How Can Workshops Benefit You? A Conversation with Success Coordinator Melanie Diaz about Habits of Success.

Written by Supreeth Muruges & Sreedevi Ravi
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The Habits of Success (HOS) program began in the Fall of 2022. The program is a combination of weekly one-on-one coaching with Success Coordinators and a workshop series spread out over the course of the semester. These workshops are open to all Northeastern students, and they cover a variety of topics ranging from goal setting to identifying individual strengths.

We got a chance to sit down with Melanie Diaz who is a Success Coordinator with the Student Support Initiative (SSI) and discuss how HOS can make an impact on any student's experience. Melanie grew up in central New Jersey and moved to Boston for college. She graduated from Northeastern University with a BS in Biology and a minor in Communications Studies. She is deeply committed to higher education, community organizing, and social & environmental justice.

Supreeth: What inspired you to conduct this workshop, and what do you hope students will gain from it?
Melanie: I am excited and inspired to conduct the workshop (later this semester) “A Guide to Prepare for Finals,” because this is an important skill that is not taught in traditional classes; however, it is extremely important to a student's academic success. Although finals week is only 1 week out of the semester, it is important that the correct preparation is conducted so that a student feels confident their hard work is represented in the final exam.

Sreedevi: What are some common misconceptions or challenges students have when they attend workshops and how do you address them?
Melanie: A common misconception about a workshop is that students already have access to this information on the internet. While this may be true, our HOS team has worked extremely hard to distill the information down to what is absolutely essential. In addition, our workshops feature interactive elements that make the subjects much more meaningful to students in the long term. Another misconception is that students feel they already know about the topics the workshops cover. However, it is always good to be reminded and discuss with peers the habits that support a student's holistic well-being along with their academics.

Supreeth: What are your thoughts on the importance of workshops in education and how do they differ from traditional classroom learning?
Melanie: Workshops are so important because they foster a supportive environment where participants can ask questions on specific elements of the subject matter that they would like to explore. Traditional classroom learning depends largely on notes and strictly recalling information (which is necessary for rigid subject material), however, workshops encourage students to be mindful when presented with information and reflect on how the workshop subject applies to them as an individual.

Supreeth: Can you share a tip or piece of advice for other students who are considering attending an HOS workshop?
Melanie: Some advice for anyone considering a workshop -- don't go in with specific expectations! Of course, if there is a question on the matter you would like to ask, the facilitator would be more than happy to share their insights. However, students have reported that going in with an open mind has helped them apply the workshop material to all areas of their life. You never know what might resonate with you!

I hope this article helped you add clarity to some of the misconceptions students have when attending a workshop and what students can take away from a workshop. Please feel free to reach out to the Student Support Initiative if you have any questions, Success Coaches and Student Success Guides are always happy to help!

You can click here to view the HOS workshop schedule for the semester.

About the Authors
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