

# MENTAL WELLNESS HANDBOOK

SKULE™ MENTAL  
WELLNESS



# WHO ARE WE?

Skule™ Mental Wellness (SMW) is the University of Toronto's mental wellness directorship for engineering students, which recognizes and addresses the importance and impact of mental health and wellness in everyday life. Our goals involve promoting and educating students on positive mental wellness practices, hosting de-stressing activities throughout the year, being a non judgmental liaison for obtaining both on and off campus resources, and creating a greater sense of community in Skule™. We wish to remind members of the Skule™ community that they are not alone, and that there are various resources and practices available for help.

# WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

- **Drop an obligation:** If you're juggling with many commitments and it is getting too much for you, talk to your club/team members to reduce your workload
- **Identify your stressors:** Try to identify possible reasons for your stress, jot them down and look at them in the beginning of the week to manage them better
- **Eat and sleep well:** An easily overlooked but extremely important point. Eat healthily and regularly and try to follow a sleep schedule.
- **Take up a hobby as a destressor:** Make time for your hobbies to unwind and clear your mind
- **Make physical activity part of your daily routine:** Exercise releases endorphins which can help you deal with stress.
- **Take time out for friends and family members:** Set aside time at least once a week to do something fun with your friends or family members, and during that time try not to think about school or work
- **Learn relaxation techniques:**
  - a. Meditation and Yoga: Join free classes at Uoft!
  - b. Deep Breathing: Deep breathing is when you breathe from your 'core' or your diaphragm to relax.
  - c. Music: Center your focus on your favourite tunes to clear your mind
  - d. Get creative: Art is a great way to express yourself and let your feelings out.

# COVID-19

- **What is COVID-19?**
  - It is a new strain of the coronavirus that was recently discovered and has been declared as a global pandemic. There are still many unknown characteristics of this disease which is still being researched.
- **Current situation regarding Covid-19:**
  - The provinces and territories in Canada are trying to contain the spread of this disease by declaring a state of emergency.
  - There are new rules and regulations enforced such as social distancing (6 feet apart), restricted travel, and keeping non-essential businesses and schools closed indefinitely.
  - Everyone is encouraged to stay home to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- **Symptoms of COVID-19:**
  - **Common:** Fever, Dry Cough, Tiredness
  - **Less Common:** Aches and Pains, Sore Throat, Diarrhea, Conjunctivitis, Headache, Loss of taste or smell, A rash on skin, or discolouration of fingers or toes.
  - **Serious:** Difficulty breathing, Pressure on chest, Loss of speech/movement.
- **If you have any symptoms, please call before visiting a doctor.**
- **If you have traveled recently, it is recommended that you quarantine for 14 days.**

# WAYS TO DEAL WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- **Staying updated on the latest regulations:** Keeping yourself updated allows you follow the rules and take any preventative measures required.
- **Focus on the things within your control:** This includes taking those preventative measures such as washing your hands regularly, avoiding crowds, staying home as much as possible and staying 6 feet apart & wearing masks when you do need to go out.
- **Staying connected:** Take time out of your day to keep in touch with your friends and family by video calling and texting. Try to not focus your conversation on the current situation if that feels too stressful for you.
- **Taking care of your mind and body:** Try your best to maintain a routine; this can help you maintain a sense of normalcy.
- **Making physical activity part of your daily routine:** Exercise can help with anxiety, relieve stress and manage your mood better. You can go out for walks or follow workout tips that can be found online.
- **Taking a break from social media:** If you feel the current events that are circulating all over social media contributes to your stress and anxiety, it is important to take a step back and take time out for yourself.
- **Helping others when possible:** Reaching out to others in need, donating to food banks, following community rules and just simply staying home are some ways you can contribute to your community.

# GUIDE TO COURSEWORK DURING COVID-19

- **Go easy on yourself:** we're in a global pandemic and it's very much not business as usual. Everyone is anxious and scared. Expecting high productivity is expecting too much.
- **Prioritize your physical and mental health:** This could involve practicing mindfulness, limiting your intake of news, cleaning up your social media feed, spending time away from a screen, taking care of those around you, going outside, reaching out to others, doing something creative, and exercising. There are many free live workouts available online and there are many tips on how to maintain your wellness while working from home
- **Carve out a space in your home that's just for work:** A desk/table/room where you can maintain a setup only for work, if possible. Try to make this space be far from where you sleep and well-lit. This helps you to have a dedicated space for your virtual meetings/online lectures and a way to create a physical boundary between your working hours vs. non-working hours.
- **Fall into routine and make a schedule:** A routine is very helpful for getting into work mode but may take a while to adjust to a "new normal"; experiment with what feels the most comfortable and productive for you. Don't forget to schedule time for self care and hobbies (yoga, art, baking, creative projects, exercise).

