

**2009/10 START-UP PACKAGE FOR:**

**Learning Skills Services**

Counselling & Disability Services  
Bennett Centre for Student Services, N110  
[www.yorku.ca/cds/lss](http://www.yorku.ca/cds/lss) 416-736-5297

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)                      **LAST NAME,**                      **FIRST NAME**

**Student Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**How To Use Learning Skills Services**

As part of the Counselling & Disability Services (CDS), Learning Skills Services (LSS) offers individual counselling and workshops designed to improve learning skills and academic confidence. To be successful, this must be a joint collaborative effort, between LSS staff and each student. We are committed to supporting student academic growth through instructional group workshops, online and print resources, and individual counselling designed to help you develop and apply learning strategies specific to your needs.

Your role is to be actively committed to your own personal and academic growth, to take responsibility for your own learning, to apply the suggested strategies and access the recommended resources, and to maintain the gains you make through using our service.

**Step One:** This Learning Skills Start-Up Package contains important information about the policies and services of the Learning Skills Services, as well a brief Self-Assessment Questionnaire. Please read and complete all materials in this start-up package, and sign the form (on, p.2) to indicate that you have done this.

**Step Two:** If you wish to access individual counselling for learning skills, bring your completed start-up package to CDS where the receptionist will book you an appointment with an LSS counsellor. Your package **MUST** contain the signed policy statement, request for appointment and completed questionnaire, before an appointment can be scheduled.

**Step Three:** Attend the scheduled appointment, in order to identify your learning skills needs and goals and to learn how to access appropriate resources and strategies. These may include group workshops, reading materials, and/or subsequent individual appointments.

**Step Four:** Follow up on the strategies, resources and referrals discussed in the appointment. Attend any workshops relevant to your learning needs. Find out everything you can about how to improve your skills in your identified areas. Try out the strategies, giving them enough time to see what works for you and what doesn't. Make adjustments as necessary.

**Step Five:** Make and attend any follow-up appointments that are recommended or desired, to discuss your progress and improve your academic skills. Generally, a maximum of four (4) follow-up sessions are permitted per student, per term. Missed or cancelled sessions will be deducted from the balance of available appointments for each student. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, if you miss two consecutive appointments without notifying the office at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled appointment time, we assume you are no longer interested in counselling and you will not be permitted to book another appointment for the rest of the academic term.

## Counselling & Disability Services

### Learning Skills Services

#### Policies and Procedures

The information below provides details regarding policies and procedures of Learning Skills Services that are located within Counselling & Disability Services (“CDS”).

#### **Student Success**

Student success at university depends on many factors, including motivation, self-discipline, psychological wellness, and physical health. Where appropriate, we consider all of these areas in learning skills counselling, and may recommend referrals or alternate resources as needed.

#### **Privacy of Information**

Our clients’ personal information is held in utmost confidence, as set out in the attached CDS Client Privacy Statement. Personal information is maintained and disposed of in a secure manner, in compliance with relevant privacy legislation. Electronic files are stored in an encrypted database.

#### **Flow of Information**

Client records are maintained in locked file cabinets in CDS. Occasionally, consultation may be necessary between Learning Skills staff and other professional staff within CDS. This sharing of relevant information may result in other staff in CDS sometimes having access to the information in the client’s Learning Skills Services file. All staff that do have access to Learning Skills Services files are required to maintain strict levels of confidentiality as outlined above and to refer only to information relevant to the services they are providing.

#### **Workshops**

Clients may take an unlimited number of learning skills workshops, on topics such as: ***Time Management, Reading and Note-Taking, Learning Style, Memory, Academic Anxiety, Essays and Term papers, and Exam Preparation.*** Please see the monthly workshop calendar for up-to-date course offerings, and register for these ahead of time, using a separate form designated for this purpose.

#### **Individual Learning Skills Appointments**

Students have the option of meeting individually with a learning skills counsellor to address specific learning skills issues. Such counselling is intended primarily as a short-term intervention and learning experience, rather than a permanent ongoing arrangement. The Learning Skills Services focuses on helping students acquire and practise learning and study strategies, but is not a tutoring service. We do not provide tutoring services.

### **Appointment Times**

While we understand that circumstances may occasionally prevent you from keeping your appointment with us, we expect you to schedule and keep appointments responsibly and punctually. In the event that you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, please notify us at least 24 hours before the appointment time.

