counseling and Testing Center (Gravelly Hall, Top Floor) or the Career Center (Museum Building, Room 440) in Pocatello between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm to schedule an appointment and fill out some paperwork that will acquaint the counselor with your specific needs. Students requiring immediate help

can be seen on an emergency basis.

Q: If ongoing counseling is recommended, does that mean there is something wrong with me?

A: NO! The college years are an exciting but sometimes stressful time. Many students encounter situations that are challenging and confusing, or their usual ways of handling problems may not be working well. Everyone needs some extra help sometimes.

Q: Will anyone tell my professors that I am going to counseling?

A: No! Counseling records are not a part of your educational records. Only you can give consent for us to release any information about you. The information that you provide and your counseling records are strictly confidential within the limits of the law.