

STAR NEWS QUARTERLY

OCU PARENT & FAMILY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

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Latest COVID-19 campus update webinar [HERE](#)



Oklahoma City
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Message from Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion

Happy Fall! It's the time of the year when temperatures fall, leaves change colors, and I am all too eager to dive into making all the soups I love. I've been back in Oklahoma from living in Colorado for some months now and serving in the inaugural role of vice president for Diversity and Inclusion at Oklahoma City University. As I've connected with campus community members, one thing rings true – OCU is a special place and is made up of highly intelligent, ambitious, and committed people. Perhaps, as a parent or support person, you've also come to know OCU's appeal.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion's (ODI) mission is "to work collaboratively with campus partners, alumni, and friends of Oklahoma City University to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice through policy, education, and strategic initiatives that advance our university's mission." The ODI team is committed to providing ongoing learning opportunities that allow everyone in our community to expand our perspectives about religious and secular worldviews, sexuality, race, disability, gender identity, ethnicity, national origin, and socioeconomic status, for example. More recently, the student diversity and inclusion team hosted opportunities for everyone to learn about deaf awareness month, wearing a costume and not a culture, and Autumn Moon Festival.

The work I get to do is exciting, challenging, and rewarding in a number of ways, and one of them is connecting with your student. If you're ever curious about they're up to and what they're learning on campus outside of the classroom, I encourage you to initiate a conversation with them. It's possible they'll share some new information that will expand your perspectives, too.

Thank you for supporting your student's learning and exploration as they continue on their educational journey!

Sincerest wishes,

Dr. Talia Carroll



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Counseling Services

Hello OCU students and families!

The fall semester is flying by and we're quickly approaching mid-terms! This semester, it is especially important that students are feeling supported, as increased stress and burnout is a likely result of the compact schedule.

Students, try to take time now and throughout the semester to be easy on yourselves. It is normal to become caught up in schoolwork, tests, rehearsals, etc. while putting your needs on the backburner. With all that being said... self-care is just as important as everything else! Practicing self-care doesn't have to be anything specific either, it'll vary from person to person. Self-care ideas include: going to bed early, taking a nap, saying "no" instead of overextending yourselves, talking to a supportive friend/family member, going on a walk, and many more. The main takeaway is to remind yourself that self-care isn't a luxury, it's a necessity.

Parents, when communicating with your student, validating their feelings and concerns would be an excellent way to provide support. Sometimes it's more important to feel heard initially, before reacting or problem-solving. Encouraging them to participate in self-care activities daily, sending reassuring messages, or even a gift in the mail would all be wonderful ways to offer comfort. Finally, informing them that campus counseling is available!

OCU counseling is offering support through virtual sessions, Monday- Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. via the HIPAA compliant provider, doxy.me. If you have any questions or are interested in counseling, please do not hesitate to reach out at 40-208-7901 or email Chloe Roby, University Counseling Administrative Assistant, at croby@okcu.edu. Thank you!

The Counseling Services Team:

[Mindy Windholz](#)- Director

[Allie Hill](#)- Personal Counselor

[Le Zheng](#)- Personal Counselor

[Wiljar Ojuro](#)- Counselor Intern

[Chloe Roby](#)- Administrative Assistant

Below are videos regarding overcoming anxiety:

Test Anxiety Explained (UNC Learning Center): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FsgwLWdSS8>
How to Overcome Test Anxiety (Dr. Antonio Webb): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PgEllewf7Y>

Exam Stress Releasing Tips and Techniques (Dr. Samir Parik): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZTGBjZyvk>

COVID-19, How the news can increase anxiety and how to handle it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15b3gllWLLc>

Managing Anxiety: Breathing Exercise Amid COVID-19 Crisis (UC San Diego Health): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAdwqHI7sac>

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Religious Life

Oklahoma City University includes Religious Life as part of a campus that helps students develop their whole selves. Often times students don't consider the role faith will play in their college years. The Religious Life Office can help students connect to their faith tradition in spaces both on and off campus. The easiest way to connect is to reach out to Rev. Elizabeth Horton-Ware, Director of Religious Life, through email. Elizabeth also makes time to meet with students to discuss difficult conversations about faith and life. This is available to students of any faith tradition, or of no faith affiliation.



