



## UWG’s Ingram Library Hosts Pop-Up Study Spot to Help Students Prepare for Finals Week

Arrianah Jones  
*Contributing Writer*

With finals week just around the corner, the University of West Georgia Ingram Library organized a pop-up study spot to help students manage the stress of the season. Designed as a space for both focus and encouragement, the pop-up invited students to pause, recharge, and connect, offering a much-needed break from the usual grind.

Library staff and academic experts were on hand to assist with research papers, projects, and presentations, helping students feel more confident heading into exams. UWG-themed merchandise, like miniature wolves and collectible pins, was also available, adding a fun element to the otherwise focused environment. The space offered not only academic help, but a chance for students to unwind and feel connected, reminding them that it is important to take care of mental health.

“I’m a senior and finals week is really exhausting,” said student Daphne Sausmer. “I think resources like this are really helpful, because it takes some of that stress away.”

For many students, especially during high-pressure weeks like finals. access to supportive, low-pressure spaces like this can make all the difference. These initiatives not only provide academic help, but also show students that their well-being matters, fostering a sense of community and encouraging healthy

habits that go beyond the classroom.

“When I was a student in undergrad, knowing that I had these resources available made me feel better,” said Stephaine Gordon, a graduate student and staff member in one of Ingram Library’s divisions. “Being able to provide that support now is just invaluable.”

As students juggle the demands of academics, work, and life, providing a space that encourages collaboration and stress relief offers a much-needed balance. The Ingram Library continues to foster an environment where students can thrive academically, offering assistance and support in whatever students need.

“Students may not have enough support elsewhere unless we provide it to them,” said Gordon. “That’s why spaces like this are so important.”

The event’s overall goal was to remind students that help is always just a step away, and as finals approach, these opportunities for connection play a crucial role in shaping a more resilient, supportive campus culture. Staff encouraged the students to push through, offering words of motivation and practical advice to help manage their time effectively and stay focused. By providing both emotional and academic support, they created an atmosphere where students felt empowered to tackle their challenges with confidence.

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“Even if you don’t do as well as you hoped, you’re almost done,” said Gordon. “Just breathe easy and you can rally for next semester after getting through the hardest part of the semester.”



Photo: Abbie Klein, *The West Georgian*



# UWG Offers Mental Health Support And Academic Services To Maintain Student Success During Finals Week

Abbie Klein  
News Editor

The week of final exams is the most crucial and stressful week for all college students. Many students feel heightened levels of anxiety, depression and isolation during this time. UWG offers several services to students to help prepare for finals week, including tutoring and academic coaching. UWG also offers free counseling services to all students to help ensure a healthy mental state around finals week.

“We provide services in person five days a week,” said Jamie Brown, Assistant Director of UWG Counseling LPC, CPCS. “It’s a walk in process. You can walk in anytime from 8 to 11... or between 1 and 4:30. [Students] get same day service, so they see a counselor that day.”

While UWG counseling has limited hours that may not work for everyone’s schedule, there are alternate services available for students who need emergency help.

“We also have something called Uwill, and that’s a service that’s available 24/7, seven days a week,” said Brown. “Let’s just say you’re cramming for a test...and suddenly you’re like ‘I can’t take this anymore. I just feel overwhelmed, I just don’t want to be here. I need somebody to talk to.’ You can use Uwill and that counseling service is something that there’s a counselor, I can’t tell you exactly what state or where they’re gonna be, but once you call them they will connect you with a counselor.”

Uwill is a free teletherapy hotline. They offer immediate service to

students in crisis at all times of the day. Information on how to contact them is available on UWG’s counseling website along with other mental health resources.

While exam week seems like it is inevitably stressful, UWG counselors are there to help students feel prepared and ready for exams while also maintaining personal health.

“The best advice I can give is to have a plan,” said Brown. “How that plan looks is to be organized. For example, know the dates of when you have something due, know the dates of when the test is. Prioritize, so think about if you organize, you prioritize.”

Brown emphasizes creating an organized schedule that not only prioritizes academic success but also mental success.

“I hear a lot of students who come in and say ‘I’ve got both of these assignments on the same day’ or ‘I’ve got both of these tests on the same day’ and they’re very overwhelmed because they’ve waited till the night before,” said Brown. “There needs to be some type of planning going into exam week, it shouldn’t be a time that you treat like any other week of school. It’s a specific week for a specific purpose.”

