

Program Title: College in the Time of Covid: How to Regain Focus on Your Academic and Emotional Health

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College in the Time of Covid: How to Regain Focus on Your Academic and Emotional Health

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[Lewis & Clark College Logo]

Speaker: John Hancock

Hello, everyone, and welcome to today's program titled "College in the Time of Covid: How to Regain Focus on Your Academic and Emotional Health." My name is John Hancock, and I serve Lewis & Clark College as the Associate Dean of Students for Health and Wellness and also the Chief Psychologist. As you might be able to infer from my visual background today, I am working from home and that is the truth these days for most all Lewis & Clark employees, save for a handful of essential staff that are tending to the most important day-to-day functions that are necessary on campus, physically. Many of you recently responded to a survey that the college distributed that asked for your feedback about how it's going since the college implemented distance learning. Thanks to all of you who responded to that survey your feedback was very helpful. College staff have listened to your feedback, and today's program is one way we are responding to that feedback. This program is being recorded on April 21st, 2020. Over the next 30 minutes or so, four of my colleagues from across the college and I will do our best to offer you some tips for finishing the semester strong; taking care of your emotional health; getting access to resources that you need; and making your best decisions going forward. So I have four panelists joining me this evening. I will now ask each of them to introduce themselves. Robin.

Speaker: Robin Keillor

Hello, My name is Robin Keillor and I am a Staff Psychologist at the Counseling Services at Lewis & Clark.

Speaker: Aimee Milne

Hi everyone I am Aimee Milne and I am the Director of Case Management here at the College.

Speaker: Katie McFaddin

I'm Katie McFaddin I'm Assistant Dean and Managing Director of the College Advising Center.

Speaker: Kayleigh McCauley

Hi everyone. Dr. Kay, Kayleigh McCauley, Associate Dean of Students, Director of Student Support Services

Speaker: John Hancock

So I want to thank you to all my panelists for joining us for the program this evening. I am aware that all five of us are in difference places, so it makes for some interesting adventures, we will do our best to address the questions that students have and give you the best information we can. So, the format for today's program is that I'm going to make some additional introductory remarks, and then each of our panelists will share with you their best insights and resources, before I then offer some closing comments. First and foremost on behalf of our panel, and on behalf of all the departments we represent, please know that we miss you, we miss you our students, so very much! Campus is so quiet without you. We wish there was a way that you could all be safely studying with us either in Portland, or studying abroad, or really studying wherever else you started the semester.

People talk about these times being "unprecedented." And I have found at times myself getting a little bit tired of that term, it's been used so much it's almost lost its meaning. So as I start talking today, I want to talk a little bit maybe about stress levels for you, our students. I know from talking with some of you and from listening to my staff, that for many of our students stress levels are through the roof. Everyone, everyone has had to deal with the stress associated with the transition to distance learning, that's no small task. Most of our students have had to deal with some sort of stay-at-home or shelter-in-place order, and the isolation that those bring. One day can bleed into the next, feelings of boredom, sadness, irritability, depression can mount, and sleep patterns can become pretty dysregulated. We know from the data in our survey that many of you are stressed by the loss of contact with friends and social connections on campus, that's hard too. Our students studying abroad were stressed initially by the realization that they would have to return to the US or their other home country prior to the planned end of their study abroad program, and then, some students were additionally stressed by the difficulty of actually making that return travel. Many of our international students have been unable to return to their home countries, so they remain with us on campus. Some of our students have the stress of having parents, guardians, or partners, or loved ones who put their health at risk everyday by working in healthcare, as first responders, or in essential jobs such as transportation or even grocery stores. In fact, some of you, our students, are working or volunteering in these very same areas, so a big THANK YOU to all of you who are working and volunteering in those areas and to the families that might be working in those areas too. Some of our students have had to take on the added burden of caring for younger siblings or elderly relatives, whether those siblings and relatives be healthy or whether they be ill. We know that many students have had a parent or a guardian be laid off from work, or have had relatives who have to close their businesses, resulting in extreme stress for themselves or their family. We are acutely

aware that communities of color and low-income households are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, leading to amplified health risks as well as intense psychological stress. We know that for many students, they do have a home that feels safe and that's wonderful. But for some students, for some of you, we know that you have struggled to find a place to feel physically and emotionally safe, to find adequate food, and to find appropriate healthcare. Indeed, reflecting on all of this, the words "unprecedented stress" are probably the very best words that I could think of to describe these times.

