What can I expect from personal counseling?

Personal counseling is a collaborative process between the counselor and the student aimed at focusing on specific goals you have set. Common goals include reducing anxiety/depression, improving relationships, improving self-esteem and overcoming a traumatic experience. Sessions are generally 50 minutes and can be scheduled weekly, bi-weekly or at other intervals as mutually decided on. Personal counseling is not a “magic wand” and the counselor cannot reach your goals for you, however, we can help guide you in the direction to do so successfully. It is an active process that will take work on your part both in and outside of sessions, and we are willing to help you do this!

Will my parents, family, friends or professors know I am coming to counseling?

All of the services provided by the Counseling and Disability Services Office are confidential. Our staff adheres to professional, legal and ethical guidelines that protect your personal information. This means any information about your contact with our office will not become part of your academic record and cannot be released to any office or individual without your consent. You may choose to sign a release of information form to allow us to communicate with family or friends and you can choose what information they have access to (ex. Contact in emergencies only). We will be sure to discuss confidentiality with you in detail at your first appointment. **It is important to note that there are some exceptions to confidentiality.** As counselors, we are mandated to report some information which may include intent to harm yourself or others, or any suspicion of abuse occurring to a vulnerable population such as children, the elderly, the disabled etc. Our primary goal is to maintain your personal safety as well as the safety of others, and in the event that we believe confidentiality must be breached, we will make every attempt to discuss this with you prior to doing so.

Are there any limits to concerns I can bring to personal counseling sessions?

While we do our best to meet your needs and often deal with severe and on-going concerns, some issues may exceed the scope of what our counselors are qualified to address. Additionally, your needs may exceed the services that we can provide in our counseling center at this time. We will discuss this with you and provide referral information for clinicians in the community who may be better suited to meet your needs. Some examples of needs that may exceed our qualifications/services include: chronically suicidal/homicidal/psychotic students, students suffering from severe psychiatric diagnoses beyond the scope of our training, students presenting with a primary diagnosis of substance dependence, and students whose presenting concerns pose ethical conflicts (ex. Roommates seeking individual counseling to talk about one another, family members seeking individual counseling to talk about one another etc.).

Often we can work with students in conjunction with their medical doctors/other treating clinicians, so please be sure to contact us to discuss suitability for services before assuming we cannot help you.

Can I have medications prescribed through the Counseling Center?
One limitation to our counseling center is that we do not have medical doctors on staff, so we will not be able to provide any medication management services. Please speak with us about referrals to physicians who can prescribe medications, including those who operate on a sliding fee scale and accept patients without insurance.

Can I have medications prescribed through Health Services?

For students in Statesboro: You may utilize Health Services at Georgia Southern, however, they will not provide NEW prescriptions to students who are not currently receiving medication management from their home physician. If you ARE currently receiving medication from your home physician, contact GSU Health Services to discuss transferring your records. If documentation can be provided directly from your treating physician, Health Services will often refill prescriptions during the times you may not be able to visit your physician to receive refills. Statesboro students CANNOT receive any services from Georgia Southern’s Counseling and Career Development Center. This includes personal counseling, crisis intervention, and/or psychiatric services.

For Students in Swainsboro:

Please contact Health Services in Swainsboro to discuss ability to prescribe psychiatric medications. They can be reached at: (478) 289-2182