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# LRC LETTERS

TRANSFORM THE WAY YOU LEARN

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# HOW DO YOU LEARN?

## QUESTION OF THE MONTH



**Teresa Nguyen**  
Kinesiology

“Personally, I get scared really easily when it comes to answering or asking questions in class. I am afraid of embarrassing myself if I ask a wrong question. I tend to hold back on participating in class because I get intimidated easily which prevents me from participating.”



**Tracy McDonald**  
Applied Mathematics

“No. I learn through probing questions, getting a deeper understanding.”



**Malcolm Canidate**  
Music

“Yes and No...I feel like initially when the class starts, I have no problems with answering questions. However, as time goes on in the class, if I feel like I've answered too many times I'll try to let other people answer. If no one does then I'd probably reluctantly raise my hand if I knew the answer because I hate when the teacher allows an uneasy silence to sit over the class.”

Does it spook you to ask or answer questions in class? Why or why not?

“It does not really spook me to ask a question during lectures. The reason why is because if I'm confused about something, I should solve that confusion ASAP in order to get a better grade on the given assignment/test/class. However, it is a little scary to answer questions during lectures because I never really volunteer to answer unless I am very certain that I am right. I'm scared to answer incorrectly because there might be judgement from my peers.”



**Angela Panding**  
Psychology

“Yes! I'm naturally shy, so if I have a burning question, I typically go to office hours.”



**Michelle Allende**  
English Literary Studies

“Yes, it does spook me to answer questions in class. Even when I know I have the right answer, I still have doubts and therefore hesitate in raising my hand. When there is complete silence in a classroom I do try to answer because the silence feels too awkward. I do tend to ask more questions than answer questions because I feel that there is less pressure in doing so.”



**Josue Barrios**  
English Literary Studies

Want to be a part of LRC Letters? [Click here](#) to respond to our next question of the month, which will be featured in our upcoming November issue.



A S K

E D W

A R D

This is the place to share any and all questions, comments, and concerns about academic skills. All questions are submitted by CPP students and answered by Edward, the LRC's Academic Skills Coordinator. To submit a question, [CLICK HERE](#).

# 01

PUBLIC SPEAKING IS A FEAR OF MINE, WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO OVERCOME THIS WHEN GIVING CLASS PRESENTATIONS?

First off, you are not alone. In fact, more than half of our population struggles with a fear of public speaking.

One of the most common causes of this fear is a lack of confidence in the content, personal appearance, or delivery. Here are some great tips to try:

### CONTENT

Don't just practice your material by yourself in front of a mirror (though that is also helpful). Practice in front of others and ask them what they learned, what confused them, etc. Make it your goal to refine any problem spots.

### APPEARANCE

We all have the outfit, color, hairstyle, etc. that makes us feel good--wear that for your presentation, if it's appropriate. Now is not the time to try a bold new look or pretend to be someone else.

### DELIVERY

Try to not memorize your presentation word for word. Once you forget a word or two, you may find yourself stumbling to get back on track.

**At the end of the day**, feel confident that you are the most knowledgeable person in the room on your topic. Stand/sit up tall, take your time, and don't forget to breathe. Should you make a mistake NEVER APOLOGIZE, keep moving. Most people won't notice until you've pointed an error out.

If all else fails, you could always imagine everyone (but you) in their underwear...

# 02

I KNOW I NEED HELP IN MY MATH CLASS, BUT I NEVER EVEN KNOW WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK MY PROFESSOR DURING LECTURE. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Visiting professors' office hours can be intimidating, especially when we need help, but aren't sure on what.

**A great place to start is the Learning Resource Center.**

Our tutors are trained to not focus on giving answers. Instead, they can help you identify your understanding of a concept and where any breakdowns are happening.

You can then use this information to develop a list of questions for your professor--something else our tutors would be happy to cover.

# 03

HOW DO I STAY MOTIVATED IN THE COURSES THAT I'M NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN?

I can be honest and share that I felt this way about several of my general ed. courses. I understood that taking courses I wasn't interested in made me a more well-rounded learner, but it was a struggle to stay motivated.

Here are some tips that worked for me:

- **Focus on the big picture.** It's easy to get bogged down midway through a semester with content that doesn't excite you. Instead of focusing on the class as the end goal, think of your degree. Each class is one step closer to your goals of graduation and becoming a professional.
- **Make connections to courses that are interesting.** Nothing you are learning is isolated to one area of study. Everything you are learning can be tied back to your major or career goals, somehow. It's your job to find those connections through critical thinking, analysis, etc. If a connection doesn't exist, then make one. Sounds like a Ph.D. dissertation in the making to me...
- **Ask yourself, "What would I change if I were teaching the course?"** Maybe you would incorporate more visuals or create more opportunities for interaction. Great. Find ways to incorporate your suggestions (in and out of the classroom) and make the course more interesting for yourself.