Contrary to most beliefs, students who get enough sleep and eat a proper diet are more likely to do better on exams. Having sufficient energy to make it through exams and think questions through is dependent



Photo courtesy of University of West Georgia

through the whole week. You’ve got to be mindful of what you’re putting into your body. Your body is already going to be under a certain level of stress by virtue of exam week... so that’s why having a plan is so critical.”

UWG is offering students an opportunity to de-stress and take a break from studying to focus on themselves at the start of finals week. On May 6, UWG is hosting “Time to Ungrind” in the TLC from 3:00 to 4:00. “Time to Ungrind” is a campus wide campaign to promote healthy coping mechanisms and study breaks to students.

To learn more about UWG counseling services and other academic support offered to students visit <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/index.php>.



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# UWG Fails to Protect Student Safety From Radical Conservative Rhetoric Under the Guise of Free Speech

Abbie Klein

News Editor

Alex Stein, a far-right conservative debater, came to The University of West Georgia through the student organization Turning Point USA at UWG on April 24. Stein was advertised as a friendly debater coming to campus to give students an opportunity to participate in healthy political debate.

Instead, Stein shouted expletives and slurs at students through a microphone from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The hate speech Stein voiced directly attacked students from marginalized communities at UWG, with specific focus on LGBTQ+ students and students of color.

“I was told about the event the day before it happened by a professor,” said Eshkar Kaidar-Heafetz, a UWG student and active member of the UWG debate team. “Walking to the TLC that day, TPUSA had a table set up between the TLC and the library that did not have the name TPUSA, only the turning point arrow, masquerading as a free speech organization... So that was really the start of things that were really weird for me.”

Stein was set up under a tent and behind a table outside the campus Starbucks by Love Valley. In front of Stein’s table, there were several signs, some promoting ideas of TPUSA and free speech, while others were handwritten signs invalidating transgender identity. Some students attempted to remove the signs, but they were immediately replaced by new ones.

“In sort of argumentative fashion you have this wide array of students against him around 30 to 40 feet from the actual thing itself, and then you have the people who support him sort of on the back end of his tent,” said Kaidar- Heafetz. “Around those you have those signs that say ‘Trans rights don’t matter.’”

Due to Stein being set up in a high traffic area of campus many students stopped on their way to class to see what was going on, subjecting them to offensive and harassing speech. Stein called out students who were not interacting with him or participating in a debate, using terms like “gay” and “trans” to be offending and entice students to speak with him.

“I got there right around the end of it but the first thing I hear is... Alex Stein called some student ret\*\*ded and very much that similar type of language... very derogatory and ableist alongside those terms,” said Kaidar-Heafetz.

Alongside the offensive language, students were also asked personal questions about their sexual preferences and habits. Along with Stein calling some students offensive and inappropriate language due to their sexual orientation. Towards the end of the event, multiple students began to counter-protest, bringing their own signs and chanting “stop the hate.” Due to this Stein left an hour earlier than he was supposed to, but not before addressing some students face to face in the crowd.

“As it starts to end he starts coming up personally to students, whether it be to take pictures or if someone had something to say he didn’t like he would start arguing with them face to face,” said Kaidar- Heafetz. “So for example, he got up in one of my friend’s faces. Got up incredibly close to him in a very aggressive manner, started yelling at him... using the same sorts of slurs. He came up to me, yelled at me, called fat and stupid and those kinds of things. Very obviously unprofessional and childish, but also very disappointing considering this is someone that we allow to come onto campus.

“When I started speaking to the other people who had been there, a couple big situations came up. I had one friend who had asked him a question and he was like ‘Well you’re wrong if you believe in it. And if you believe in it the two reasons are either that you’re stupid or you’re black.’” continued Kaidar- Heafetz.

Many students who were uncomfortable, felt unsafe or discriminated against at the event took the opportunity to submit a concern to UWG under the Title IX and Equal Opportunity policies.

UWG’s Equal Opportunity policy states, “UWG is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for living, working, and studying. Consistent with federal and state law, University System of Georgia policy, and University policy, the University prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status by any member of the University community on campus, in connection with a University program or activity, or in a manner that creates a hostile environment for any member of the University community.”

