

Promoting Student Well-being in the Classroom and Beyond

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Symposium Chair:

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Introduction



- ▶ Student academic success is important to their future success.
 - 20-40% increases in income and occupational status occur for those completing a Bachelor's degree over those who finish secondary school (Pascarella & Trenzini, 2005)

- ▶ One of the growing challenges to student success are mental health challenges.
 - Rates of requests for accommodations and/or services to deal with mental health challenges has been rising over the past decade prompting higher education institutions to increase mental health services to students as a result (Lipson, Lattie, & Eisenberg, 2018).

Achieving Academic Success

- ▶ Several studies have shown that **student mental health and wellbeing are linked to their academic success** (Eisenberg, Hunt, & Speer, 2013; Keyes et al., 2012; Martin, 2010).
- ▶ Lynam and Cachia (2018) suggest **using teaching strategies that promote academic maturity and reduce stress to increase learning.**



Symposium Goals

- ▶ The goals of this symposium are to:
 1. Describe mental health factors that impede student academic success at the college/university level;
 2. Show how **promoting resilience and employing pedagogical practices** through campus wide resource development and through direct course content can promote improved wellbeing and student academic success and;
 3. Share evaluative data as available.

Strategies

- ▶ We will share **four strategies** aimed at promoting student academic success in a college/university context both via the development of campus wide resources and through course content used to address student mental health and wellbeing.
- ▶ These include:
 - 1) Supporting students' learning, health, and wellbeing using **online resources**;
 - 2) Supporting the wellbeing of **distance education students**;
 - 3) Supporting student well-being from inside the classroom: scaffolding **mindfulness and compassion training** into curricula and;
 - 4) Creating a space for flourishing: a **teamwork approach to adding well-being** in the classroom.

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Supporting Students' Learning, Health, and Wellbeing Using Online Resources



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The Challenge: For Students

- ▶ University students face **multiple health, learning, and wellbeing challenges** that must be overcome in order to succeed in their academic lives (Eisenberg, Hunt, & Speer, 2013; Keyes et al., 2012; Martin, 2010).
- ▶ Unfortunately, many students are **not aware and do not know how to access resources** for supporting their mental health and wellbeing (UBC 2019 Undergrad Experience Survey).



The Challenge: For Faculty

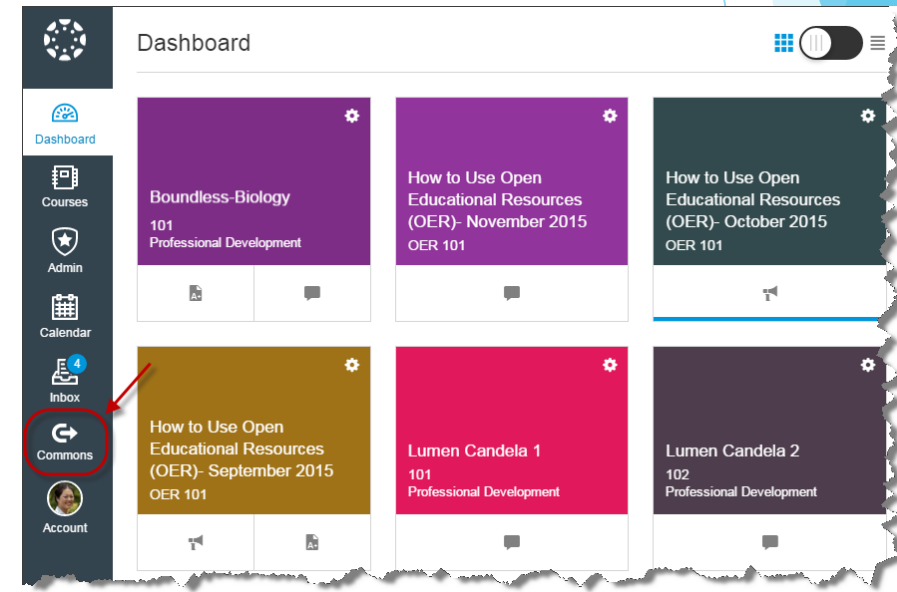
- ▶ Instructors recognize that student wellbeing is key to academic success (Keyes et al., 2012; El Ansari & Stock, 2010), and they want to address this issue in the design of their course and course materials.
- ▶ Instructors often spend a lot of time **searching for resources** and are often left wondering if they have addressed the most important issues and utilized the best resources for their students.

Teaching Practices that Promote Well-Being

- ▶ Using Appreciative Inquiry methodology, a campus wide study found three themes emerged as teaching elements that promote well-being:
 - ▶ **“Belonging & social inclusion:** Students’ well being is supported when they feel connected to their instructors and peers.
 - ▶ **Learning well:** Students’ well-being is supported when they are motivated to learn and when they feel that they are learning effectively.
 - ▶ **Whole student:** Students’ well-being is supported when instructors recognize that students have lives outside academics (Lane et al., 2018, p.4, *emphasis added*).”

Development of Online Well-being Resources

- ▶ Three UBC central units: 1) Chapman Learning Commons, 2) Student Health and Wellbeing and 3) the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology created an [online resource](#) for instructors to support student learning and wellbeing
- ▶ Items in the resource were **chosen by student employees** from the Chapman Learning Commons and Student Health and Wellbeing centres
 - ▶ Reviewed by 4 students and 4 instructors before the pilot
- ▶ The resource was made available in Canvas Commons for easy download into courses



Pilot Details

Piloted in the January 2020 term by approximately 36 instructors (teaching in a wide variety of faculties) in approximately 49 courses

Courses include 1st - 4th year undergraduate and graduate courses, and are being offered both on campus and via distance education

Approximately 120 downloads in January 2020; current total is 191

Topics

- ▶ Initial topics (pre-Covid-19):
 1. Academic support;
 2. Technology & equipment;
 3. Library skills & research and;
 4. Health & wellbeing.
- ▶ These were revised to include online learning resources

Resource module 1: Academic Support

- ▶ Skills for class
- ▶ Interacting with professors
- ▶ Academic integrity



[Myths About Learning](#)

Ever wondered if the way you study isn't the most efficient? Or if modern psychology has anything to say about how we learn? Find out more.



[Time Management](#)

Wasting a lot of time online? Pulling too many all-nighters? Getting better at managing your time is easier than you think!



[Profs-in-Commons](#)

Profs-in-Commons is a part of the [Profs-in-Spaces network](#), which seeks to increase meaningful engagement between students and professors outside of the classroom. Regardless of your discipline, the Profs-in-Commons welcome you to chat about anything university-related, from your coursework to your wellness, and to participate in activities such as ProfWalks and knitting! Check out the webpage for updated schedules and offerings.



[Cite Sources](#)

Confused by all the different citation styles? Check out our citation reference so you avoid plagiarism!

