



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Patrick McGonigal

Academic Resource Center

TO: Faculty

FR: Dr. Leslie Ashburn-Nardo, Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence and Academic Culture
Dr. Rebecca Weidensaul, Asst. VP, EMSS

DA: September 18, 2026

RE: **2026 Fall Term Faculty Referral Guide and Resources in Canvas**

Overview

To diminish barriers to student success and increase student use of co-curricular support services, we are offering **all faculty who are teaching courses in Fall 2026** a new referral tool within Canvas. This tool will prompt students to access the services/support they may need in a timely manner. There are three options for faculty referrals within Canvas: (1) the academic advisor (to assist with academic planning and guidance), (2) an academic coach (for learning support consultations) and/or (3) The Drexel Writing Center to support the student with writing assignments.

Background

The first iteration of the faculty referral tool was piloted in Winter 2026 and Spring 2026 with Gateway Course faculty who were using Blackboard Learn. Faculty recommendations helped students connect quickly and easily to services they needed. With the adoption of Canvas, **all faculty** can make referrals beginning Fall 2026 term.

Referring students to academic support services

We encourage faculty to promote resources available at the McGonigal Academic Resource Center (ARC). However, the new faculty referral tool in Canvas enables faculty to make timely referrals based on a student's academic progress and observations about their performance in the course. When faculty believe a student could benefit from consulting with their academic advisor or by using academic support (writing consultations and/or academic coaching), we encourage faculty to use this tool within the Canvas course shell.

IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS – This referral tool should not be used to refer a student who is in crisis; these should be reported via care referral form as a [student of concern](#), nor should it be used for those who have experienced possible discrimination or harassment.

Please use preexisting protocols and resources for students with those circumstances:

The following safety/student welfare resources serve Drexel undergraduate and graduate students:

- Drexel University Public Safety (if someone's safety is at immediate risk):
215.895.2222 Or dial 911

- 24/7 Drexel Counseling Center Crisis Line: 215.416.3337
- Counseling Center (during regular business hours): 215.895.1415

The Office of Student Conduct serves as the reporting center for all [reports of Student and Student Organization misconduct](#), as well as non-urgent reports about students in need of support.

- Any member of the Drexel University community or person with knowledge of an incident of misconduct or a student of concern can make a report.
- If the following reporting tools are not working, please contact their office via email at studentconduct@drexel.edu.

The Office of Civil Rights Compliance is the reporting hub for discrimination, harassment, and bias incidents as well as sexual harassment and misconduct. As mandated reporters, faculty are obligated to report their knowledge of such incidents to civilrights@drexel.edu. Additional information about mandated reporting is available [here](#).

THE FACULTY REFERRAL TOOL HIGHLIGHTS

How will faculty use the academic support referral system for specific students in their course?

- The tool is available in Canvas at the start of the Fall 2026 Term.
- Referrals can be made to academic advising, academic coaching or writing support because they are services that are available to all students and provide a comprehensive foundation to facilitate student success.
- Outreach is done for all referred students, so they have the appropriate support services in a timely manner.
- Faculty can make multiple referrals over the course of the term.
- Students will know that their faculty has made the referral for a specific course.
- Faculty will not receive a copy of the email correspondence sent to students but will see a record of previous referrals they have made for the student in Canvas.

What happens after faculty makes the referral using the tool in Canvas?

- First, a general message about academic services is sent via email from the McGonigal ARC email.
 - The correspondence is automated, and a copy of the email will reside in the student's record. A sample of the email is provided later in this document.
- Next, another email from the specific unit or units that provide the service(s): the academic advisor, the Center for Learning and Academic Success Services (CLASS), and/or The Drexel Writing Center offering more detail.

- The message is non-punitive and encouraging in tone; it is optional for students to follow up, but we want them to know that support and guidance are available and the steps they should take to access that support.
- Each message will provide specific details about the services and contact information to make an appointment or drop-in for services.
- While referrals are processed daily, a weekly report will be sent to the academic advisor, CLASS (Academic Coaching service), and/or Drexel Writing Center staff/service to assist them with managing outreach efficiently. This typically will happen at the beginning of the following week.