# GUIDE TO COURSEWORK DURING COVID-19

- **Take breaks! :** Often! Get up from your workspace and read, hang out with your pets, watch an episode of your favorite TV show, nap, play a game, paint your nails. Recognize when you're cognitively loaded and not working well, then step away from work for a bit.
- **Connect with classmates and friends:** Create study groups for your courses and stay connected with your friends with texts, phone/video calls. Social distancing does not mean social isolation. You can use free online tools such as WhatsApp, Slack, Skype, or Zoom.
- **Do the best you can with working from home:** Recognize that this is new territory. If you're trying and still aren't able to get stuff done, that's okay. It might take a while. It might be impossible. It's okay. It's hard to be productive right now. Do what you can.
- **Use productivity tools:** There are many techniques to help you focus and complete your work. Setting small goals, holding yourself accountable, and keeping organized will help you stay on top of your coursework.

## Information on the guide given by:

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# UOFT RESOURCES

## ST. GEORGE HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTRE

[www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc)

214 College Street, 2nd Floor, Suite #232, Toronto, ON M5T 2Z9  
416-978-8030

The Health and Wellness Centre provides the same health services as your family doctor. In addition to general health services, they provide individual psychotherapy, pharmacotherapy, on location counselling, and group therapy. They also run a number of workshops including Better Breathing, Better Skills, Mindful Moments: Meditation and Yoga, Mindful Eating: Food and Mood, safeTALK: Suicide alertness for everyone, and others.

## MULTI-FAITH CENTRE

[www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/mf](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/mf)

569 Spadina Avenue Toronto, ON M5S 2J7  
416-946-3120

The Multi-Faith centre runs a large variety of programs during the year to help students grow while exploring meaning, purpose, and identity. The programs and facilities encourage interfaith dialogue and learning for all students, as well as healthy living. Their programs include Meditation and Yoga, JourneyDance, monthly Massage Days, and more. You can also connect with chaplains of a number of different denominations and you can find a full list of the campus chaplains through the Multi-Faith Centre website.

## LINKMENTALHEALTH

[www.linkmentalhealth.com](http://www.linkmentalhealth.com)

LinkMentalHealth is a platform that connects people to in-person therapy regardless of what they can afford. On the platform, you will be able to see the coverage you receive through the UTSU's health insurance plan. They also provide a list of free counseling programs available in your area and includes their wait times.



# FEELING DISTRESSED?

## Academic Distress

Academic Success 416-978-7970  
Accessibility Services 416-978-8060  
Engineering Registrar 416-978-1866,  
[registrar@ecf.utoronto.ca](mailto:registrar@ecf.utoronto.ca)

## Financial Distress

If you are experiencing unexpected circumstances that are leading to financial difficulties, contact the Engineering Registrar at 416-978-1866, or email them at [registrar@ecf.utoronto.ca](mailto:registrar@ecf.utoronto.ca)

## Housing Distress

Housing services 416-978-8045 ext. 0  
If it is after hours and you don't have a place to stay, contact: Campus Police 416-978-2323

## Emergency During University

(Business hours: 9 am – 5 pm, Monday to Friday)  
[safety.utoronto.ca](http://safety.utoronto.ca)  
Community Safety Office 416-978-1485  
Sexual Harassment Office 416-978-3908

## 24/7 Emergency On-Campus

Campus Police 416-978-2323

**Call 911 in situations requiring immediate police, fire, or medical response to preserve life or property. To ensure prompt service, contact Campus Police after calling 911**

# ADVISORS

## **INCLUSION AND TRANSITION ADVICE**

**Mikhail Burke, Inclusion & Transition Advisor**

mikhail.burke@ecf.utoronto.ca

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS TRANSITION ADVICE**

Book an appointment by logging in to [clnx.utoronto.ca](http://clnx.utoronto.ca) and clicking the "Appointments" tab. Then look for the "Centre for International Experience" section.

## **CORE 8 FIRST YEAR**

**First Year Office**

firstyear@ecf.utoronto.ca

416-978-4625

35 St. George Street (Galbraith Building), Room 170

## **CHEMICAL ENGINEERING (UPPER YEARS)**

**Vanessa Andres, Academic Advisor**

ugrad.chemeng@utoronto.ca

(416) 978-5336

WB216 (Room 216, Wallberg Building)

## **COMPUTER & ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING (UPPER YEARS)**

**General Inquiries**

askece@ecf.utoronto.ca

**Leanne Dawkins, Academic Advisor**

leanne.dawkins@utoronto.ca

(416) 978-8570

SF-B600 (Room B600, Sandford Fleming Building)

## **CIVIL & MINERAL ENGINEERING (UPPER YEARS)**

**Shayni Curtis-Clarke, Academic Advisor**

shayni@civ.utoronto.ca

(416) 978-5905

GB105 (Room 105, Galbraith Building)