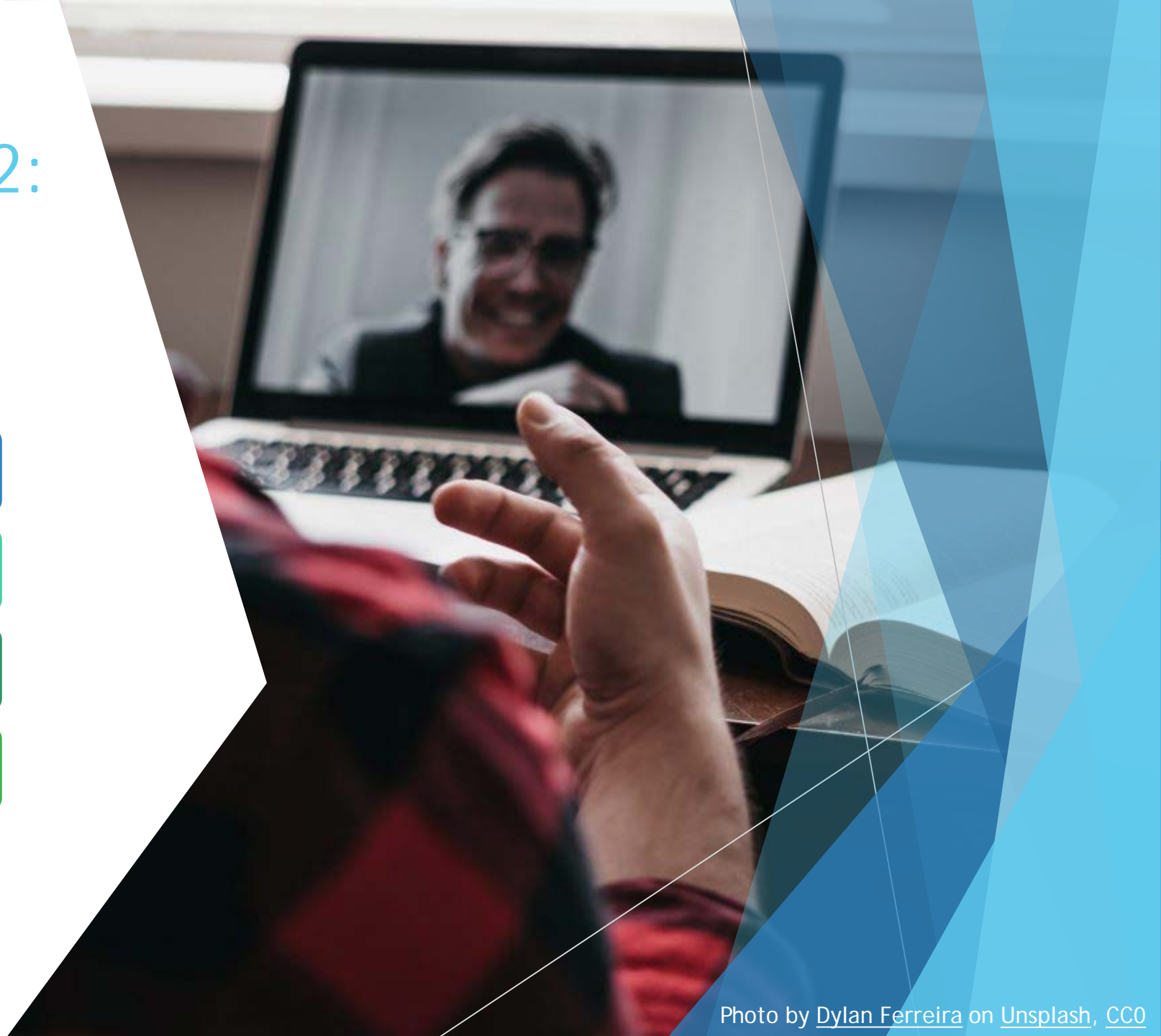
Resource module 2: Technology and Equipment

Equipment

Computers and software

Canvas support

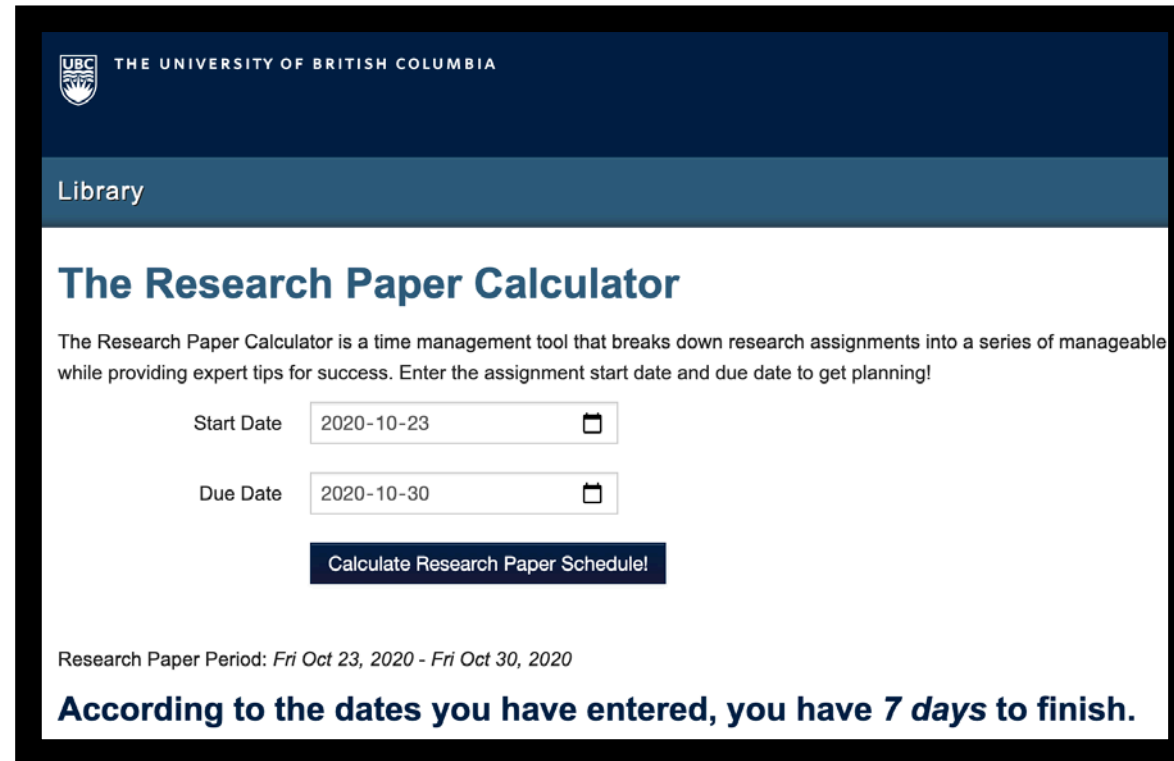
Tech support



Resource module 3: Library Skills and Research

Library
skills

Resources



The screenshot shows the UBC Library website's 'The Research Paper Calculator'. At the top, the UBC logo and 'THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA' are visible. Below that, the word 'Library' is displayed. The main heading is 'The Research Paper Calculator'. A descriptive paragraph states: 'The Research Paper Calculator is a time management tool that breaks down research assignments into a series of manageable while providing expert tips for success. Enter the assignment start date and due date to get planning!'. There are two input fields: 'Start Date' with the value '2020-10-23' and a calendar icon, and 'Due Date' with the value '2020-10-30' and a calendar icon. A dark blue button with white text reads 'Calculate Research Paper Schedule!'. Below the button, it says 'Research Paper Period: Fri Oct 23, 2020 - Fri Oct 30, 2020'. At the bottom, a bold statement reads: 'According to the dates you have entered, you have 7 days to finish.'

For example, this easy-to-use assignment calculator helps students plan out their paper or project.

Screenshot taken from the UBC Library

Resource module 4: Health and Wellbeing

▶ Take care of yourself

▶ Explore campus services

▶ 24/7 crisis support



[Health Topics for UBC Students](#)

stress when it arises.

Having trouble eating well and staying on budget? Are you getting a good night's sleep? Do you know when you are stressed and what to do about it? Learn how to lead a healthy life while studying and how to effectively manage



[Tips and Strategies from other UBC Students](#)

They've been through it and want to share what they've learned along the way: learn from fellow students' experiences on health and wellbeing on the [UBC Life Blog](#).



[Empower Me](#)

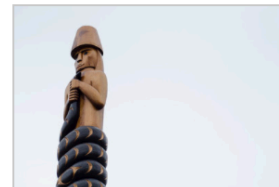
concerned about, and will give you the option of getting help online, in person, or by phone.

Have concerns about your mental health? Don't keep them to yourself! Call 1 844 741 6389 (toll free) any time, night or day. Empower Me provides counselling and life coaching for free. They can help with anything you're



[Counselling Services](#)

Struggling with low mood, anxiety or relationship challenges that are affecting your ability to study? Make an appointment with a Wellness Advisor or access single-session counselling.