Important best practices for academic support referrals:

- If you have any questions about appropriate referrals, please contact ARC@drexel.edu or Rebecca Weidensaul at rebecca@drexel.edu.
- Faculty should refrain from doing “bulk referrals” or clicking the same resource for every student in the course.
- Making announcements in class or providing information on the syllabus to promote services in a general way ensures that all students are aware of available resources. For example, use the Drexel Writing Center for your project or paper.
- It is recommended that faculty use the referral tool for students whose performance suggests they could benefit from a specific service.

Consider adding the following information to your syllabus for all students:

The McGonigal Academic Resource Center (ARC), located in the Korman Center, serves as a hub of on-campus academic support services focusing on providing **content tutoring, writing support, academic coaching (time management/study skills, etc.), learning specialists, workshops, and more**—making it easier to access the tools that best fit your individual needs. Students are welcome to use the ARC's collaborative **study spaces for individual or group work**. To learn more about the McGonigal ARC, visit: [Drexel.edu/ARC](https://drexel.edu/ARC) or email ARC@drexel.edu.

HOW TO USE THE REFERRAL TOOL in Canvas: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE and SCREENSHOTS

To refer students to advising or academic support services in Blackboard Learn:

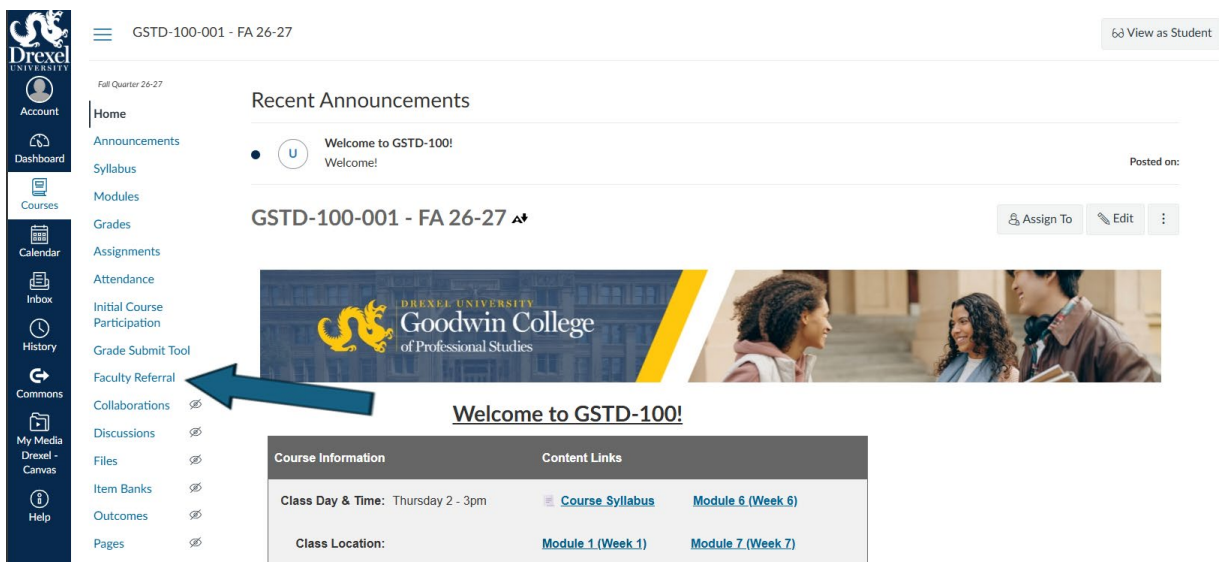
1. Log into and select “Courses”.
2. Select the Course you are teaching.
3. Under “Course Management”, select “Course Tools”.
4. Under “Course Tools”, select “Faculty Referral”.
5. A list of students in your class will appear with student photo, name, course, previous referrals, referrals, etc.

- Under “Referrals”, use the carrot (blue upside-down triangle) for each student; a drop-down list of the 3 services will appear.
- Click on the service or services you recommend and whether you spoke to the student about the referral. This information will be tracked as part of the referral, but no action is taken.
- Final step – click on “submit referral” button.
- A pop-up message will appear at the top of the screen to let you know your referral was saved.
- A history of your referrals will be saved in the student record, so you can reference it at any time.
- This will trigger email outreach by the McGonigal ARC to your students along with the specific services you have recommended.