And yet, and yet hope lives. Hope lives in our presenters tonight, that you, our students, will all be safe, that you'll stay healthy, and that you'll be back with us to study just as soon as it is safe to do so. Hope lives in you, too, as you socially distance, as you care for each other, as you care for your communities and as you fight to finish the semester as strong as possible. Don't let go of that hope. As a wise person once told me, "Just because you can't see a positive future doesn't mean that it doesn't exist." What you are doing now-- academically and health-wise-- will make a difference. Campus staff are committed to supporting you as you finish the semester and plan for what comes next. Today's program is all about building on that hope, and helping you connect to the resources you need to both do and feel your best. And now, without further ado, I am going to ask Dr. Robin Keillor from our Counseling Service to talk a little bit about what you can do to support your emotional health. Robin.

Speaker: Robin Keillor

Thank you, John for your remarks and I wanted to start by just reminding all of you that Counseling Services are still available in a somewhat modified format because we are all working from home as well, but we do have tele-mental health services available through video or telephone counseling or consultation. And so we really do invite you if you need some additional support to feel free to give us a call at 503-768-7160 or email counsel@lclark.edu to connect with services. We do want to explain that for those of you who are still residing in Oregon, anywhere in Oregon, we are able to provide more ongoing services. Things do get a little bit more complicated if you are living in another state or outside of the states, but we do encourage you still to contact us and we can at minimum provide consultation support and some location based referrals for your area if we're not able to provide ongoing services. And Aimee will be talking a little bit later about how you can find some services as well. I also want to make reference to a really amazing video that some of you may have already seen that was published by our Psychology faculty and its available through Source in the April 7th edition and I encourage you to look there, they made a very creative video to kind of outline a lot of the primary ways of supporting your emotional and mental health during this difficult time or really frankly any difficulty time. And those recommendations by the American Psychological Association were well outlined by the Psychology faculty so I'd encourage you to check that out. There's also a lot of other great resources available and you can find some of those on the Counseling / Case Management and Coping with COVID-19 webpages at Lewis & Clark. And of course just by Google-ing "mental health during pandemic" or "how do I manage my anxiety when I'm social distancing." Some really reputable places to get that information from are the Center for Disease Control or CDC, the American Psychological Association or the JED Foundation. Mostly the highlights include, staying socially connected. That means you're going to be more creative and flexible in how you're going to do that when you are remaining physically distance from your friends and family. But really know that that's important, we are social beings. It's

also really important to attend to basic needs like your sleep, nutrition, getting some exercise, and fresh air when you can trying to seek out something you enjoy more days than not.

I do want to talk about some of the things that I have been hearing that aren't covered quite as much in the media or in online resources, just to have you have a few more things to reflect on. As John was mentioning earlier we are all in this together, but we are all in a different "this" with our experiences and our situations varying so greatly as he really helpfully outlined. I also want to mention that a few people are actually feeling more stable and less stressed right now because for one reason or another this slow down has helped them to feel like they have the time they need or the energy they need in a structure that works better for them. I think most of us though are feeling a lot of stress right now, and I really wanted to remind you that if you don't see yourself reflected directly in the conversations around you or in the media, it's really important to know that you're not alone. It's really okay to have your own experience and to be effected differently and one day you might feel differently than the next. The big important thing to think about is if you need to talk about it, reach out to someone for some support.

I've also heard a number of people say "I'm tired of hearing people that about having so much time and I'm really learning more about myself and I'm trying new things." For some of us this is an exciting time to learn about baking, or sewing, or gardening, maybe pick up a new language, but for others we are feeling really overwhelmed and it's kind of hard to keep up and it's tiresome to keep hearing about how much free time we have. So I want you to think about the possibility that you've lived a very carefully scheduled life since you were pretty young. Some of you were also involved in the arts, or sports, you might have been in leadership positions, you might have been working maybe multiple jobs, volunteering, being caregivers, or maybe just managing your mental and physical health by staying pretty busy. While a few people have had kind of little change in their daily routines other than switching to online classes, most of us are in a pretty abrupt slowdown right now. It can be pretty stunning to adjust to having so much unscheduled time. If you are feeling disoriented or confused about why it is really hard to focus right now and it's hard to keep up when it seems like you should have so much extra time, please remember that you are making a huge adjustment. Nobody can really offer you a roadmap because we're all in kind of uncharted territory and that can just take a lot of extra energy.