Students who submitted concerns received responses back from the UWG Office of Legal Affairs starting on Friday, that claimed Stein’s behavior was protected under First Amendment rights saying, “The University claims to uphold our educational mission by allowing for the exchange of ideas, even controversial ones, while maintaining safety protocols and community standards of conduct.”

UWG has yet to release another statement about the event.

“I don’t think they’re entitled [to do something], I think they’re required,” said Kaidar- Heafetz. “I think that in the response

letter the University of West Georgia wrote they said that it did not violate a) their rules of free speech but b) it occurred within community... behavior guidelines. Which, when looking into there is no published list of what those guidelines are. Which, at least to me, makes it seem like it’s an arbitrary term they’ve sort of coined in order to justify the existence and the continuance of hate speech on campus.

“If calling students of the university, who not only attend here but also pay money to go here, allowing them to get called r—ed by some random dude coming in from a hate speech organization. If those don’t violate community participation and behavioral guidelines that the university has, it makes me wonder what kinds of things the university is willing to justify,” continued Kaidar-Heafetz.

Many students were extremely upset at the University’s response to the event’s Title IX violations and have raised more questions about what the university is willing to protect. If a student or faculty member were to say the same things that Stein did, would the university take disciplinary action?

“If the university’s first reaction is not, ‘we understand we’re looking into this’ it is instead to shield itself from any criticism. I think that is a rather large issue for how the university handles any situation,” said Kaidar- Heafetz.

Students are very disappointed by UWG’s failure not only to protect students’ safety and wellbeing but also by a lack of apology UWG has yet to give to minority students who were attacked by Stein’s speech. UWG is a school that prides itself on inclusivity and diversity as well as being an advocate for student safety and well-being. When put to the test UWG fell extremely flat on what student’s expected.

During the event, there were several campus tours happening creating an uncomfortable situation for not only tour guides, but also for prospective students and their families. Proposing the issue of this event possibly affecting application numbers.

“The university is so willing to brush over [this event]... that goes against everything they’ve recently tried to advertise themselves as,” said Kaidar- Heafetz. “The university should not get to receive social credit for things like removing the indigenous flame off the logo as an attempt to be more culturally sensitive and diverse and then simultaneously bring about a man on campus... that said that there is ‘white genocide’ happening.”

Students urge the university to not only stand with their minority students but also to ensure safety for students in the future. This is not the first time a conservative speaker has come to campus. However this is the first time that an event of this nature was held in a public area that students could not avoid.

“The fact it was held outside given the fact [Lydia Taylor Davis] was in the TLC in a room that people could choose to enter and choose to leave, as opposed to a space where you are forced to come into engagement with it.” said Kaidar- Heafetz. “There is no ability to say ‘Hey this isn’t something I want to engage in this isn’t something I want to hear’ there is no ‘if you don’t like just leave.’”

Pressure continues on UWG to hold the proper violators accountable and to stand in solidarity with their students to uphold their values of diversity and inclusivity. College campuses should be a place for all students to feel safe and supported regardless of their identity or beliefs.



Photo: Abbie Klein, *The West Georgian*

Arts and  
Entertainment

Lady Gaga’s “Mayhem” Fails to Disappoint

Kailie Bridges  
Contributing Writer

Lady Gaga, who rose to fame 20 years ago for defying pop norms and remains a cultural icon today, released her latest summer album, Mayhem.

Released on March 7, it has found remarkable success with tracks like “Die with a Smile” surpassing the iconic original “Poker Face” in popularity with over two billion streams. It has also been recognized as the fastest song to reach one billion streams on Spotify.

The album stays true to her signature subgenre of pop and bears resemblance to styles found in her most well-known songs like “Just Dance.” Her Saturday Night Live performance of “Abracadabra” and a collaboration with Bruno Mars both contributed to the overnight success of Mayhem. Within hours of its release, ten of the fourteen tracks reached the top of national and global charts in over 20 countries.