Oklahoma City University Religious Life

Rev. Elizabeth Horton-Ware, Director

erhortonware@okcu.edu • (405) 208-5484

Spring 2021 Academic Calendar



Oklahoma City University will modify its usual academic calendar for the Spring 2021 semester to mitigate risks due to COVID-19. While these schedule changes are unusual for the university, they are designed to support a learning and living environment that is as safe as possible for our students, faculty, and staff.

The university will open on Monday, Jan. 4, 2021. The first day of classes (nonlaw) will be Tuesday, **Jan. 19**, which is a week later than the usual start date. Residence halls will open Jan. 15.

Due to the academic schedule adjustments, the university will not observe a spring break next semester. The last day of regular classes (nonlaw) will be April 30, with final exams **May 3-7** as originally scheduled. Residence halls will close at 5 p.m. May 7.

The full academic calendar is available online [here](#).

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Homecoming 2020: Press Play

Socially Distanced Stars,

Hello from your 2020 Homecoming Executive Committee! After countless hours of planning, we are SO excited to announce the debut of the 2020 Homecoming Celebration with this year's theme of "Press Play"!

Homecoming will take place **October 26 - October 30** and here's a preview of what you can expect:



Monday (October 26, 2020)

Welcome & Kickoff Webinar

Welcome to a week unlike any other! Join us as we introduce you to the week's schedule, your graphic design contest submissions, your stellar Homecoming Court and the Executive Committee.

Tuesday (October 27, 2020)

Door Decorating Contest

Students and organizations are invited to participate in this door decorating contest throughout the day. Expect to see creativity that just may cause you to press pause.

Wednesday (October 28, 2020)

Stars from the Plaza

Drawing from a Homecoming favorite, we will be showcasing some of the sweet offerings from Oklahoma City's Plaza District.

Thursday (October 29, 2020)

Distanced Day of Service

Take part in this safe and socially distanced opportunity to give back. Join us throughout the day to donate blood on campus to the Oklahoma Blood Institute.

Friday (October 30, 2020)

Virtual LipSync & Closing Ceremony

Homecoming's most iconic event just could not stay away...even without the lips! Expect more manageable LipSyncs (seriously, 90 seconds), familiar faces from OCU yesteryear and Homecoming coronation.

If you're interested in participating or being a part of a Homecoming Team, please be on the lookout for more details and our 2020 "Homecoming Press Playbook"! This semester has challenged our resiliency, adaptability and flexibility. We hope that you will take this opportunity to join us in coming together to celebrate the institution that we all get to call home.

Smiling Behind Our Masks,
The 2020 Homecoming Executive Committee

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Finals Week Survival Kits

The end of the semester can be one of the most stressful times of the year, and with this year adding extra stressors with the COVID-19 pandemic, social justice movements, and a major presidential election year for students, it is more important than ever to show some extra love and support.

The Office of Student Engagement will be putting together special gift bags for your student(s) for purchase. You can send your encouragement, love, and support to your student with the purchase of a **Finals Week Survival Kit!**

Finals Week Survival Kits are sold during both the fall and spring semester and will be given to your student on your behalf of the Office of Student Engagement.

To purchase one for this fall, please do so by **Thursday, November 12**, at our webpage at [THIS LINK](#).

The \$25 Care Package Will Include:

Candy ♦ Sticky Notes ♦ Stress Ball ♦ Pencils
Hot Chocolate ♦ Tea ♦ Granola Bar ♦ Coloring Book
Gum ♦ Chex Mix ♦ Highlighters ♦ Pre-packaged Cookies
Index Cards ♦ Hand Sanitizer ♦ Emergen-C

Holiday Ornaments

With our usual Parent & Family Day celebration not occurring this December due to COVID-19 restrictions, we still wanted to offer parents and families the opportunity to receive our annual holiday ornament! We offer ONE ornament per family.

If you would like an ornament, please complete the following [FORM](#) by **Monday, November 2**. We will then get them ordered, and have your student stop by to pick them up. GO STARS!