



Maryland Hall

"Seeking assistance demonstrates strength and maturity, and is crucial in order to succeed during your time at Loyola."

The Art of Asking for Help

By Morgan Binkis

Asking for help is hard. Believe me, I know. Before I arrived at Loyola University of Maryland, I hated asking people for advice. My mentality said I was being too "bothersome" to others or that asking for help was a sign of weakness. However, now I realize that seeking assistance demonstrates strength and maturity and is crucial in order to succeed during your time at Loyola. I did not step foot on the Loyola campus until the day I moved in. I know—it sounds insane. I was required to transition and become accustomed to Loyola's campus fairly quickly. However, I soon began having difficulty navigating campus and was unaware, for some time, of the many resources that Loyola offers its students.



On my very first day of the first semester, I found myself walking around aimlessly in an effort to locate one of my classes. I stopped a student who I did not know and asked her if she could direct me to Maryland Hall. Her response? "Yes of course! I am going that way, so we can walk together!" That experience eased my nerves and demonstrated to me Loyola's core desire to help others. Furthermore, it revealed to me the benefits of asking people for help as opposed to figuring things out on my own.

I am usually the type of person who hates asking for help and advice. But if I have

learned anything from my time at Loyola, it is how important it is to advocate for yourself and your needs. This is especially true regarding communicating with professors. Being very open and communicative with professors and faculty members is essential in ensuring a successful semester. Professors want to hear from you, especially when you are having difficulties in their class. Office hours are extremely useful in reviewing material that you may be struggling with. These one-on-one meetings are especially helpful if you have a fear of asking questions during class time.

When you meet with your professors during office hours, they will become more acquainted with you, your thought process, and your work in general. Grace Sanz, a member of Loyola's class of 2025, agrees, saying "most of the professors are always willing to meet with you, willing to help you."

During my second semester, I was placed into a Chemistry course, Intro to Chem 101, in which I found myself struggling to understand all the content. I expressed my concern to my professor, Dr. Kyle Lunsford, who consequently met with me to review the material I was having trouble grasping. Dr. Lunsford always reminded the class of her office hours due to her desire for the class to succeed. Her willingness to meet, both in person and on Zoom, generated a welcoming environment that otherwise could seem intimidating for many students.



The Counseling Center

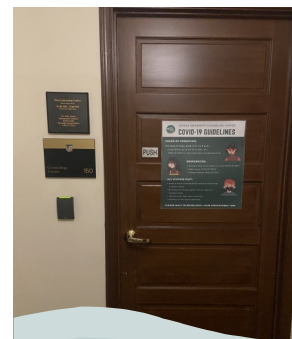
Loyola hosts a plethora of wonderful services for its students to utilize to excel both academically and socially. One of these resources is [The Counseling Center](#) which provides students with mental health support in transitional stages and self-identity issues, among many other things. Loyola's Counseling Center is committed to providing students with the support and tips they need to succeed in all aspects of college. If you are like me and struggle to ask for help, the Counseling Center is a handy service since all meetings with the counselors are confidential. Additionally, the services offered by the Counseling Center are free-of-cost for all full-time undergraduate and graduate students. The Counseling Center supports students through a variety of issues and offers both short-term and long-term therapy as well as in-person, online, group meetings, or one-on-one meetings.



Kat Zranchev, a member of Loyola's class of 2025, began visiting the Counseling Center after she began feeling homesick during her first semester at Loyola. She also began to feel "really anxious about the start of classes and hadn't made a lot of friends" up until that point, says Zranchev. These are common emotions among first-year students transitioning into college. Kat described her experience with Loyola's Counseling Center as "not as intimidating as [she] thought it would be." In terms of

setting up a counseling appointment, Kat said "it was super easy to do it myself." She also said, "I really liked everyone in the Counseling Center, I think that they're really approachable." Many students at Loyola choose to attend counseling sessions, which makes the experience more relatable and less stigmatized. Zranchev mentioned this saying, "I know, a lot of my friends have gone and some of us even had the same therapist."

The Counseling Center is an excellent resource on Loyola's campus, so if you find yourself struggling, this is a great place to start and ask for help. When asked the question, "what advice would you give to students who are either struggling to reach out to the Counseling Center?" Kat responded "as a first-year, and if you're going to be away for the first time, especially if you're really far away, I would say that it can be intimidating, in general, to ask for help, but I think that the Counseling Center really makes it easier to access." She also believes that it is important for Loyola students, especially first-year students, to visit the Counseling Center. She says, "especially as a first-year, you're still figuring out how classes work and just the anxiety of being away from home, especially if you haven't made a lot of close friends, I think that just making the first step and admitting that you need help is a really good step. And then from there, make a call or just go on the website, and if you really think that meeting the first session helps, keep going, if not, don't."



Door to Loyola's Counseling Center



Entrance office of Counseling Center

The Writing Center

Loyola's Writing Center is another excellent tool that you can use to receive additional feedback on your writing assignments. Students can make appointments or just drop in to meet with another Loyola student to gain advice on essays and citations. The Writing Center is great in that you are meeting with a peer who understands the struggles of writing papers, so the pressure of edits and feedback is reduced.