Even though it might feel difficult to do right now, it can be really beneficially to set small daily goals, to create a schedule that includes your sleep schedule, and to try and set up your environment with a "school zone." That would help you to get both mentally and physically oriented to being more productive with your work. So that would include like getting up at the regular time in the morning, taking care of your basic hygiene at minimum, so brushing your teeth and hair, taking a shower when you want to. It also would include getting dressed as though you were going to class. So even though that might be pretty casual, you would be getting dressed so that you would be presentable in public. Try making the bed, maybe sitting upright when you're studying, taking breaks, during the day, and just trying to get into that mental and physical zone. If you are fortunate to have plenty of space to spread out in it's pretty easy to set up a separate space for studying and another space for everything else in your life. But for a lot of us, we really have limited space and so doing some of these small things can help you to feel a little bit more oriented towards studying when you are losing track of what you are doing. Also, I want to remind you that it's really important to be willing, especially here

as we are winding down in the semester to ask questions of your faculty any time you are feeling confused or unsure about assignments or what's coming up in your course. They are there to help and they really do want to hear from you, so I'd encourage you to ask questions.

Remember, you really don't have to do this alone. Reach out to trusted friends, family, faculty members, staff, counselors or crisis services if you need extra support or encouragement. You can find information about counseling and crisis services on the Case Management and Counseling websites.

At this point, Aimee Milne is going to talk about resources that case management has found to help support students.

Speaker: Aimee Milne

Thanks, Robin. So, let's talk a little bit about some resources that might help you wrap your head around some of these ideas that Robin just shared with us. So I'm going to start by sharing my screen with you all. [shares computer screen. https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] We are going to start on my webpage. So, this is the Office of Case Management. And what I've done is towards the bottom here, you can see I've sort of identified some resources to support wellness during this time. And the first one that I want to talk to you all about is a guide to telemental health, that's right here [<https://www.lclark.edu/live/files/29779-updated-guide-to-telemental-health>]. Robin talked a little bit about the fact that on campus we are still offering counseling but you may be looking to find somebody that you can work with going through the summer or even into the fall if you are still in town. So, this is a great thing to talk about what telemental health is and it's also going to give you some places where you can start looking for options. So, that is a guide that's on my webpage. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/]

The other piece that I want to let people know about is this COVID-19 Resource Guide [views <https://www.lclark.edu/live/files/29735-covid-19-resource>] this is a fabulous guide that was put together by one of our staff in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Office. And not only does it have Lewis & Clark specific resources, so it lists Counseling, Ombuds, Health Service, but it also sort of expands into academics and some other resources that I thought was great. It talks a little bit about some state and national resources. I'm always a big fan of the HeadSpace app. So, but this gives you some ideas of other resources that might be available to you. I would encourage everyone to take a look at that. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] The other piece that is important on the webpage that I think would help folks is if you are in your own community and you are looking to find a therapist in your area there are a couple of databases that I have identified that allow you to look for providers.

One that's really known well nationally is Psychology Today [views <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>] so you can for example you are in Lafayette, California, so you plug in the zip code of Lafayette [types Lafayette, CA in the Find a Therapist City or Zip search box] pull up, you can take a look and see providers that are available. You have Blue Cross Blue Shield, you can go ahead and filter for folks who take Blue Cross Blue Shield [clicks Blue Cross filter]. And the thing that's really nice about this is that you can also email to start the conversation, they'll let you know if they

are doing video and phone options right now during out social distancing. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/support-for-off-campus-referral/]

So there are other networks that are available here, I also talk a little bit about health insurance and how that works, some tips, so feel free to peruse that area. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] Also, this is kind of a nifty little database [views <https://www.pandemictherapists.com/>] someone in my role at another university started, and this is a list of therapists who are doing teletherapy by state. So, this is another place that you could look and see about providers say if you are living in Alabama, who are offering teletherapy. So, I'm going to take you back to my webpage [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] The other piece on here that I really like folks to talk about is, actually Robin alluded to the JED Foundation [views <https://www.loveislouder.org/>] they have a program called Love is Louder and they talk about how do you stay connected when we are social distancing. And I think that is one piece that a lot of the students I've been working with are struggling with, is how do we stay connected to our community.

So, there are some good ideas about how to do that on this webpage as well. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] In terms of academic support you can look and see here there are some academic resources that are available [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/academic-resources/] I know that Katie when she goes next, she's going to give you some ideas as well, but just so you know this kind of allows for resources that are available academically. [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/]

Lastly, Robin alluded to crisis support [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/crisis-support/] there's Counseling Service we do offer some crisis and emergency assistance [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/counseling_service/emergency/] this allows for that information as well. I'll take you back to my webpage here [views https://www.lclark.edu/offices/case_management/] Let's see, I'm going to actually stop sharing my screen now. So, lastly I want to reiterate what Robin was saying which is that this is not an experience that everyone is finding themselves feeling like everyone around them is having the same experience. So, these are very broad based resources that I offered you all. If at any point you need help, you need someone to partner with on finding resources, you feel like the things that I was talking about were not speaking to you, I really encourage you to reach out to my office. I am happy to partner with you about financial resources, there are some in fact, oh I forgot that piece. Sorry, I'm going to share my screen one more time. [Shares screen]

