

University Counseling Center

Hello and welcome everyone. My name is Aruna, and I am a staff member in the Graduate School at Grand Valley State University. At Grand Valley, we do our very best to ensure that our graduate students have as many resources available to them as possible to help them succeed within their program. One of the services that caters to the student's mental health and well-being is the University Counseling Center.

The University Counseling Center (UCC) is a safe space that caters to the mental and psychological well-being of the students. Embarking on the journey to college is exciting and exhilarating, but at the same time, it can be nerve-wracking and anxiety-inducing. For some, these changes can be emotionally distressing and stress management can be difficult. The Counseling Center is here to help you with all struggles related to academic pressure, anxiety, neuro-divergent issues, addiction, grief, and anger management. Students can schedule free appointments with licensed counselors from diverse backgrounds.

The University Counseling Center is a support system that helps you by providing a variety of services. The services include emergency/crisis, individual counseling, group counseling, Let's Talk, connection and consultation, gender affirmation services, and alcohol and other drug services. We are delving briefly into these services in this podcast.

Emergency service includes drop-in counseling services daily for urgent/emergency situations and the Center coordinates with GVPD to provide after hours services in the event of a crisis. Call or Text 988 for suicide and crisis lifeline or text home to 741741 for crisis text line.

Let's Talk gives students the opportunity to talk one-on-one with a counselor and seek professional advice without having to sign up for counseling. It is for students who are not sure about counseling but would like the perspective of a counselor or would just want to talk through a specific problem. Let's Talk is open for everyone through a virtual link from Monday to Friday for an hour. To check for the designated hours, please visit www.gvsu.edu/counsel/lets-talk-396.htm. Let's Talk is a platform to share your problems that need professional support but it is not appropriate for urgent concerns and mental health emergencies.

Individual Counseling is a scheduled appointment for a one-on-one meeting with the counselor which helps you to explore and understand yourself better. It gives you the space to explore your goals and concerns in a comfortable, private, and non-judgmental setting. You can seek counseling regarding issues of emotional health, relationships, sexuality, academics, stress, depression, sexual abuse or assault, and organizational skills.

Another service of university counseling is Group counseling sessions. In group counseling, 5-10 individuals meet face to face to share their struggles and concerns which are facilitated by 1 to 2 groups of therapists. These tend to be 60 to 90 minute long sessions catering to the different needs of the students. It provides a unique opportunity for students to receive multiple perspectives, support, encouragement, and feedback from other individuals in a safe and confidential environment regarding similar issues of emotional, personal, and relationship struggles. These interpersonal interactions help you to deepen your level of self-awareness and to learn how you relate with others. It is a safe and supportive place to experiment with your new ideas and ways of being. There are more than 20 groups in the Counseling Center that cater to

the different concerns of students. It has LGBTQ + Mental Wellness, support of color group, ADHD: finding your focus, anxiety management, Adult children of alcoholics, alcohol or other drugs, and grief support. These are just a few of them, to know more about the groups and their designated hours to meet up, please visit www.gvsu.edu/counsel/group-counseling-105.htm#grief.

Connection and Consultation is set up to be a resource for students who have a friend that they are concerned about and want to understand ways to support them. Other services include gender affirmation, alcohol and drug issues, and self-help tools are also available for the students. The University Counseling Center keeps all information confidential and works to create a secure and trustworthy place for all students.

Gender Affirmation Services is a space where all identities are celebrated and students feel empowered to be their authentic selves. The UCC is available to support transgender and gender diverse students in their gender, mental health, and overall wellness journeys. UCC clinicians can help to complete a comprehensive assessment, and provide letters for gender-affirming hormone therapy, and/or surgery in line with the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) Standards of Care and practices. You can also consult with a counselor regarding your personal journey of gender, assess wellness history, explore the associated risks and benefits of gender affirming services, and identify available skills, support, and resources to assist you throughout your journey.

Another important service UCC offers is Alcohol and Other Drugs Services. The AOD Office helps to build awareness among students to focus on making healthy and safe choices regarding alcohol and other drug uses. It helps with the prevention, education, intervention, and recovery phases of alcohol and drug use. If you want to learn more about the services, visit www.gvsu.edu/aod/ or call (616) 331-2537.

The Counseling Center has locations on both campuses at 206 Student Services Center, Allendale and at DeVos 101B, Pew Campus. You can make an in-person or virtual appointment by directly calling them at (616) 331-3266 or visiting their website, www.gvsu.edu/counsel/. The center can help you schedule a 30-minute screening appointment for later that same day or the next available business day. You will meet with a counselor one-on-one and discuss whether individual counseling, group counseling, self-help resources, or a community referral would be best for you.

The University Counseling Center helps to enhance your well-being through mental health services, including prevention, education, and counseling. You are not alone here, The UCC is always here to help you. Do reach out to The University Counseling Center. Thank you for your time and hope you have enjoyed this podcast.