Loyola's Writing Center

Grace Sanz, class of 2025, began visiting the Writing Center during her first semester at Loyola for help with some essays for her Writing-100 class. "I think it's a really great resource and the people over there are really helpful," remarks Sanz. She added, "The Writing Center emails your teacher when you go to show that you're putting effort into the class and you're working to do better." Grace described one of her visits to the Writing Center wherein she "sat down one time with a girl for like 2 hours and [they] went over [her] whole essay, like totally broke it apart." Additionally, Grace

shared, "[the tutor] helped me find some resources even, gave me ideas about it." Grace believes that the Writing Center is "a really good resource to have on campus for anyone who might need help with their writing because writing can be difficult especially if you weren't taught in high school how to write efficiently or effectively...

go[ing] in there and getting suggestions and having them help you to improve your writing is something that will help you become a better writer." When asked if she felt intimidated by having someone critique her writing, Sanz admitted, "I think it can be intimidating based on the way that you take it, but they were really helpful and they always offer suggestions before they change anything" and that she "didn't feel criticized at all because [she] knew [she] was going there for help and to improve [her] writing." She adds, "it's very constructive criticism and they always encourage you too."

The Study

Another service available to students at Loyola who are in need of academic support is The Study. The Study "[offers tutoring and academic support services](#)" as well as organizational techniques and study



The Study is located in Jenkins Hall

"I think it's a really great resource and the people over there are really helpful."

strategies. At The Study, students can obtain tutors for any of their classes in which they would like some additional support, be coached in time management and organization, as well as participate in workshops to improve study techniques, note-taking, etc. All of the courses that are offered by The Study are free of cost to all full-time Loyola students. Additionally, students can simply sit in The Study to do schoolwork or study in a quiet environment.

I sat down with Molly Fredette, Director of The Study, to discuss ways in which Loyola students can access help from this location on campus. In her description of The Study, Fredette stated, "I think that many first-years could benefit from working with us a little bit, especially as they're transitioning from high school to college. It's a big transition and having some support on campus can be really helpful. Even if students don't think they need support initially, sometimes at least knowing about where things are located and when they do need support, knowing where to go." Molly shared, "The Study offers a variety of academic support services to students. We offer them to students in any year but first-years can really benefit with that transition from high school to college." These services include [peer tutoring](#), professional tutoring, coaching services, and workshops. Loyola's peer tutors "provide content support in just about any course offered at Loyola," says Fredette. With peer tutoring, "students can meet with a tutor weekly if they want to, they can meet with a [tutor] once, it really

depends on the level of need and the support that the students want to get from the program." The Study also offers [professional tutoring](#) in math, reading strategies, and ESL. Additionally, [coaching services](#) in both time management and organiza-

tion, as well as academic coaching, are beneficial for anyone. Lastly, The Study provides [workshops](#) in areas such as goal-setting, memory, learning styles, reducing test stress and anxiety, effective note-taking, and more which are all "focused on building good skills," according to Fredette.

One of the great things about The Study is its range of accessibility. Molly Fredette shared, "all of our services are offered either in-person or online at this time" which "gives students a lot more flexibility." Additionally, it "provides a level of convenience for students."

I then asked Molly, "how early should students come to The Study?" Jokingly, she exclaimed, "We love to see students day one!" She shared, "a lot of students wait until they are in academic distress or feeling stressed out about a class to come in and seek support at The Study, so I always encourage students to come in as early as possible and don't be afraid to ask for help, especially from peer tutors."



The Loyola/Notre Dame Library

"I think that many first-years could benefit from working with us a little bit, especially as they're transitioning from high school to college. It's a big transition and having some support on campus can be really helpful."

Molly Fredette



If you find yourself struggling, Molly Fredette for directions to Maryland Hall—or directs freshmen to “just find one person on campus and say, ‘hey I’m struggling,’ and let that person connect you to a variety of different supports on campus.” She says, “taking that first step is hard but finding that one person to say, ‘I need help,’ to and then letting that person help you is what I would recommend.” Furthermore, Molly said, “if a student is really struggling and they’re not sure what to do, they can come meet with me. I’d be glad to talk to them a bit about their challenges in the course and then we can make a game plan together.”

It is okay to struggle. It is okay to feel lost sometimes, or scared, alone, and stressed. But just know that when you are in these periods of pressure, it is incredibly important to ask people for advice. They want to help you! At Loyola, almost every faculty member, administrator, and student is willing to provide advice, support, and comfort to one another. Through the utilization of Loyola’s resources such as professor’s office hours, The Counseling Center, The Writing Center, and The Study, you will have no trouble at all navigating your first semester—and if you do, feel free to stop me and ask

***“It is okay to
struggle. It is okay to
feel lost
sometimes, or scared,
alone, and stressed.
But just know that
when you are in these
periods of pressure, it
is incredibly important
to ask people for
advice. They want to
help you!”***