Support for Indigenous students: [Hope for Wellness](#)

If you're experiencing emotional distress and want to talk, contact the toll-free Hope for Wellness Help Line at or the online chat open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Resource 5: Online Learning

Support

Learning skills
workshops

Online
learners
resource guide

Keep learning

Practice taking
exams online

Feedback



- ▶ No formal data was collected due to Covid-19 rapid transition to remote learning
- ▶ 2nd year Sociology of Family course
 - ▶ 10/42 students accessed the health and well-being module!
- ▶ 4th year Family Theory course
 - ▶ 4/39 students accessed this module
- ▶ An unsolicited comment from a 4th year student:

“The new pilot module looks great and provides some great resources! As a fourth year [student], I wish I had access to a lot of these resources when in my first few years at UBC. Thank you for providing such a great resource for students!”

Next Steps

Module will continue to be revised

Increase uptake of the online resource in order to get the word out about services to students

Other methods of sharing this information are being identified

Feedback on the module content and possible delivery methods will be obtained and used to inform next steps (contacting students, instructors, and staff)

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Supporting the Wellbeing of Distance Education Students

Dr. Kimberly Allen and Alice Chen
North Carolina State University

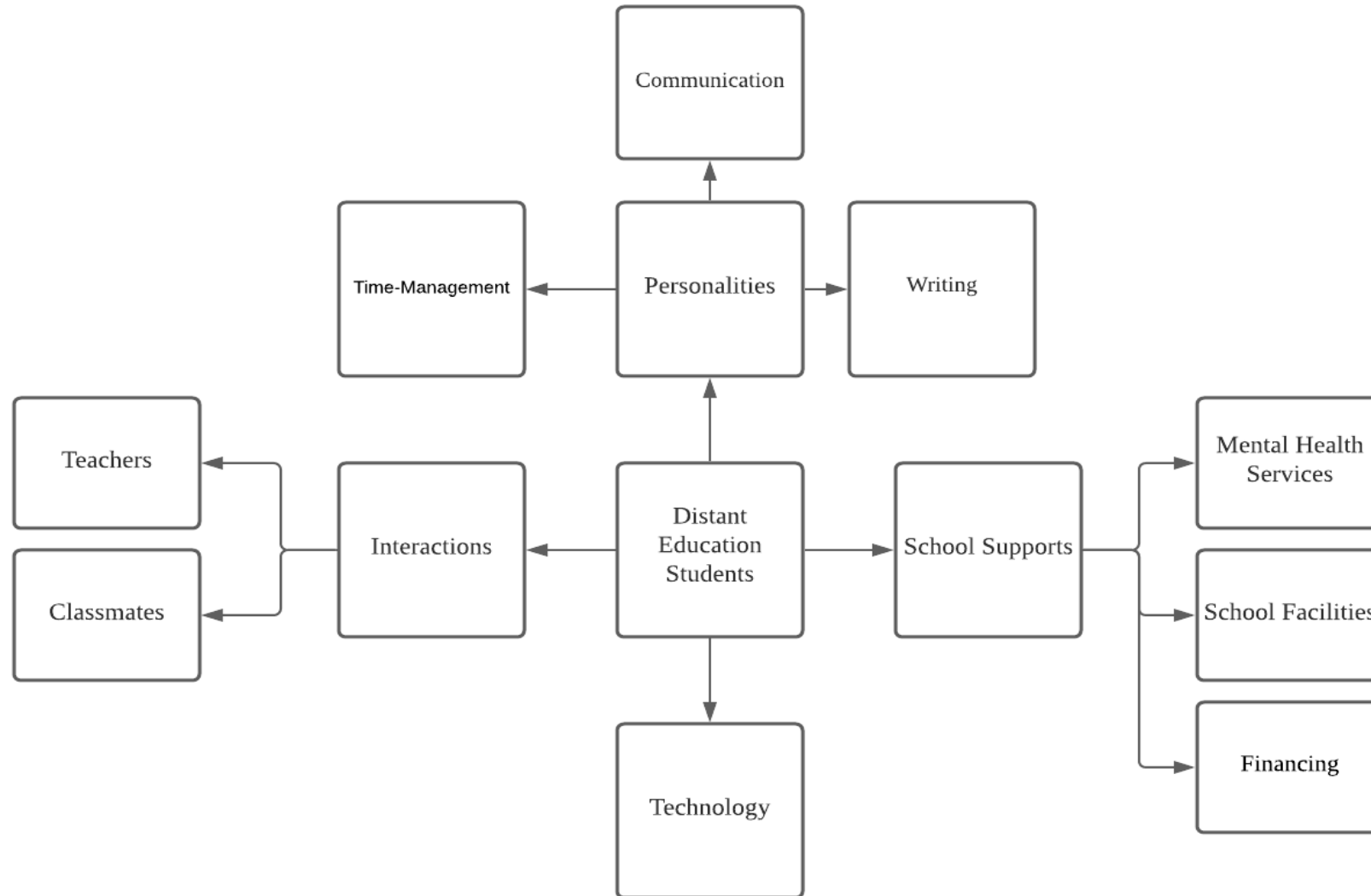
Project Team

- **Dr. Kimberly Allen**, Professor Youth, Family, and Community Sciences now Assistant Dir. of CALS
- **Dr. Angie Smith**, Assistant Professor, Counseling in the College of Education
- **Chris Willis**, Assistant Director of Planning and Assessment, DELTA
- **Alice Chen**, Graduate Student, Youth, Family, and Community Sciences
- Funding by the Distance Education & Learning Technology Applications (**DELTA**), NCSU

- In 2018, 32% of students in public institutions participated in distance education (Government Statistics, 2018).
- During a pandemic, 97% of college students have switched to on-line instruction (Government Statistics, 2020).
- The challenges which distant students face include (BALRAM, 2020; Learn Safe, 2020)
 1. Students will increase depression, anxiety, and lack of attention due to prolonged screen time.
 2. Hard to concentrate on learning
 3. Loneliness
 4. Lack of interaction with teachers and students
 5. Lack of support from the school

- Most of the supports from school is focus on on-campus students, not online-students.
- On-line students are more likely to have a lower GPA and more likely to drop out (Milman et al., 2015; MyCollegeGuide, 2020).
- The major three reasons for on-line students to have a lack of success are:
 - Students personal factors (mental health, background experiences),
 - Course/program factors (faculty support, course design), and
 - Environment factors (work or family) (Milman et al., 2015).

What students need for distance learning?

