As faculty and staff, we play a critical role in promoting student health and well-being.

To create a campus environment that positively promotes student wellbeing, the entire campus community needs to be involved. Recent data shows that our students have health concerns that are affecting their ability to be successful. In a 2018 National College Health Assessment Survey, GVSU students reported various factors which have impacted academic performance.1

**ANXIETY**
22.6% in 2014 increased to **27.1%** in 2018

**DEPRESSION**
12.1% in 2014 increased to **17.9%** in 2018

**SLEEP DIFFICULTIES**
20.1% in 2014 increased to **21.3%** in 2018

**STRESS**
29.4% in 2014 increased to **32.5%** in 2018

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Strategies to create supportive learning environments for student well-being

Students thrive when they are well. You have the unique opportunity to intentionally connect with students around wellness because a portion of their time is spent in the classroom. Your role is critical to every student’s well-being.

OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Be mindful of types and frequency of communication.
- Avoid emailing or posting assignments after 10pm.
- Know preferred communication styles and respond timely.

Encourage students to enjoy the outdoors.
- Research confirms that taking part in nature-based activities can improve mental and physical health. Visual connection with nature has been shown to lower blood pressure and improve happiness and cognitive performance.
- When the weather is nice, hold a class discussion outside.

Reach out to students if you’re concerned.
- Be observant. If you notice a distracted, fatigued, or unwell student, don’t be afraid to ask them how they are doing.
- Offer to walk with students to resource locations on campus.
- Student contact info can be located in Navigate or Banner.

Monitor student engagement and risk factors.
- Using Blackboard Retention Center dashboard.
- Submit academic concerns through EAB/Navigate.
  - Faculty should be the first point of contact for a student who is struggling academically.
  - Offer academic resources such as office hours, tutoring, academic coaching, and the knowledge market.
  - Submit a concern at gvsu.edu/navigate.

Submit a C.A.R.E. report at gvsu.edu/care if a student expresses a non-academic struggle, such as mental health issues, death in family, medical concern, social/adjustment issue, addiction, or concerning behaviors.

DURING CLASS

Before class

Be positive and prepared.
- Walk into the classroom ready to go so you can spend time engaging with your students.
- Greet students as they enter your classroom.
- Play music.

Build relationships with your students.
- Have informal conversations to let students know they can talk to you. Ask them about their day or how they are doing.
- Share how students help you learn and grow as faculty or staff.
- Send individual emails acknowledging a job well done.

Hold an informal Q&A session to discuss course content.

Help students grow in their capacity to integrate health and well-being into part of their definition of success.
- Share information in your syllabus about student well-being and other university resources.
- Encourage students to stay hydrated, get good sleep, and participate in physical activity.

Engage students in collaborative learning.
- Set norms for group work to help decrease anxiety.
- Encourage students to seek help from you or other students before completing a challenging assignment.
- Walk around the classroom and move out from behind the podium.
- Take academic field trips to different locations on campus.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/collaborativeteaching

Create an environment for well-being in your classroom.
- Allow for an active break if classes last longer than one hour.
- Add a question to an assignment asking students to write about something that makes them feel grateful.
- Facilitate a mindfulness activity.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/mindfulness

Collaborate with campus partners.
- Invite them to class to speak to students about campus resources or student wellness topics, such as stress or finances.

Inside of class

- Facilitate a mindfulness activity.
- Add a question to an assignment asking students to write about something that makes them feel grateful.
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Consult the Blackboard Retention Center dashboard.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/classroommindfulness

Consult other resources.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/collaborativeteaching

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