THE FOLLOWING SECTION PROVIDES YOU WITH EASY SCREENSHOTS

Screenshot #1:

Select “Faculty Referral” found on the course’s menu

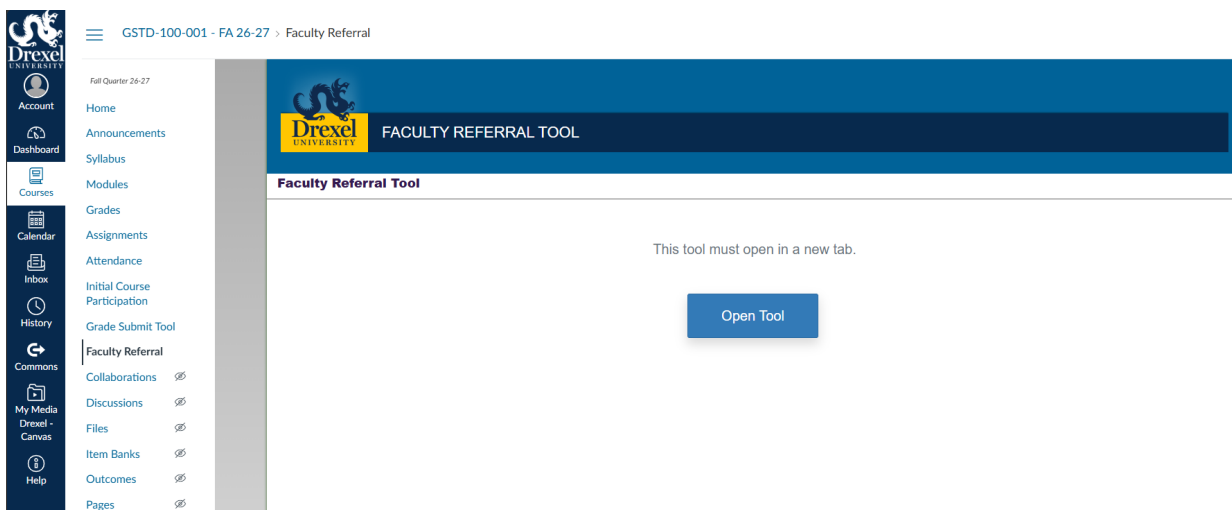


The screenshot shows the Drexel University Canvas LMS interface for the course GSTD-100-001 - FA 26-27. The left sidebar contains a menu with options like Home, Announcements, Syllabus, Modules, Grades, Assignments, Attendance, Initial Course Participation, Grade Submit Tool, Faculty Referral, Collaborations, Discussions, Files, Item Banks, Outcomes, and Pages. A blue arrow points to the 'Faculty Referral' option. The main content area displays a welcome message from the instructor, 'Welcome to GSTD-100!', and a banner for Goodwin College of Professional Studies. Below the banner, there is a table with course information and content links.

Course Information	Content Links
Class Day & Time: Thursday 2 - 3pm	Course Syllabus Module 6 (Week 6)
Class Location:	Module 1 (Week 1) Module 7 (Week 7)

Screenshot #2: Opening the “Faculty Referral” Tool

Select “Open Tool”



The screenshot shows the Drexel University Canvas LMS interface for the course GSTD-100-001 - FA 26-27, specifically the 'Faculty Referral' tool page. The page has a blue header with the Drexel University logo and the text 'FACULTY REFERRAL TOOL'. Below the header, there is a message stating 'This tool must open in a new tab.' and a blue button labeled 'Open Tool'.

Screenshot #3

Find the student in your course and what resources are available for referrals

Course: CSTB 100-001 - FA 26-27

Advising: Support with academic planning, course selection, degree requirements, academic progress, or navigating university policies and resources.

Academic Coaching: Personalized guidance to develop or refine active learning approaches and effective study strategies, improve organization, and build skills for academic success.

Drexel Writing Center: One to one or small group consultation to support development of writing projects and skills.