## **ENGINEERING SCIENCE (ALL YEARS)**

**General Inquiries:** asknsci@ecf.utoronto.ca

**David Bird, Undergraduate Advisor, Years 1 & 2**

nsci1\_2@ecf.utoronto.ca

(416) 946-7351

**Brendan Heath, Academic Advisor, Years 3 & 4**

nsci3\_4@ecf.utoronto.ca

(416) 946-7352

BA2110 (Room 2110, Bahen Centre for Information Technology)

## **INDUSTRIAL & MECHANICAL ENGINEERING (UPPER YEARS)**

**Gayle Lesmond, Academic Advisor**

undergrad@mie.utoronto.ca

(416) 978-6420

MC 109 (Room 109, Mechanical Engineering Building)

## **MATERIALS ENGINEERING (UPPER YEARS)**

**Sabrin Mohamed, Academic Advisor**

maria.fryman@utoronto.ca

(416) 978-7308

WB140 (Wallberg Building)

## **CROSS-DISCIPLINARY OFFICE (ENGINEERING MINORS & CERTIFICATES)**

**Sharon Brown, Academic Advisor**

cdp@ecf.utoronto.ca

416-978-3532

44 St. George Street

## **SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID**

**Pierina Filippone, Assistant Registrar,**

**Scholarships&Financial Aid**

awards@ecf.utoronto.ca

416-978-4159

GB 157 (Room 157, Galbraith Building)

You can also book an appointment online through the advising portal at [portal.engineering.utoronto.ca/weblogin/sites/Advising/](http://portal.engineering.utoronto.ca/weblogin/sites/Advising/)

# OFF-CAMPUS MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

## SKYLARK CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

[www.skylarkyouth.org](http://www.skylarkyouth.org)

'What's Up' Walk-in Clinic: 65 Wellesley Street E., Unit 500

Youth Wellness Hub: 40 Orchard View Blvd., Unit 102 (lower level)

Skylark offers free, walk-in counselling services for youth, with no health card or appointment necessary. Skylark has various locations throughout Toronto, including near Wellesley & Eglinton stations.

## HARD FEELINGS

[www.hardfeelings.org](http://www.hardfeelings.org)

848 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M6G 1M2

Hard Feelings is a non-profit mental health service offering a welcome, inclusive environment with affordable counselling options. Short term counselling options (about 10-12 sessions) are available for young adults aged 18 and older

## STELLA'S PLACE

[stellasplace.ca](http://stellasplace.ca)

18 Camden Street, Toronto, ON M5V 1V1

Stella's Place offers comprehensive mental health services for youth and adults aged 16 to 29. Free, walk-in counselling is available on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 3-5 pm.

## **GRIFFIN CENTRE**

[www.griffin-centre.org](http://www.griffin-centre.org)

1126 Finch Ave West, Unit 16, Toronto, ON M3J 3J6

Griffin Centre is an accredited, non-profit mental health agency offering walk-in counselling to ages 29 and under. Service is offered in languages including English, Mandarin, Hindi and more.

**Call 911 in situations requiring immediate medical response**

## **MENTAL HEALTH DISTRESS HELPLINES**

Good 2 Talk Student Helpline 1-866-925-5454

Gerstein Centre Crisis Line 416-929-5200

Mental Health Helpline (Ontario) 1-866-531-2600

Drug and Alcohol Helpline 1-800-565-8603

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline 1-888-230-3505

## **24/7 EMERGENCY OFF-CAMPUS**

Assaulted Women's Helpline 416-863-0511, TTY/ATS 416-364-8762

Toronto Rape Crisis Centre 416-597-8808

York Region Women's Sexual Assault Helpline 905-895-7313

Peel Rape Crisis Centre 905-273-9442

# COVID-19 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

## WELLNESS TOGETHER CANADA

<https://ca.portal.gs/>

'Wellness Together Canada was recently funded by the Government of Canada due to the spike in mental distress since the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides online support for mental health and addiction by providing customized wellness programs and provides self-guided courses and apps, an online community of coaching and support and one to one counselling.

**They also have immediate support for:**

- Youth: Text **WELLNESS** to 686868.
- Adults: Text **WELLNESS** to 741741.

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OVER PHONE

Distress Centres of Greater Toronto 416-408-4357 (24/7 Support)

Progress Place Warm Line 416-960-9276 (8 pm to 12 am Support)

Crisis Service Canada 1-833-456-4566 (24/7 Support)

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT OVER TEXT

Distress Centres of Greater Toronto

TEXT: 45645 (24/7 support)

Kids Help Phone

TEXT: 686868 (24/7 support)

Crisis Services Canada

TEXT: 45645 (support from 4pm – Midnight ET)

# CONTACT US!



@SkuleMW



@skulementalwellness



mentalwellness@skule.ca



<http://wellness.skule.ca/>

 All Solutions Printing

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[www.aspprintingsolutions.ca](http://www.aspprintingsolutions.ca)