**Integrating Well-Being Concepts into Learning Environments**

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INTEGRATING WELL-BEING CONCEPTS INTO LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- Well-Being and Academic Performance

- Teaching Strategies

- Additional Resources

# Well-Being and Academic Performance

- Positive well-being is a key predictor for learning and student success.

- Integrating well-being concepts into classroom/learning environments results in healthy classroom practices that ultimately lead to student/academic success, a healthy culture and positive environment, student retention, and effective learning outcomes.

**THE ASK: Help support your students by implementing one or more of these practices in your courses.**

# 1: Be Mindful About Deadlines, Workload, & Timing of Feedback

- Adjust deadlines for assignments to discourage all-nighters (i.e., don't make assignments due at 8am)

- Consider the timing of exams and assignments to alleviate undue stress and anxiety (be aware of major religious holidays throughout the quarter)

- Set deadlines that offer work/life balance for yourself and for your students

- Ensure the workload is reasonable and communicate grading and deadlines clearly
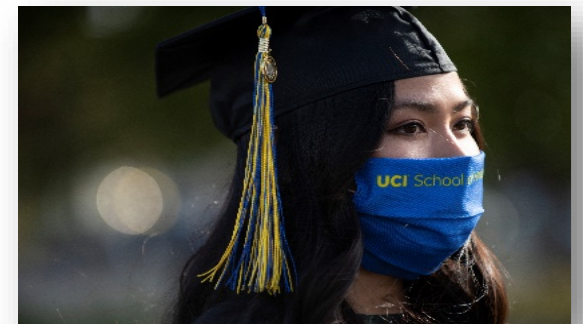
# 2: Be Flexible and Offer Options

Providing students with some flexibility and control over their learning experiences helps them to feel empowered and supported, contributing to their well-being.

- Give students options for their grade. For example, best assignment grade out of the two
- Offer choices in assignments so that students can pick what works best for their learning

## 3: Encourage Breaks, Standing, Stretching, and Reflection

Implementing this standard in classrooms can overall stimulate physical activity levels and increase engagement.

- Offer short breaks during class for students to stretch, do a mindfulness activity or do get-to-know-each other activities

- Conduct a portion of your discussion group standing and/or standing for group exercises, prefacing with "If you are able, stand….".

- Welcome students to stand in long lectures or seminars

- Incorporate brief meditation or self-reflection activities into classes lasting more than an hour.

# 4: Share Resources and Wellness Info with Students

Feeling supported by campus starts in the classroom.



- Include sample health and well-being messages and resources on syllabi

- Share general information about mental health and well-being with students

- Provide resources in your syllabus

- Familiarize yourself with student resources and support services



- Be aware of the signs that a student is in distress (academic indicators like missing class or behavioral, emotional or physical indicators), and take timely and appropriate action. Learn more in the UC Promoting Student Mental Health Guide.

# 5: Help Students Connect With You

- Share your teaching philosophy with students

- Make yourself available in different forms: email, skype, etc.

- Seek feedback from students throughout the course (this could be done through web-survey or an anonymous in class comment card)

- Encourage students to attend office hours

- If you feel comfortable and safe to do so, talk about yourself and your experiences and provide students the opportunity to do the same

# 6: Be Welcoming, Enthusiastic, and Caring

Creating a safe space in the class environment is important for students.

- Be intentional about setting a welcoming tone

- Show enthusiasm for the subject, including your own professional path

- Be positive, supportive and personable

- Let students know you care about them and are invested in their success

- Take care of your own well-being so that you can be present and encouraging for your students

# 7: Help Students Connect with the Community

Provide an opportunity to make a difference.



- Bring in other subject matter experts as guest speakers

- Connect course concepts to the "real world" and give students the opportunity to do the same

- Create assignments in which the results can be utilized by a community group or campus initiative

- Lead discussions or activities that help students develop a sense of civic responsibility

- Encourage students to seek out extracurricular volunteer opportunities and explore their own values and goals

# 8: **Provide Timely Feedback and Helpful Advice**

Allow students to discover challenges early on and work to improve themselves throughout the course.

- Provide timely and specific feedback and outline ways that students can improve

- Ask students to identify concepts they want to learn more about and what was challenging and address at the beginning of the next class.

# 9: Provide Opportunities that Promote Professional and Personal Skills

- Provide opportunities for personal development

- Incorporate mindfulness, journaling, and other forms of personal development into class activities and assignments

- Incorporate skill-building activities in class and find ways to build this throughout the course
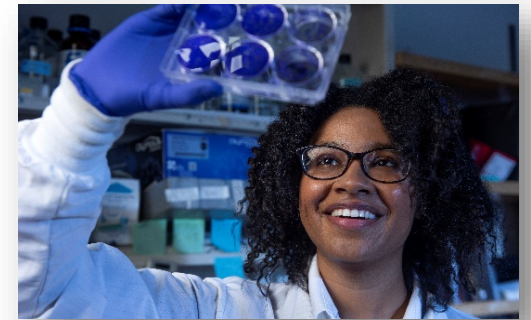
## 10: Help Students Connect with Each Other

Help develop communication and teamwork skills that are increasingly important for the professional world.

- Encourage connection in your classes by having students introduce themselves to one another and work together in teams

- Include teamwork as a component of grading for group projects

- Provide opportunities during class time and breaks for students to work together and get to know one another

- Work with your teaching assistants to create opportunities for social connection and teamwork in labs and discussion sections

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