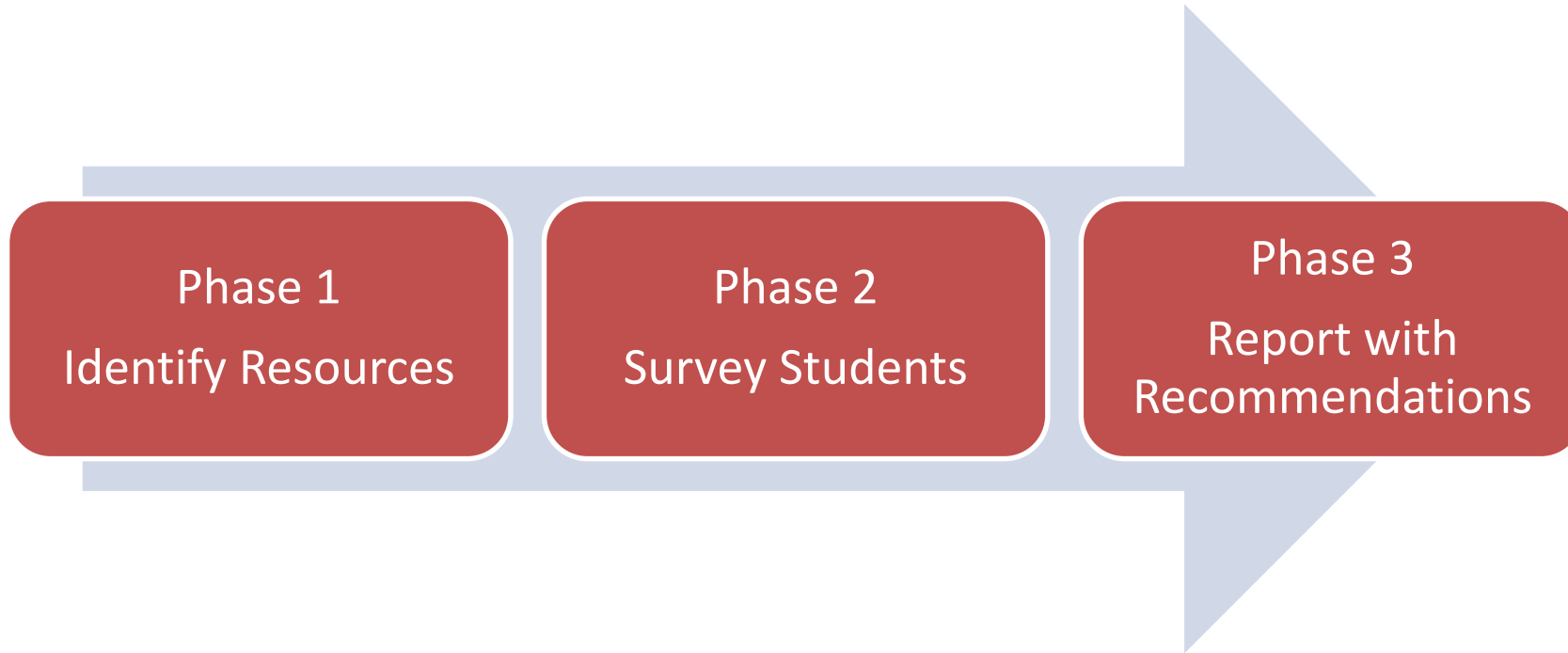


If we better support distance students, it
could help them to complete the degree
and fulfill their career

The purpose of this project

- To better understand the need for mental health and other support services for distance education students
- To determine a course action including resource development for how to better service the mental health needs of distance students.
- Started small, has grown into quite a big thing that might include all graduate students.

Our Plan (delayed thanks to COVID)...



NCSU Distant Education Resources

**Virtual
Orientation**

**Funding
(assistantships
not allowed)**

**Technology
Requirements
and Help Desk**

Advising

**Library
Services**

**University
Tutorial
Center**

**Zoom Web
Conferencing**

**DELTA Remote
Testing**

**Career
Services**

What we are going to ask?

- Benefits/deficits of online learning?
- Why online course(s)?
- What resources would be helpful?
- For which resources would you be willing to pay student fees?
- Which resources do you want access to at NCSU?
- What makes you feel supported as a student?
- What do your instructors do that makes you feel supported?
- What else do you want us to know?
- Mental Health Assessment



For more information, please contact:



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Supporting Student Well-Being From Inside the Classroom: Scaffolding Mindfulness and Compassion Training

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Background

- Changing landscape in higher education with increased student and faculty diversity, campus mergers, changing expectations of faculty and staff, fiscal difficulties, and campus reorganization
- Despite rapid changes many institutions have yet to develop structures and cultures that promote emotional and social connectedness and wellness for faculty, staff and students
- Feeling disconnected from community is strongly correlated with suffering (Wikung Gustin & Wagner, 2012)
- High rates of burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue in the helping fields (Bloom, 2006; Curtis, Moriarity, & Nettan, 2010; Madden Scannapieco & Painter, 2014)
- In the helping fields, student motivation for helping often are motivated by their own experiences of needing help or caregiving and may have disproportional rates of adverse childhood experiences and/or adult trauma (Esaki & Larkin Holloway, 2013)

Background

Training in

- Trauma-informed care
- Self and community care
- Self-compassion
- Mindfulness-based stress reduction

Research indicates these practices are related to lower levels of stress, burnout and compassion fatigue, higher levels of compassion satisfaction, greater quality of life and self-compassion

- (see Alkema & Linton, 2008; Shapiro, Astin, Scott, & Cordova 2005; Thomas & Otis, 2010)

Purpose

- To examine student and instructor experiences with integrating trauma-informed, mindfulness and self-compassion training across three human services courses
- To explore students' levels of self-compassion at the beginning and end of the training

Methods: Participants and Data Collection

Pre-survey was distributed across 3 human service courses totaling 79 students

61 students agreed to participate in the study and completed the pre-test

Data Collection:

- Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003)
- Subscales: Self-Kindness, Self-Judgement (reverse score), Common Humanity, Isolation (reverse score), Mindfulness, Over-identification (reverse score)
- Bi-weekly student and instructor reflections
- Post-activity rating on the usefulness of the assignments
- Post-activity reflection on the relevance of self-compassion and overall experience with the assignment

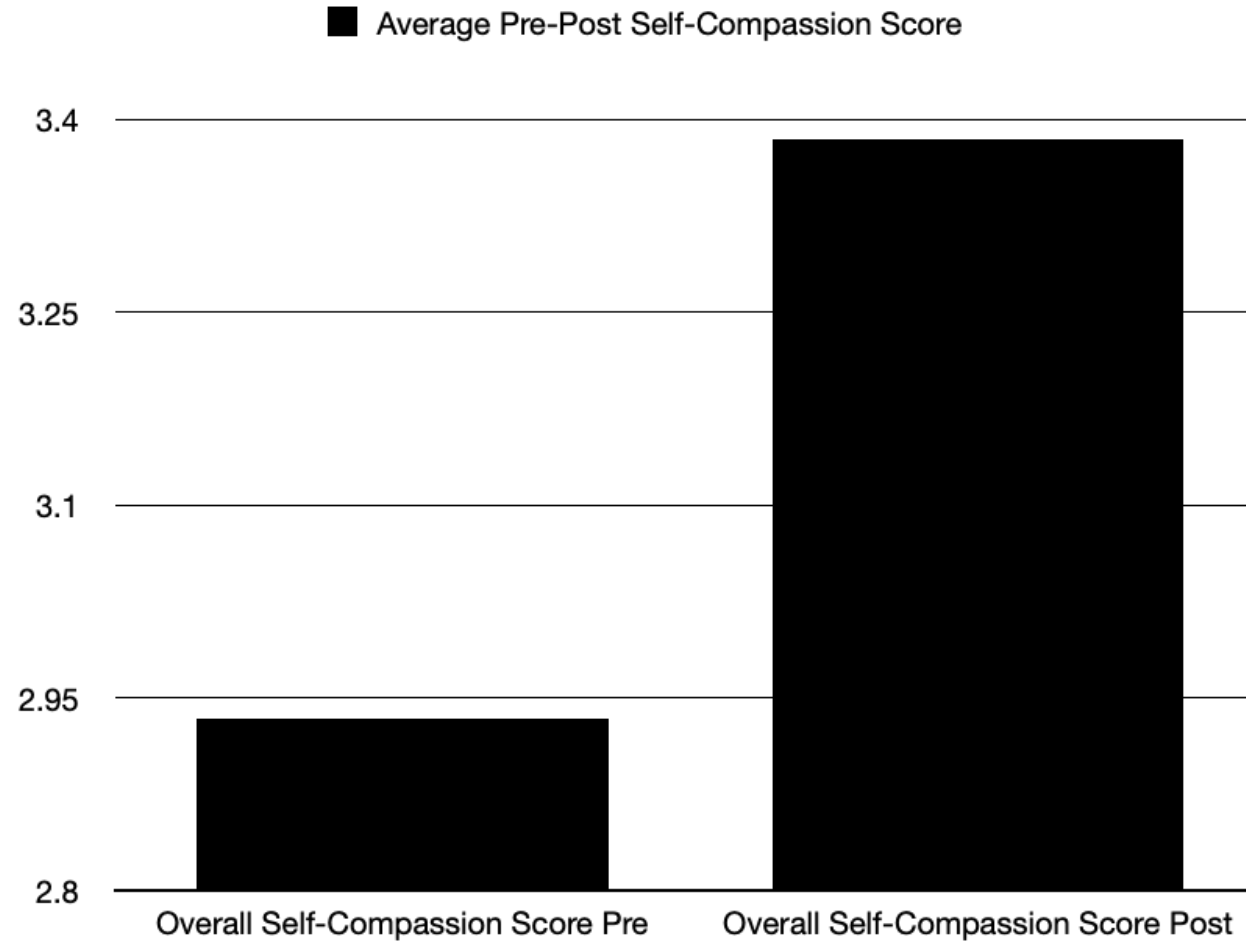
32 students completed both the pre-test and post-tests.

- Only data were only included for students who completed both the pre and post test.
- Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics
- Averages of the pre-post scores on self-compassion and sub scales were calculated

Methods: Mindfulness and Compassion Training

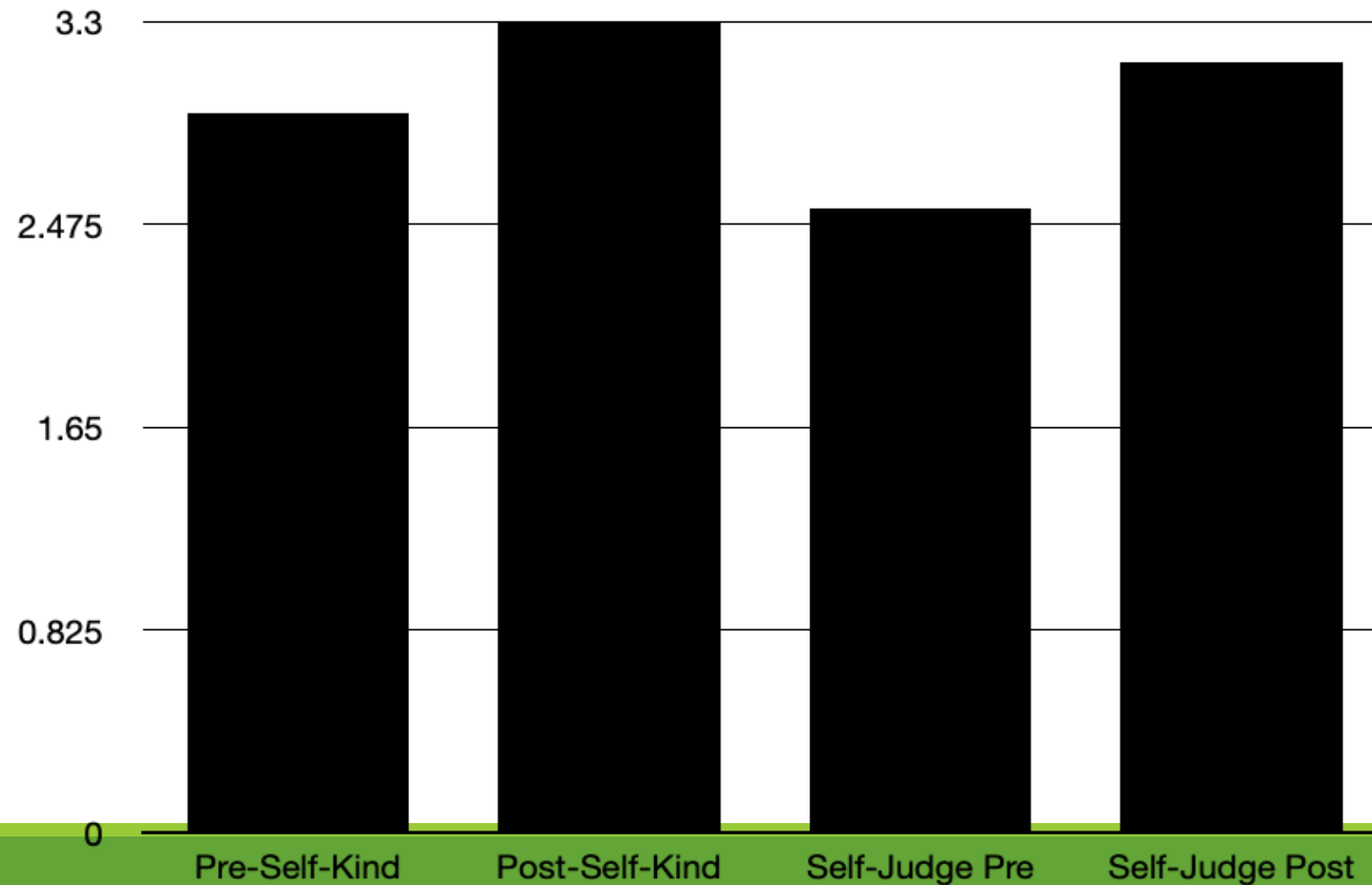
- Approximately 1 hour of direct instruction on the concepts of self-compassion, self and community care, trauma and mindfulness and the research supporting the relationship between self-compassion to well-being
- 5-10 minutes per week of group mindfulness activities
- Peer-to-peer discussion and conversation of self-care, community-care or mindfulness activities
- Bi-weekly reflections on self-compassion, self and community care activities

Results: Pre-Post Self-Compassion Score



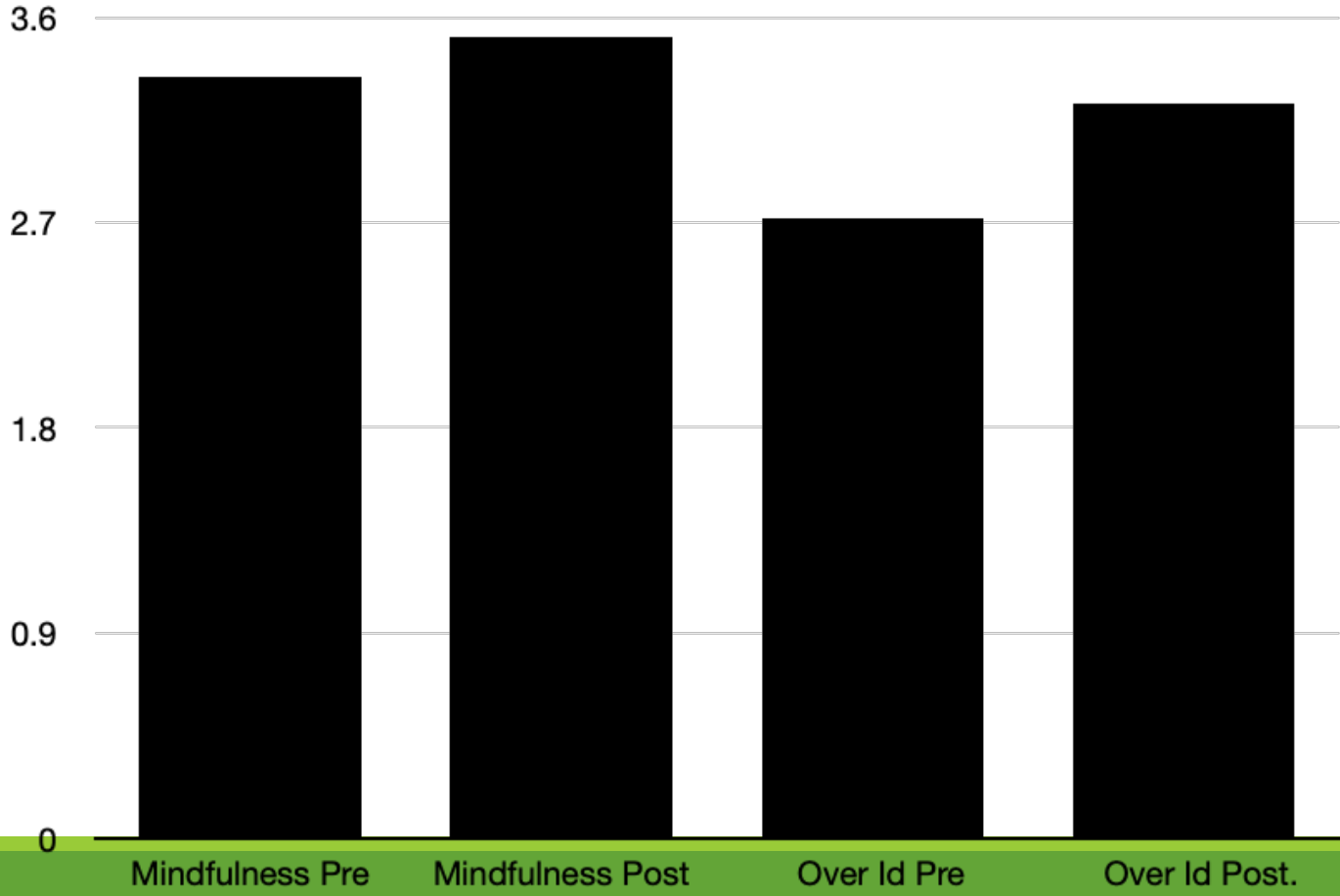
Results: Pre-Post Sub-Scale Scores

■ Average Score Sub-Scales Self-Kindness and Self-Judgement (Reverse Score)

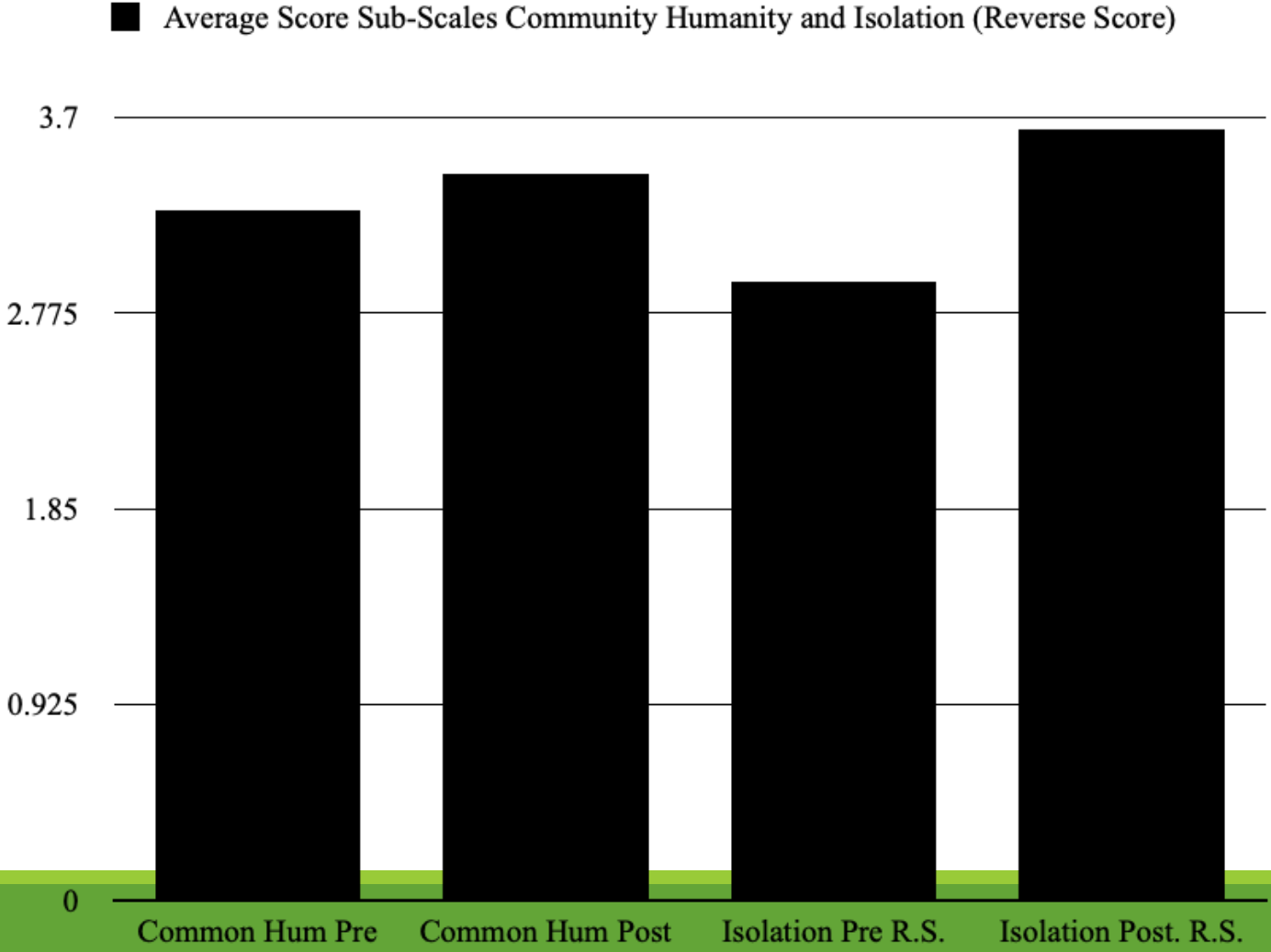


Results: Pre-Post Sub-Scale Scores

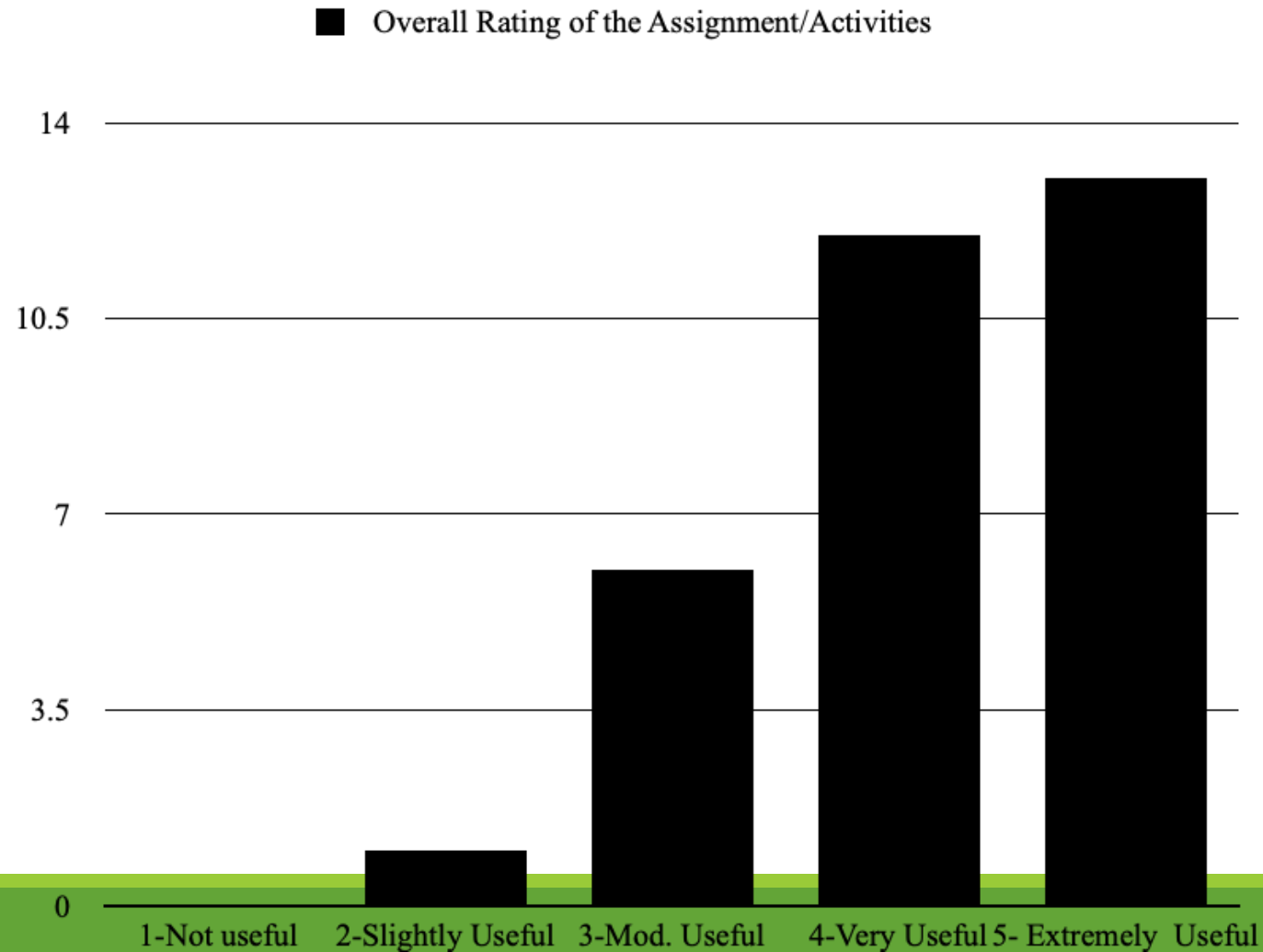
■ Average Score Sub-Scales Mindfulness and Over Identification (Reverse Score)



Results: Pre-Post Sub-Scale Scores



Results: Overall Rating of the Assignment/Activities



Results: Strategies used by students

- Exercise
- Mindful breathing
- Nature
- Spending time with family, friends, pets
- Being of service to others
- Asking for support
- Art and creativity
- Challenging negative self-talk
- Setting boundaries with self and others

Quotes From Student Reflections

“I found it beneficial because it helped provide more self-compassion towards myself, especially since I’m really hard on myself about almost everything.”

“Actually creating a self-care plan was really helpful and held me more accountable to actually do it. A lot of time people do not make time for self-compassion/care, making a plan and reflecting on them every few weeks really helped me to not only take care of myself, but to also determine what was helpful and what was not.”

“I found it beneficial primarily because it is just not something that I otherwise don’t really think about, especially in the context of work/education.”

“I find extremely beneficial as it makes sure I stay on track with what I want from colleges experience, which is to be more aware. I believe self-care/compassion assignment are in this course to make sure we don’t lose track of ourselves. We’re so caught up in our lives that we end up harming them. This is to ensure we go through the course with the healthiest mindset.”

Discussion

- Of the students who completed both the pre and post test most found the activity useful (n = 32)
- There was an *increase* in self-compassion rates from the beginning to the end of the semester across all sub-scales
- Students engaged in a variety of practices to support care and compassion for self and others
- From the instructor perspective: Allowed for a greater focus on relationships building with students and promoted well-being especially during the transitions related to the Covid-19 response

Limitations and Future Work

- High attrition from pre-test to post-test likely due to Covid-19 related disruptions.
- Small sample size
- Lack of control group
- Some discomfort at the beginning of the semester helping students see the connection between related activities and course objectives
- Future work should involve larger sample sizes
- Focus on increase collaboration between various campus departments
- Replication in other disciplines and other institutions
- Consider sociodemographic characteristics of sample

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Creating a
space for
flourishing: A
teamwork
approach to
adding well-
being in the
classroom



We are...



Faculty

- Maureen Ittig, Penn State Fayette
- Robin Yaure & Jackie Schwab, Penn State Mont Alto
- Lauren Jacobson-McConnell, Penn State Altoona

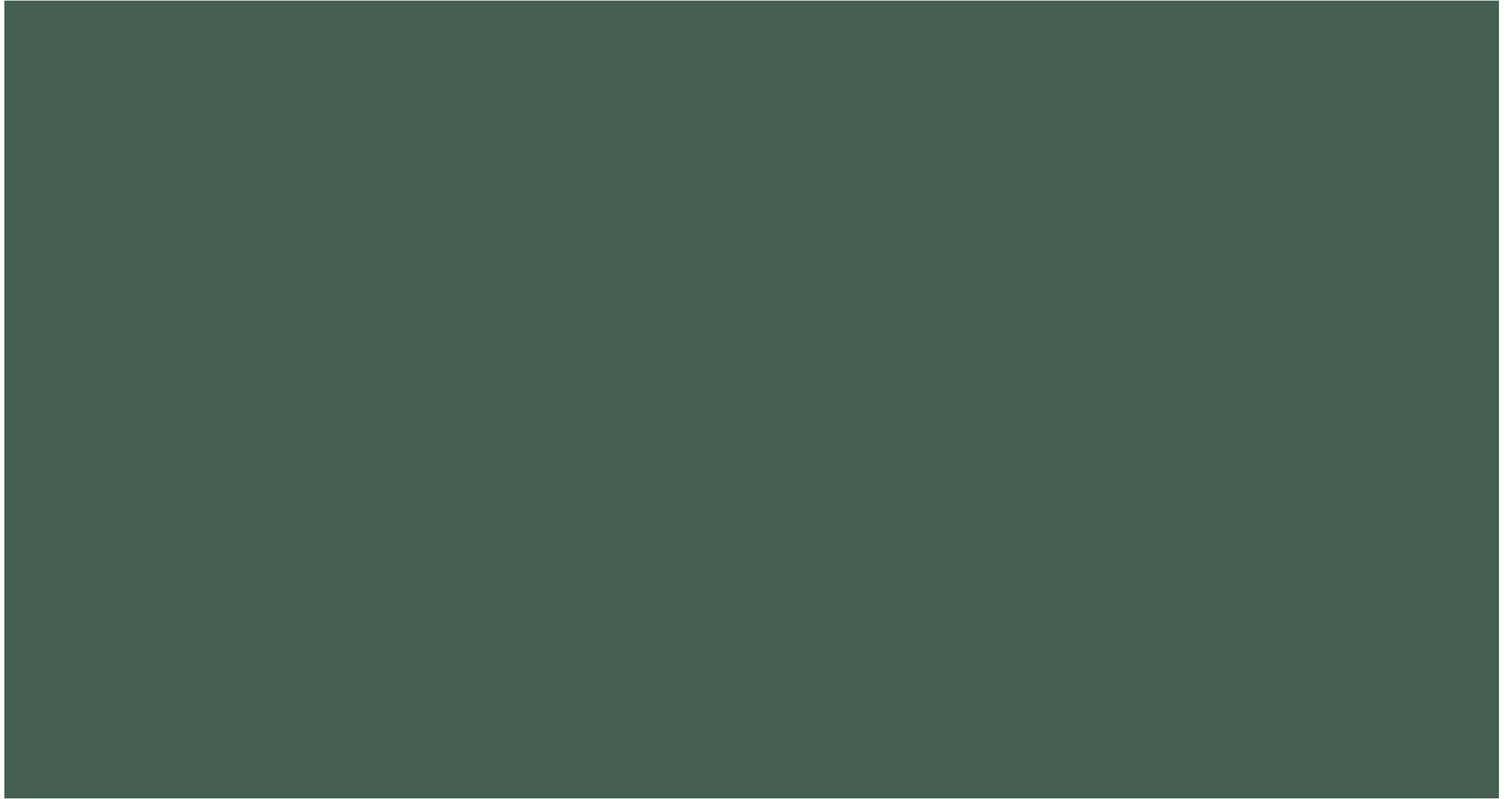
Undergraduate Student

- Amanda Moore, Penn State Mont Alto



QUESTION

What do you think of when you think of "human flourishing"?



Definition of *flourish*

1. to grow luxuriantly : thrive
2. to achieve success : prosper
 - to be in a state of activity or production
 - to reach a height of development or influence. " (Merriam-Webster.com, 2019)

HDFS 108N: The Art & Science of Human Flourishing

Designed by Dr. Robert Roeser,* Leslie Hubbard & Dr. Karolyn Kinane to help students manage stress and flourish in their lives

Course is designed as an “integrative” course combining health and well-being and social science academic disciplines.