LRC Clips serve as bite-sized videos that cover different Academic Skills. Available on YouTube, these clips are meant to give an overview of various skills for you students and faculty who not only want to think about how you learn, but who also want to transform the way you learn. Students and faculty can create their own playlists of Clips that are most relevant to them. Some of the topics covered in this month's clips are participating in class, how to read a textbook, and where to sit in class.

**Click here  
to watch!**

LRC CLIPS



# LRC Clips

## Asking Questions In Class



LRC CLIPS

Have you ever been afraid to speak up in class? Whether it's asking or answering questions, I think we can all admit that we've been hesitant to speak up in a classroom setting at some point in our lives. But, have you ever weighed the pros and cons of speaking up in class? Well, why don't we do that right now:

### Pros -

- When you speak up and ask a question or answer a question, it keeps you engaged in class
- You may ask a question that other students also have, but are too shy to ask
- Your professor will be excited about your participation and engagement with the material
- You can always learn from answering or asking questions, even if your answer is not correct.

### Cons -

- Maybe you answer a question incorrectly, but isn't the learning experience worth more than being right or wrong?

As you can see, there are far more benefits to speaking up in class than there are to staying quiet. Whether you do it to stay engaged and awake, or to really deepen your understanding of the material, you can't lose when using your voice! **To watch this Clip, just click the play button on the left.**



FACULTY & STAFF  
SPOTLIGHT

RECOGNIZING THOSE WHO MAKE OUR CAMPUS A COMMUNITY





**Jennifer H. Kohagura,**  
**Psy. D.**  
Counseling and  
Psychological Services  
Clinical Staff, Psychologist

**F**eatured on LRC Chats, “It’s okay Not to Be Okay,” Jennifer Kohagura shares some of the struggles and resources for students with mental health concerns. In a brief interview with Jennifer, she shares some of her own thoughts on academic skills:

**Q:** In your opinion why are academic skills important?

**A:** Academic skills... are all different coping strategies and life skills that students can adapt to other parts of their lives. The ability to use a variety of these skills in different situations shows resilience and flexibility.

**Q:** What is one academic skill you would recommend to students that you work with?

**A:** Many of our students at Cal Poly Pomona have multiple responsibilities and roles in their lives... Time management is critical for students to balance academics, responsibilities, personal life, and self-care.

**Q:** What academic skill do you wish you knew more about or wish you had used more when you were in school?

**A:** I underutilized tutoring when I was an undergraduate. I had the belief that the science classes were presented in English so I should be able to understand and apply the knowledge like I did with all other subjects. But for some reason my brain viewed most of my science classes as a foreign language and there was a learning disconnect. If I had gotten tutoring, I’m pretty sure someone could have translated those classes so it didn’t feel like a foreign language.



**Denise Garretson,**  
**M.S.**  
Math & Stats Department  
Lecturer

**D**enise Garretson is one of the Learning Resource Center’s coveted coordinators. Upon speaking to Denise, she revealed some of her opinions about academic skills:

**Q:** In your opinion why are academic skills important?

**A:** Academic skills are important because it helps students learn to be students. They are skills that can be applied to any class and any subject.

**Q:** What is one academic skill you would recommend to students that you work with?

**A:** An academic skill I highly recommend is reading the section BEFORE class, trying to understand any definition, formulas, or concept. Even if a student does not understand completely, at least the classroom is not the first time they are seeing it. They can gather informed questions and ask them in class or in office hours.

**Q:** What academic skill do you wish you knew more about or wish you had used more when you were in school?

**A:** I wish I knew more about being prepared for class, reading the section & writing down questions. I also wish I knew how to take notes. I wrote down everything from the board, but notetaking is more than that. It can be a really effective tool.

# L C H A T S R C



## IT'S OKAY NOT TO BE OKAY

Guest:

Jennifer H. Kohagura, Pys. D.

*There is no greater factor in academic success than your mental health, but as students, we often forget to prioritize it. In this episode, we are joined by Dr. Jennifer Kohagura, Psychologist from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at Cal Poly Pomona, as we talk about the role that mental health plays in our academic and professional success. We also discuss some of the habits and resources that all CPP students can begin utilizing today in order to have a healthier mindset. To listen to this, or any of our episodes, just click the icons in the top right corner.*

If you are a student that wants to learn about the secrets to a successful college career, or just want to hear noteworthy conversations about topics that influence student success, then this is the podcast for you.



L R C C H A T S

# A Mental Health Talk for CPP Students

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In this episode of LRC Chats, students are encouraged to think about and talk about their mental health. Our special guest, Jennifer Kohagura, from CPP Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) explains that a large portion of college Freshmen already have pre-existing mental health concerns, and even if they don't, the prime age for these concerns to develop is between 18-24 years of age. This creates increasing importance for mental health awareness, which is becoming far more accepted in this generation.

Kohagura tells us that students need to recognize when they are struggling, and part of this is making sure not to minimize their feelings. She tells us that if you feel your concerns negatively affecting your ability to function in any capacity, not just academically, then it is time to ask for help. CAPS focuses on helping the whole student through different modalities. Appointments can be made over the phone or in person. More information can be found at:

<https://www.cpp.edu/~caps/index.shtml>.

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