

OUR ROLE

As faculty and staff, we play a critical role in promoting student health and wellbeing.

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



UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Academic Advising | gvsu.edu/advising

Campus Health Center | gvsu.edu/campushealth

Campus Interfaith Resources | gvsu.edu/campusinterfaith

CARE for Students of Concern | gvsu.edu/care

Career Center | gvsu.edu/careers

Dean of Students Office | gvsu.edu/dos

Division of Inclusion and Equity | gvsu.edu/inclusion

Division of Student Affairs | gvsu.edu/studentaffairs

Disability Support Resources | gvsu.edu/dsr

Gayle R. Davis Center for Women and Gender Equity | gvsu.edu/cwge

Milton E. Ford LGBT Resource Center | gvsu.edu/lgbtrc

Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships | gvsu.edu/financialaid

Office of Multicultural Affairs | gvsu.edu/oma

Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center | gvsu.edu/ftlc

Recreation and Wellness | gvsu.edu/rec

Replenish Food Pantry | gvsu.edu/replenish

Social Justice Education | gvsu.edu/socialjustice

Student Ombuds | gvsu.edu/ombuds

Student Wellness | gvsu.edu/studentwellness

Team Against Bias | gvsu.edu/bias

Title IX Office | gvsu.edu/titleix

Universal Design for Learning | gvsu.edu/elearn/udl

University Counseling Center | gvsu.edu/counsel

Veterans Network | gvsu.edu/veterans

Faculty & Staff Benefits & Wellness | gvsu.edu/hro/benefitswellness

¹American College Health Association.
(Spring 2014, Spring 2018).
National College Health Assessment Survey.
Grand Valley State University.



PROMOTING STUDENT WELLBEING

at GVSU



Strategies to create a learning environment that supports student wellbeing

The learning environment includes classroom spaces, technology used, and most importantly, the interactions with fellow students, faculty, and staff. Included are simple ideas to promote a positive learning environment - before and during class, as well as outside of the classroom.

BEFORE CLASS

Be positive.

- Greet students as they enter your classroom.
- Share your positive attitude with students.
- Play music.

Be prepared.

- Walk into the classroom ready to go so you can spend time engaging with your students.

Have informal conversations.

- How was your weekend? Did you go to the basketball game?
- How did the assignment go? Anything I can help clarify?
- How are you doing?



OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Be mindful of emails.

- Send individual emails acknowledging a job well done.
- Avoid emailing or posting assignments after 10pm.
- Respond to emails in a friendly way to encourage future communication.

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

Take students to different locations on campus.

- The George & Barbara Gordon Art Gallery and GVSU Art Gallery encourage art appreciation.
- Visit university resources that support students.
- When the weather is nice, hold a class discussion outside.

Collaborate with campus partners.

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

Encourage students to participate in outdoor activities and enjoy nature.

- VanSteeland Arboretum has 700+ trees & shrubs of many species.
- Research confirms that taking part in nature-based activities can improve mental and physical health.²
- Visual connection with nature has been shown to lower blood pressure and improve happiness and cognitive performance.³
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/rec

Encourage participation in a yoga or exercise class.

- Learn more at gvsu.edu/rec

DURING CLASS

Learn the names of your students and pronounce them correctly.

- Keep trying and make it a priority.
- Use tent cards to remember student names.
- Learn about microaggressions and how to avoid them.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/socialjustice

Use inclusive language.

- Sign up for training at gvsu.edu/sprout (filter inclusion and equity)
- Download a suggested syllabus at gvsu.edu/inclusion
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/inclusiveteaching

Promote a community of learners where students get to know each other.⁴

- Start class with students sharing (ie. think, pair, share).
- Encourage students to have a growth mindset.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/teachingresources

Let students know you care and support their personal development.

- Share personal examples of when you struggled with content, etc.
- Encourage students to speak up and seek support when needed.
- Let students know they can talk to you.
- Be observant. If you notice a distracted, fatigued, or unwell student, don't be afraid to ask them how they are doing.
- Learn more at ulifeline.org/gvsu/help_a_friend

Help students grow in their capacity to integrate health and wellbeing into part of their definition of success.

- Promote good choices that promote overall wellbeing.
- Share information in your syllabus about student wellbeing and campus resources (Replenish Food Pantry, Health Center, Recreation, Counseling Center, LGBT Resource Center, Money Smart Lakers, etc.)
- Encourage students to stay hydrated and get good sleep, etc.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/studentwellness
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/studentengagement

Engage students in collaborative learning.

- Allow group work to decrease anxiety while setting norms for group behavior.
- Allow students to get help from you or other students before completing a challenging assignment.
- Share with students how they help you learn and grow as a faculty or staff member.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/collaborativelearning

Walk around the classroom and move out from behind the podium.

- Allow for an active break if classes last longer than one hour.

Facilitate a mindfulness activity.

- Add a question to an assignment asking students to write about something that makes them feel grateful.
- Learn more at gvsu.edu/ftlc/classroommindfulness

²Bragg, R., & Atkins, G. (2016). A review of nature-based interventions for mental health care. