



Open Mic Open Minds

How to Participate

All performative genres, from music to spoken word to storytelling and beyond, are welcome!

If you are a creator and would like to perform your own work: Just show up! We will have a sign-up sheet available at the event. You will be given a 5-6 minute slot following our featured performers. *Creators who are comfortable performing their own work do not have to submit work ahead of the event.*

If you are a creator and are uncomfortable performing your work: Send your submissions to pittactiveminds@gmail.com no later than **Monday, Feb. 25** with the subject line "Open Mic Open Minds: Submission," and we will assign a volunteer to perform your work! If you have a preference for a speaker (like a personal friend) or you would like your work to remain anonymous during the show, please note that in the body of the email.

Additionally, if you decide that you would like your work to be shared during the event but are uncomfortable onstage, please approach one of the Active Minds members and we will try to match your work with an available volunteer. We'll do our best to accommodate these requests, but we cannot guarantee that we'll be able to share material not submitted in advance.

If you are a performer and would like to volunteer to read creators' work: Send an email to pittactiveminds@gmail.com no later than **Monday, Feb. 25** with the subject line "Open Mic Open Minds: Performing Volunteer," and let us know if there are any subject areas about which you are uncomfortable, so that we can match submissions and volunteers appropriately.

Open Mic Open Minds: Content Guidelines

If you are a creator, we ask that you please abide by our content guidelines. We do not advocate censorship, but we find guidelines to be helpful with particularly sensitive subject matter.

As such, please keep the following in mind as you choose what to present:

1. Please provide a warning for sensitive content before you perform.
2. You may discuss suicide, but refrain from discussing specific plans and/or means for current suicide plans.
3. Avoid intensely graphic depictions of suicide, suicidal attempts, or self-harm.
4. Avoid specificity when referring to means of and ways of hiding self-harm.
5. Avoid talking about specific weights and calorie counts when discussing eating disorders.
6. Refrain from using phrases like "in a better place" when referring to loved ones lost to suicide. Attributing positive characteristics to suicide can be dangerous for audience members contemplating suicide.
7. Refrain from giving advice or diagnoses to others.
8. Make sure you are comfortable with what you are sharing. If some parts of your story are too painful or emotional, it is okay to leave them out.

General Open Mic Guidelines

As a creator, use what is necessary to tell your story and express yourself artistically, while keeping in mind that your audience is a diverse group of humans with different life experiences, backgrounds, and points of view.

As an audience member, remember that it's a risk to share your music, writing, or other art with the world, and support performers by being attentive and respectful.

Mental Health Resources at the Event

We will provide pamphlets and handouts listing on- and off-campus resources for those in need of more information. Additionally, we plan to have a counselor from the Counseling Center available on-site.

About the Center for Creativity

The Center for Creativity seeks to foster connections between and among members of the Pitt community whose scholarly efforts and passions are rooted in “making stuff”: stories, pictures, music, scenes, statements, apps, messes, etc. While the Center’s heart is in the Department of English's Writing Program, it is intentionally and purposefully open to students, staff, and faculty in all programs of the University.

About Pitt Active Minds

Pitt Active Minds is dedicated to increasing students’ awareness of mental health issues, providing information and resources regarding mental health and mental illness, encouraging students to seek help as soon as it is needed, and serving as liaison between students and the mental health community.

Mental Health Resources in General

University Counseling Center: <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/> or 412-648-7930

University Counseling Center General Mental Health Crisis Response: 412-648-7930

University Counseling Center Sexual Assault Response: 412-648-7856

Re: Solve Crisis Services Mental Health Center Hotline: 1-888-7-YOU-CAN (796-8226)

National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255