“Die with a Smile” finds immediate success with a gorgeous duet between Gaga and Mars, with an upbeat theme of love and devotion capturing the hearts of many. It found widespread popularity on TikTok for its emotional chorus and it brings a welcomed variety to Mayhem’s overall tone. Other tracks like

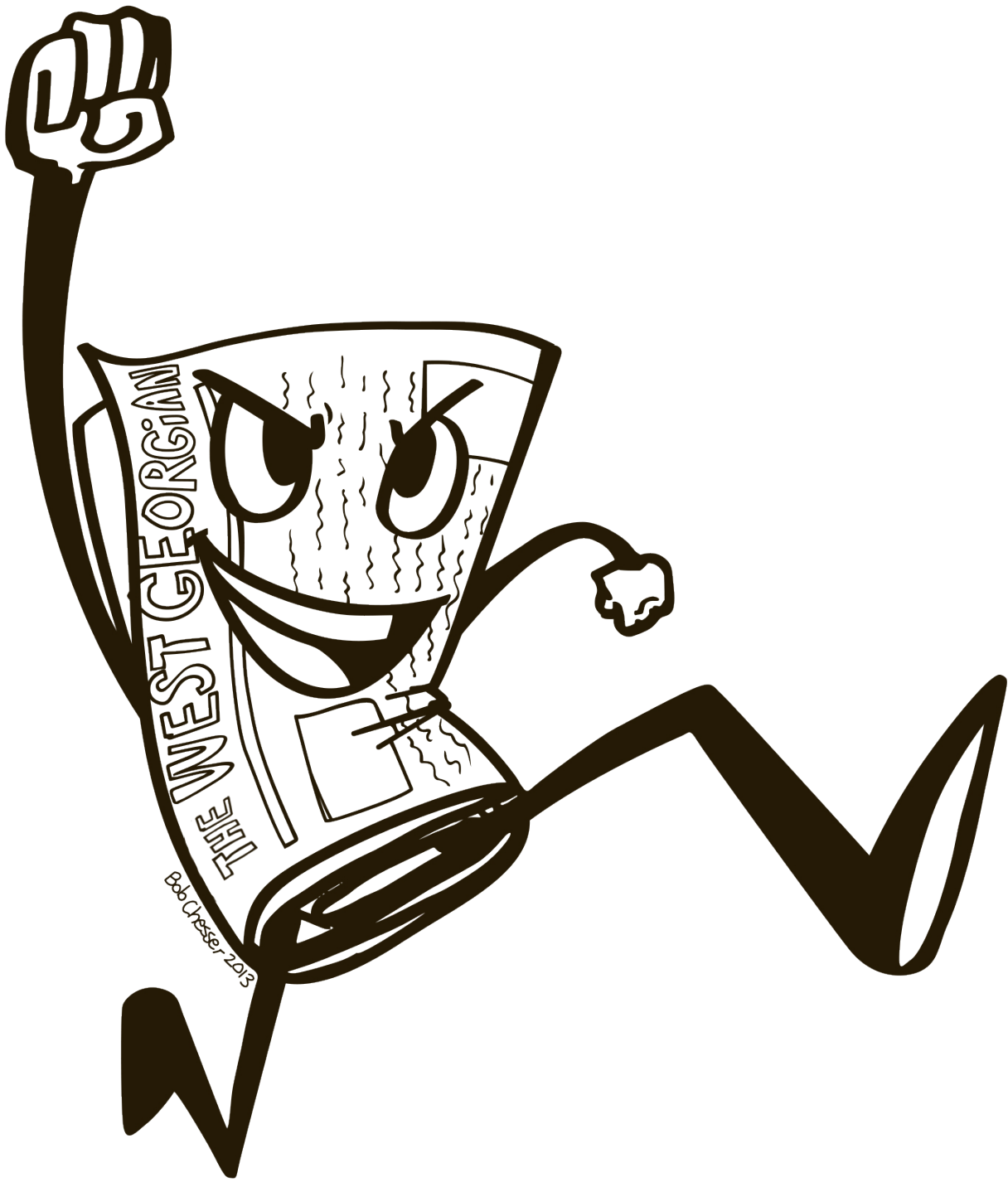


Photo courtesy of Google

“Killah” bring back the dark theme, with heavy synth and vocal layers, and lyrics based on control and desire rather than the love and devotion found in “Die with a Smile.” It’s been well received by many for its subtle nods to Gaga’s early dark-pop music to go well with her other upbeat tracks.

With Mayhem, Lady Gaga not only delivers a critically successful album, but shows she still shines in relevance and pop culture as she did years ago. With a mix of nostalgia and modern twists makes this album deserving of its success.

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