Photo	First Name	Last Name	University Id	Course	Referral Date	Referrals Click the blue arrow ▼ to expand academic support referral options	Spoke with Student about this Referral	Action
	Frank	Adams	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Ben	Brown	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Emily	Chen	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	John	Chen	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Joseph	Lee	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Robert	Lee	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Mark	Travis	XXXXXXXXXX	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals

Showing 1 to 7 of 7 entries

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- A list of students in your class will appear with student photo, name, course, previous referrals, referrals, etc. For privacy, we have blocked those in this example.
- **Before making a referral, review definitions of each service available:**
 - **Academic Advising** – support with academic planning, course selection, degree requirements, academic progress, or navigating university policies and resources.
 - **Academic Coaching** – personalized guidance to develop or refine active learning approaches and effective study strategies, improve organization, and build skills for academic success.
 - **Drexel Writing Center** – one to one or small group consultation to support development of writing projects and skills.
- Keep in mind, an academic advisor and academic coach can help connect a referred student to other tutoring services/supports that are appropriate. In this case, the student will receive additional outreach in a timely manner from those additional resources.
 - Most tutoring services begin in week 2 of the term and continue through the last day of classes or based on availability.

- To learn more about each of these services, visit [Drexel.edu/ARC](https://drexel.edu/ARC)

Screenshot #4

Choosing and submitting a specific referral(s) for a student in your course

Course: GSTD-100-001 - FA 26-27

Advising: Support with academic planning, course selection, degree requirements, academic progress, or navigating university policies and resources.
Academic Coaching: Personalized guidance to develop or refine active learning approaches and effective study strategies, improve organization, and build skills for academic success.
Drexel Writing Center: One to one or small group consultation to support development of writing projects and skills.

Photo	First Name	Last Name	University Id	Course	Referral Date	Referrals	Spoke with Student about this Referral	Action
	Faria	Al-Bawani	10759.202615	10759.202615		Click the blue arrow ▼ to expand academic support referral options	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Shen	Shen	10759.202615	10759.202615		☐ Academic Advisor ☐ Academic Coaching: CLASS ☐ Tutoring: Drexel Writing Center	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Wang	Gao	10759.202615	10759.202615			☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Wang	Gao	10759.202615	10759.202615			☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Wang	Gao	10759.202615	10759.202615			☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Wang	Gao	10759.202615	10759.202615			☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Wang	Gao	10759.202615	10759.202615			☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals

Showing 1 to 7 of 7 entries

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- **Under “Referrals”, click on the carrot (blue upside-down triangle) to make a referral for each student.**
 - A drop-down list of services will appear.
 - Click on the service or services you recommend for that student.
 - These will be recorded for future reference under “Referral Date”.
- **After you click on the service/services you recommend for the student, indicate if you have informed the student about the referral by clicking “Yes” or “No”.**
 - Contacting the student is not required. However, if you discuss the referral with the student, you can use this field to indicate that the student was informed for tracking purposes.
 - Any additional information regarding the referral and follow-up conversation with advisors can be found in Drexel’s AVT (Advisor Visit Tracking) system.
- **Final step - “submit referral” button and your referral will be processed.**

- A pop-up message will appear at the top of the screen to let you know your referral was saved, but you will not receive a receipt.

Screenshot #5

Referral Records

You will see all previous referrals each time you go into the referral tool.

Course: GSTD-100-001 - FA 26-27

Advising: Support with academic planning, course selection, degree requirements, academic progress, or navigating university policies and resources.

Academic Coaching: Personalized guidance to develop or refine active learning approaches and effective study strategies, improve organization, and build skills for academic success.

Drexel Writing Center: One to one or small group consultation to support development of writing projects and skills.

Photo	First Name	Last Name	University Id	Course	Referral Date	Referrals Click the blue arrow ▼ to expand academic support referral options	Spoke with Student about this Referral	Action
	Faria	Alfonso	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Sean	Brown	10102015	10759.202615	09/17/2026	▼	☒ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Dylan	Calderon	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Bryan	Comas	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	August	Li	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Romy	Lee	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals
	Nico	Tran	10102015	10759.202615		▼	☐ Yes ☐ No	Submit Referrals

Showing 1 to 7 of 7 entries

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Screenshot #6

SAMPLE of the First Email Correspondence sent to the student after faculty makes a referral:

DREXEL UNIVERSITY
McGonigal
Academic Resource Center

Dear Sean:

Greetings from the McGonigal Academic Resource Center (ARC) located at the Korman Center!