I want to share with you, there's a resource called 211.org [views <http://211.org/>] so, this is a resource for folks to find social service resources, housing resources, so if you live in Portland you can look [uses search box to search for Portland] and we have Oregon has an info, so there is information that is specific to COVID. There is also, if you need help with utility assistance, housing and shelter, food assistance. And what I'm finding is that I've gone through this 211.org, there's options pretty nationally. Almost every major area in our country has a 211 info webpage. So, that's a good place to find financial support at this point. So, I'm going to stop sharing [stops screen share]. So, feel free to email me and make an appointment and I'm happy to partner with you at any point on finding resources. So, with that I'm going to hand it over to Katie McFaddin from our

Advising Center who will help you, sort of, get things together and finish this strong academic term.

Speaker: Katie McFaddin

Thanks, Aimee. Faculty advisors and staff in the College Advising Center have certainly been talking with students about how to finish the semester and their efforts to do so, in the best way possible. As you're likely aware, this Friday, April 24th at 4:00pm is the deadline to change a class to credit/no credit (CR/NC) if you want to do that, or the deadline to withdraw from a single course, if you find yourself wanting to do that. Electing a course CR/NC means that whichever mark you earn - CR or NC - there is no effect on your GPA, positive or negative, it's a neutral mark. It means that if you earn the equivalent of a C or better, then you have the credit for the course and a mark of CR. I have been really encouraging students to talk with their faculty members before and as they make that decision, just to get their thoughts on how they're doing in the class, to make sure it matches up with their – how they're thinking about it. To make sure they're not missing anything. And then you can do the form, and it does require your instructors approval, so give yourself a little time for that.

If you're thinking about that or you're thinking about course withdrawal and you have questions or you just want to talk through the pros and cons with somebody really feel free to reach out to us in the College Advising Center. We've been having a lot of those conversations this week, we're here, we're ready to help. We know that it can be a little confusing. So, you can book a video or phone appointment with us using the button on our homepage, or you can email us at cac@lclark.edu.

Over the last few weeks I've definitely spoken with students who are struggling academically...maybe just in one class, or maybe in several, and they know they need to write their instructors, they know that. But they're sitting on those emails because they feel like they just haven't found the right way to explain what's going on, they're looking for the right wording, maybe the perfect wording that feels like they can hit send. And the longer they wait, they more they have to make it perfect to send it. And I guess I'm here to encourage you to just remember that this pandemic is a global experience - we are all going through some version of it, and so I don't want you to feel stuck trying to compose the perfect explanation of the difficulties you're experiencing. I've been telling students look that uses too much time and energy, and you don't have a lot of that right now; none of us do when we're stressed out. So, my advice is to write something simple and short, and just get it sent. Even just something as simple as, "I'd like to find a time to talk with you on the phone," is great. Just initiate the conversation and get it out there and then you can spend your time and energy working on maybe the assignments or the things that are coming up. If you feel stuck writing those kinds of emails, reach out to us about that to. You know I've been coaching students on how to write some of that and how to just feel unstuck so they can send the communication they know they need to send, it's just hard.

And finally, I also wanted to say something about fall registration. So, it's understandable that you may be concerned about fall semester, you know, is it going to happen the same way, or maybe your families finances are influx – you're not sure if you can afford it. If concerns like that are causing you to hold off on registering I'd like to encourage you to actually register and reserve your spot in classes. Financial Aid, I was just talking with them and they said that they are very aware that families financial situations are

changing and they would like students who are concerned to contact them and initiate a conversation and start working on some solutions for fall. And you know if between now and fall semester things change, and for whatever reason you choose not to go ahead with fall semester, you can withdraw up until the Friday before the start of the semester and receive a full refund. So, that's why I think it's important now to just reserve your spot in those classes and start working on a plan.

And now, Kayleigh McCauley from the Student Support Service can talk about some more resources for students.

Speaker: Kayleigh McCauley

Awesome. Thanks, Katie. Hi Pios - The Student Support Services Staff has been hard at work providing academic support to students now that we are fully online. We are also continuing to work with students who have academic accommodations, to ensure that their online courses are accessible and to help troubleshoot any issues that may arise by attending courses online. If you're listening to me talk right now and you're in need of some additional academic support or you need to revise or even set up academic accommodations, please reach out to us. Students can schedule an appointment with an SSS staff member online. We are offering both Zoom and Phone appointments, Monday through Friday 9:00am-5:00pm Pacific Time. And that's very important because we have students now all over the world and in multiple time zones, so make sure that you have the right time zone as you are scheduling your appointments. Scheduling an appointment is super easy, just visit lclark.edu and in the search box, search for Student Support Services. That will bring you to our main page, where you'll find the information on how to schedule an appointment online. We'd be happy to meet with you.