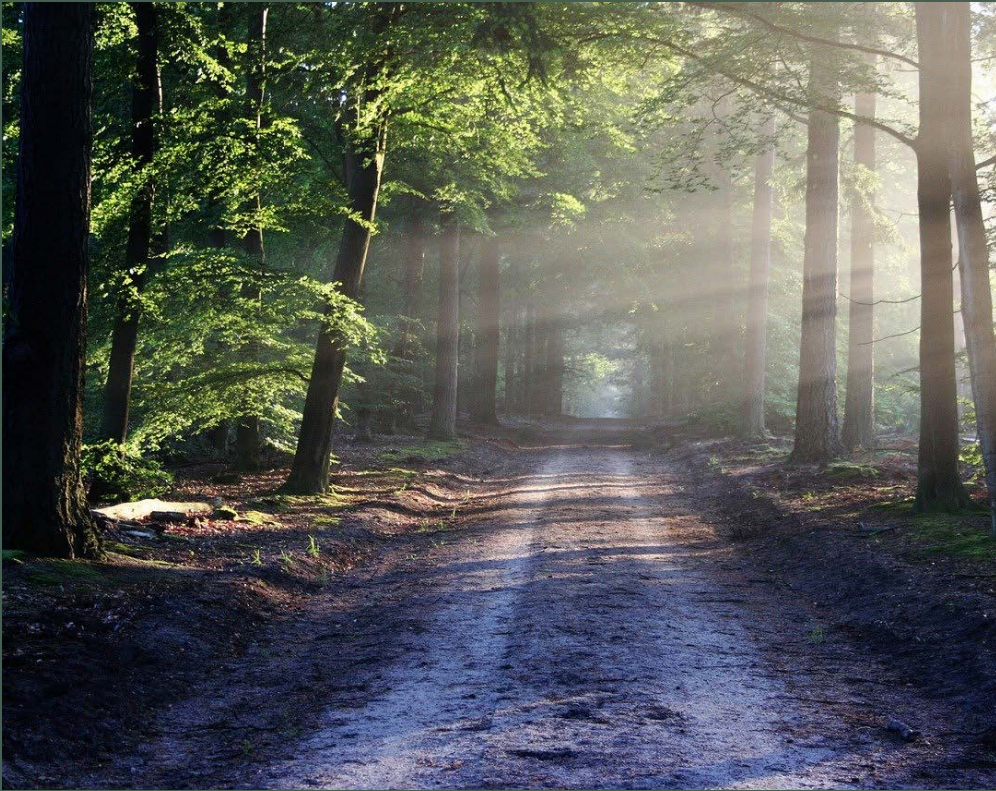
*Robert W. Roeser is the Bennett Pierce Professor of Care, Compassion and Human Development at Penn State University.

Our Involvement

- Winter 2018-19 – call for collaborators
- Two grants: **Bridging Theory to Practice, Multi-Institutional Innovation** and **PSU General Education**
- Summer Institutes in 2019 & 2020 for coaching
- “Flourishing Team” continuous to meet monthly



The Course



- The course includes material on mindfulness, meditation, philosophy, and evidence-based wellness, focusing on helping students “flourish”.

The faculty and student experiences

- Joined for many reasons and with varying levels of experience
- Recognized the need for all of us to manage worries and reactions to stress

Mindfulness focuses not on ignoring stressors but on accepting them.



Method

- Using autoethnography¹ to examine our experiences with personal narratives and “collaborative witnessing” to create co-constructed narratives²

1) Denzin, 2014; 2) Ellis & Adams, 2014; Ellis & Berger, 2001

Auto-ethnography Themes

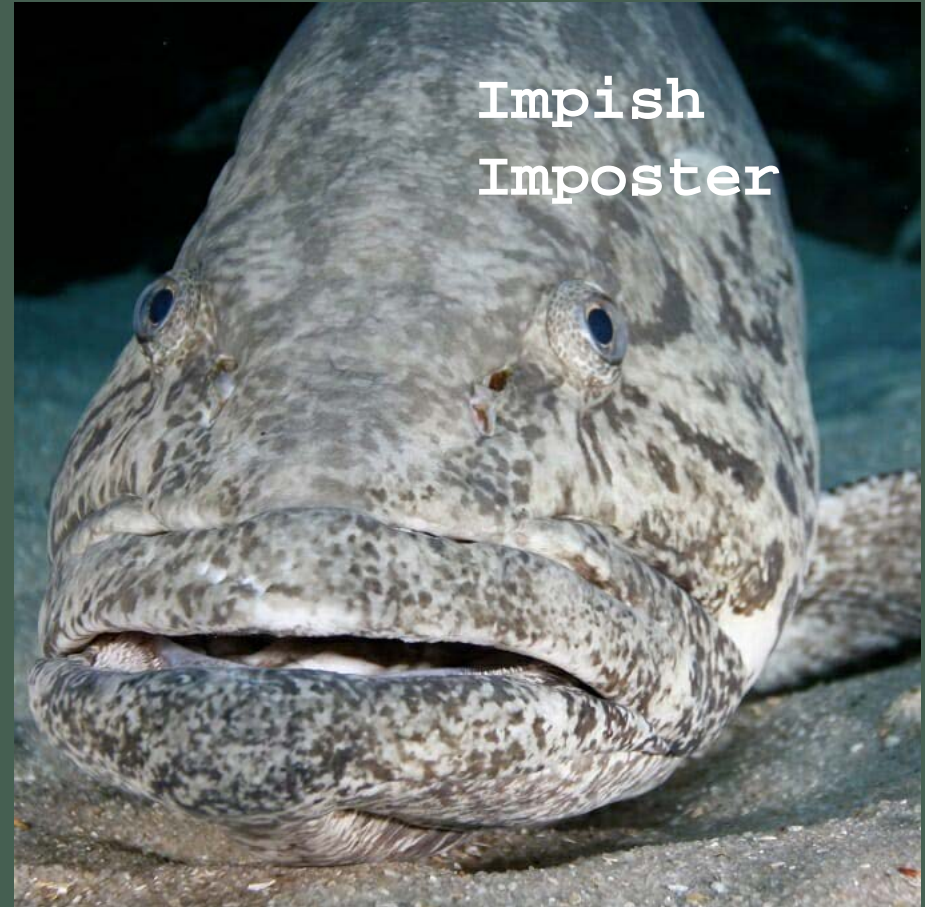
1. Confidence v. Insecurity
2. Flourishing in the time of Covid-19 and beyond
3. Motivations and appreciations
4. Team dynamics
5. Promoting resilience



Theme: Confidence v. Insecurity



**Spirit
Guide**



**Impish
Imposter**

**Practical
Problem-Solver**



Flourishing in the time of Covid-19 and beyond

A note from a student:

I know this is quite late being that you went to her funeral on Friday, but I wanted to reach out to you and say I am deeply sorry for the loss of your sister in law. I can not imagine how difficult it must be to try to give yourself space to grieve but also continue to take care of the responsibilities and tasks of being a professor. I hope you were able to feel some sense of peace and rest this weekend and enjoyed the beautiful weather we had. I also hope our class can be a blessing to you personally as it has been for me periodically this semester. I will see you in class tomorrow and I truly hope this week goes smoothly for you.

Motivation & Appreciation

Involvements and interests that led us to the flourishing course

- Network of colleagues that focuses on student resilience and faculty development
- PEACE group at the Prevention Research Center
- Greater Good Summer Institute
- Interest in mindfulness
- Felt compelled to take course to deepen practice



What are we getting out of being part of the course?

“Flourishing together”

- Opportunity to practice skills ourselves
- Enjoy seeing students in positive and supportive light
- General joy to be able to be part of this course and project

Team Dynamics



- Academy Hierarchies Illuminated
 - Awareness of varying levels of power and expertise within cross-campus network.
- Leaning into campus team to navigate feelings of "imposter syndrome" and authenticity.
- Campus team conflict related to leadership, style, and recognition.

Promoting Resilience

- Cultivating habits that encourage resilience and increase ability to manage the demands of life at college and beyond
- Using mindfulness skills to effectively combat daily challenges to well-being
- Promoting well-being and mental wellness as equal to academic endeavors
- Giving students the tools to take control of their lives



Conclusion

Although course design as an intervention enhancing student well-being, it may positively impact teacher well-being as well.

The team-based structure also raises the visibility of hierarchical and external reward systems in the higher education system.

Further exploration of how teaching applied courses like this one can promote faculty resilience, mindful practice, and overall teaching effectiveness would be of value.

For further information, see:

- <https://hhd.psu.edu/sites/default/files/biobehavioral-health-bbh/biobehavioral-health-bbh-rob-roeser-profile-penn-stater-magazine.pdf>
- <https://news.psu.edu/story/623843/2020/06/22/academics/human-flourishing-course-support-students-during-challenging-times>
- <https://www.prevention.psu.edu/publications/type/3318>

References

- Denzin, N. K. (2014). *Interpretive autoethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, C. & Adams, T.E (2014). *The purposes, practices, and principles of autoethnographic research*. The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research
- Ellis, C., & Berger, L. (2001). Their story/my story/our story. In J. F. Gubrium & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research* (pp. 849–875). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.