RE: GSTD-100-001 with McGonigal - Strategies Academic Success.

Your instructor cares about your successful progress and would like you to learn more about the academic support/resources we have at the McGonigal ARC and beyond.

I encourage you to follow up with the specific resources we have available:

- Academic Advisor
Get Connected With: Sean N. Brown at snb24@drexel.edu

For the full list of academic support services, visit: drexel.edu/ARC.

If you have any questions or prefer a consultation, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at ARC@drexel.edu. We are here to help you and hope to see you at the McGonigal ARC services!

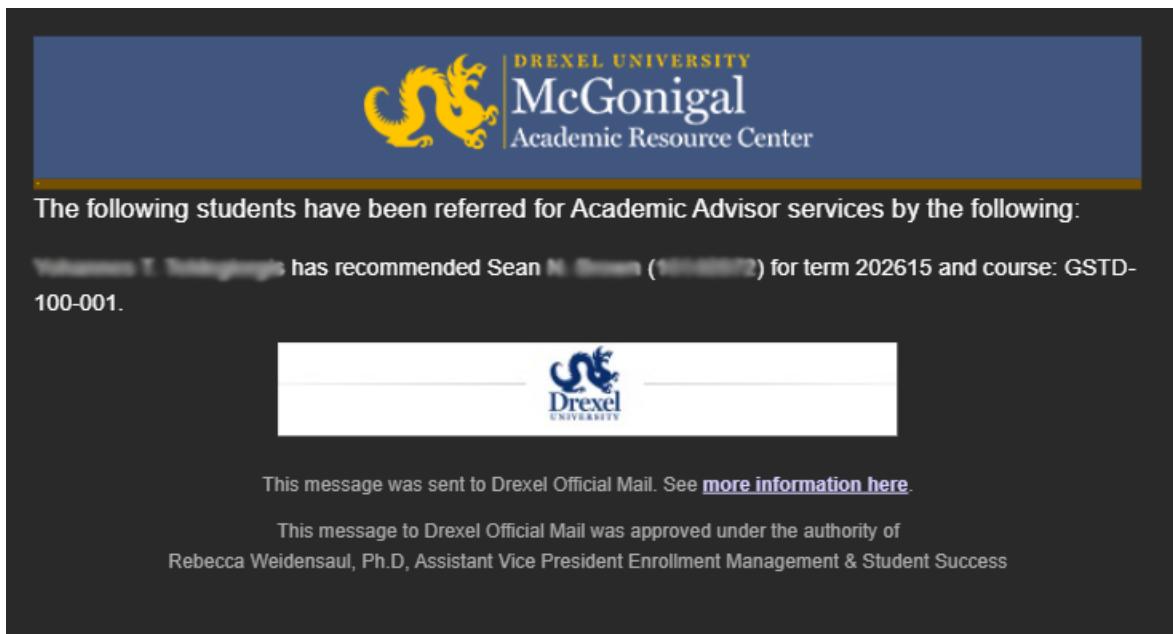
Best,

Rebecca Weidensaul, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice President
Enrollment Management & Student Success
Pronouns: she/her/hers

Drexel University
The McGonigal Academic Resource Center (ARC)
Korman Center Room 121B
15 South 33rd Street (Off of 33rd and Market – in the quad)
Philadelphia PA 19104
Tel: 215.895.6092 Email: rebecca@drexel.edu
[Drexel.edu/ARC](https://drexel.edu/ARC)

Screenshot #7

SAMPLE of the Email Correspondence sent to the academic advisor, academic coach or Drexel Writing Center after faculty makes a referral:



Who do faculty contact if there are questions?

- **When and/or why to refer a student or students?**
 - Contact The McGonigal ARC: ARC@drexel.edu
- **Technology questions about Canvas or functionality?**
 - Contact: ais_student@drexel.edu

Thank you for your participation in this new faculty referral opportunity in Canvas.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

Rebecca Weidensaul, Ph.D

Assistant Vice President, Enrollment Management & Student Success

Drexel University

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Drexel.edu/ARC