**Unless warranted by exceptional circumstances, if you miss two (2) consecutive appointments without notifying us prior to the scheduled appointment time, we assume that you are no longer interested in counselling. You will not be allowed to book another appointment for the rest of the academic term**

Please note that you must call during office hours (Monday, Thursday, Friday, 9am - 4:30pm, Tuesday and Wednesday, 9am - 7pm) as there is no voicemail.

We have a maximum waiting period of 15 minutes past your scheduled appointment time. After this grace period, you may be asked to reschedule.

### **Email and Internet Policy**

Email is not a confidential form of communication and therefore CDS does not conduct counselling by email and discourages the use of email communication between clients and counselling and disability staff. CDS practitioners do not accept invitations from clients to participate in their online social networks, nor do they invite clients to participate in their own personal online social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Myspace).

### **Letters of Reference**

CDS practitioners are unable to provide letters of reference for students unless they have supervised the student in a work, volunteer or academic capacity.

### **Questions or Comments**

Should you have any questions, concerns or suggestions regarding the information above or any other aspects of the Learning Skills Services, feel free to discuss them with your learning skills counsellor at any time. You may also ask to meet your counsellor's supervisor at any time.

**Please sign below to affirm that you have read and received a copy of these Policies and Procedures and the CDS Client Privacy Statement.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Effective Date: September 1, 2009

## Counselling & Disability Services (“CDS”) Client Privacy Statement

### **What types of personal health information do we collect from you?**

We collect only personal and health information we reasonably need to provide counselling and disability care to you and as is allowed under the authority of the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (S.O. 2004, c. 3 Sched. A, s. 29) or other privacy legislation that may apply: your name, birth particulars, contact information (addresses, emergency contacts), and academic status (faculty, year of study). As part of our intake procedure, we may ask you to complete a questionnaire to better understand your situation. We may also ask you to allow us to collect information from other professionals with whom you have been involved previously.

### **What are the uses or purposes for the personal health information you collect from me?**

We need information to provide counselling and disability services to you and for administrative purposes, and CDS staff and counsellors may use it to consult with each other to improve the quality of the service provided to you.

We also store aggregate personal information in our electronic database for the purpose of collating demographic, intake and session information, monitoring progress and summarizing our services. We use such group data (not the names of our clients) to provide statistical data to *York University* administration or to write reports about our services.

### **What types of entities may receive the personal health information I give you (if it is shared)?**

With very few exceptions, your information will not be disclosed to anyone outside CDS without your consent. The exceptions include circumstances where disclosure to authorities is allowed by our profession’s ethical standards or required by law, for example:

- if there is reason to believe that there is a significant risk of bodily harm to the client or others
- in the case of apparent, reported, suspected or potential child abuse or neglect
- in response to a court order or summons for records or testimony
- if clients report sexual abuse by a Regulated Health Care Professional
- as part of the regulatory activities of the College of Psychologists, Social Workers or Nurses to protect the public interest.
- for the purpose of contacting a relative, friend or potential substitute decision-maker if the client is injured, incapacitated, or ill and unable to give consent personally
- for the purpose of a proceeding or a contemplated proceeding in which CDS is expected to be a party or a witness if the information relates to or is a matter in issue in the proceeding.

The external parties in the examples above have their own strict privacy obligations and we will make every effort to protect your privacy in these instances.

### **How long do you keep my personal health information?**

We usually maintain client records for fifteen years after the date of last contact, unless there are extenuating circumstances which require us to maintain the records for longer (e.g., if required to respond to legal action).

### **How can I limit the use of my personal health information?**

When giving us permission to disclose information about you, you may limit what we disclose. However, if the information you do not want disclosed is clearly needed by the person receiving the information to provide you with appropriate service, we are required by law to inform the person receiving the information that you have refused consent to provide some necessary information.

### **How can I exercise my access rights?**

With only a few exceptions, you have the right to see your record of service, and to request copies of information in your record. Exceptions include the possibility of harm to you or someone else, and confidential information in the record about a person other than yourself.

### **How can I correct the information in my record?**

If you believe that information in your record is not accurate, you may request that we correct it. If we do not agree with the correction you request, you may file a notice of disagreement into your record.

**For more information or to file a complaint**

The *CDS Privacy and Information Practices* document is available at: [www.yorku.ca/cds/privacy](http://www.yorku.ca/cds/privacy)

If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of personal information by CDS, or would like to obtain access, request a correction of a record of your personal health information held by CDS, or file a complaint, please contact:

CDS Privacy Officer      E-mail: [cdspriv@yorku.ca](mailto:cdspriv@yorku.ca)  
Tel: 416-736-5297

CDS  
York University  
4700 Keele Street, N110 BCSS  
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

## Learning Skills Services: Request for Individual Appointment

When you drop off this start-up package and Self-Assessment Form, an appointment time will be scheduled for you as soon as possible on a first-come, first-served basis. For further information, contact the Learning Skills Services by telephone at (416) 736-5297.

### PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Date \_\_\_\_\_ (date you are filling out this form)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student number \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK HERE IF YOU ARE A GRADUATE STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_ or Program/Level \_\_\_\_\_  
(For Undergraduates) (for Graduate Students)

Year of Study 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> 6<sup>th</sup> Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(please circle)

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

May we leave a detailed message for you at this number? Yes No

E-mail (if used regularly): \_\_\_\_\_

Which issue(s) would you like assistance with?

- General Study Skills
- Time Management
- Academic Anxiety and Stress Management
- Preparing for Exams
- Reading Skills
- Note-taking Skills
- Learning Style
- Other: (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Comments (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

## Learning Skills Services Self-Assessment Questionnaire:

Use the scale accompanying each statement below (from **1 = strongly agree** to **5 = strongly disagree**) to indicate the extent to which that item describes you. Be sure to return your completed questionnaire when you book your start-up appointment in Room N110, Bennett Centre for Student Services. *(Please note that not all questions will apply to post-course-work Graduate Students. If this is your situation, feel free to leave blank any questions which do not apply.)*

### Awareness of Course Goals:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have read and understand the course description and syllabus for each course	1	2	3	4	5
I can identify the main themes of my courses	1	2	3	4	5
I can list the key topics and concepts in my courses	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the relationship between the lectures and tutorials and readings in the courses I'm taking	1	2	3	4	5
I use the outline of course grades to help me gauge the importance of various course assignments	1	2	3	4	5

### Time Management:

I have articulated a series of personal and academic goals towards which I'm striving this year	1	2	3	4	5
I have a strong awareness of where my time is used	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I have a successful balance of school, homework, work, and personal time.	1	2	3	4	5

**Strongly Agree**      **Agree**      **Neutral**      **Disagree**      **Strongly Disagree**

I use a written plan, to-do list, or monthly calendar to keep track of my various activities

1	2	3	4	5
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I spend at least 4 - 5 hours per week per course on reading/studying, related learning activities and assignments

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Note-taking skills:**

I am able to listen actively to lectures and summarize their main ideas

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I have a system to record information in a meaningful and organized way

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I use my notes as the basis for review, thoughtful inquiry, studying, writing, and idea development

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I am able to use my notes to detect course themes and to connect lectures and readings

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I have learned the instructional style of my instructors and can detect the cues they give to indicate that they are conveying important information

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

**Reading skills:**

I know and use strategies to develop an overview or preview of my text materials before a full reading

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I maintain my concentration over long readings through active reading; that is, by summarizing, thinking, questioning, and developing ideas

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I keep up with the pace of readings in my courses

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I understand the materials I read in my courses	1	2	3	4	5

I can list the structural pieces of a chapter or book that can assist me in locating specific information	1	2	3	4	5
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**Academic Anxiety and Stress Management:**

I identify and work to cope with my academic stressors	1	2	3	4	5
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I have anticipated those points in my academic schedule when I will experience elevated levels of stress	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

I tend to maintain an optimal level of stress for my own maximal productivity	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

I usually feel in control when it comes to school and school tasks	1	2	3	4	5
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**Preparing for Exams:**

I tend to start my studying far enough in advance of the exam or test	1	2	3	4	5
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I find that in preparation for tests and exams I don't need to re-learn a lot of what I was supposed to have learned	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

When I study I tend to test or quiz myself to ensure that I have a fluent knowledge of my topics	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

I prepare in ways that assure me I'll comprehend and remember my course materials	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

I successfully anticipate the content tested and/or the kinds of questions on exams and tests, most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
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I am calm about exams and don't usually experience stress, panic, or "blanking out" when writing exams

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

### Learning Style

I am aware that different people have different ways of processing and retaining information

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I have a good understanding of how I learn best

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I know the different types of learning strategies that I can use to increase my ability to remember and learn

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I use a variety of learning strategies to reinforce learning and retention of information

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

### Academic Writing:

I usually understand what the assignment asks me to do

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

My process of writing includes at least three of the following: pre-writing, idea generating, researching, and revision

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I usually start writing tasks early enough and typically do not require extensions to posted deadlines

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

I understand and follow the university's guidelines on plagiarism

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

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What works for you?  
What doesn't work for you?  
Comments?