Did you know that other academic support opportunities are also available online? Like Katie said, the College Advisors, and Student Support Services, along with SQRC, SAAB tutoring, the Writing Center, Librarians, all of the above are all working remotely and are available to you online. So, be sure to reach out to those offices individually if you need help. We are here for you and we are ready to assist.

Recently, myself and the Student Support Services team have been working with students who are juggling a number of additional concerns or responsibilities at home. In the beginning of our presentation John was talking about some of those things. We've talked to many of you who are adjusting to living with family again, or now without roommates, juggling family responsibilities, definitely having difficulty accessing the internet, or even having the right technology to access your courses, helping to now homeschool your younger siblings, and a number of other issues that we have heard from you that you are facing at this time. You're not alone. There are many other students, and even some of us that are experiencing those things. If you find yourself struggling to juggle all of these responsibilities or concerns, please reach out to us, we are available to help support you as you try to figure out how to communicate with your faculty in order to find solutions for you to engage fully academically. We have a few options, and we'd love to connect with you.

Finally, many students that we've spoken to are struggling with financial responsibilities at this time. Many of you have experienced unexpected expenses due to COVID-19. I want to just take a moment to thank the student leaders of the ASLC for their leadership in facilitating the ASLC COVID-19 Related Unexpected Expenses fund. I appreciate

your leadership and you've done a great service for all of the students at the College. Moving forward Lewis & Clark students will have the opportunity to apply for relief funds provided by the federal government's CARES Act. The funds will be used to help students financially with pandemic-related expenses. Be sure to look out for your Iclark email and on the website. The application for this fund and additional information will be available very soon.

Please know that we are all thinking about you all and sending you well wishes. And that's the resources I have for you, please reach out to us if you need any help.

So, with that, John, I am turning it turn it back to you.

Speaker: John Hancock

Great, thank you, Kayleigh.

So, I realized there was one other bit of information that I wanted to share with our students and it actually has to do with student health insurance. A relatively small number of our students have student health insurance, maybe about 30 to 40 percent of our undergraduates. But I know that it's an important topic because I know that as some parents and guardians have lost jobs or some partners or spouses have lost jobs sometimes that has meant a loss of health insurance coverage. So, it is possible for students who have lost health insurance coverage to get on the student health insurance plan, even mid-semester. So, that's something I want students to know about. And secondly for those people who are on the student health insurance plan, it is a nation wide plan, and so if you're interested in finding a provider who is near to you physically and geographically if you'll just visit our student health insurance webpage, just type in student health insurance on the colleges website and it will take you to our webpage and right at the top of that webpage it talks about some benefits for COVID-19, as well as how to find a provider near you. And if you look into the webpage deeply enough you'll find some contact people who can help you get onto the student health insurance plan if you have lost health insurance coverage through some other plan that you may have been a part of. So, I wanted to be sure you knew about that.

At this point I want to thank everybody on the panel for being a part of today's program. And also just make a couple of remarks to close things up.

So, at the beginning of today, I spoke about hope. Another one of my favorite quotes about hope, comes from Martin Luther, or at least that's who it is attributed to: and that quote goes that "Everything that is done in this world is done by hope."

And the truth is that we don't know exactly how long it will take for this storm to end, but in the end it will end. And we hope to see all of you back on campus as soon as it's safe.

Until then, may hope get you and those you care about through the storm, as you deal with all of the challenges and all the stresses of your lives.

I want to say thank you to all of our students who've listened to this webinar today. I, and our panelists certainly hope that today's program has had some answers for some of your questions, we know we haven't answered them all. But we encourage you to

reach out to individual departments if you have questions about other topics. And we hope that we've reminded you of your connection to Lewis & Clark. You do belong as part of our community, even when many of you aren't here physically.

The situation with COVID-19 continues to be a rapidly evolving one, it seems that sometimes it changes by the week or every other week or sometimes by the day. Please don't forget to check out the college's COVID-19 website on a periodic basis--that's where the Frequently Asked Questions are both posted and updated. To get there, just click on the coronavirus box on the college homepage. And, if you have any additional questions after this webinar, feel free to submit it either to our panelists or to our departments or to the College's email for COVID-19 and that's called basically just, covid19info@lclark.edu.

That's all I have, and that's all we have. But I want to say best wishes to everyone for a successful and healthy end to the semester. Thanks for tuning in. Bye.

[End Video]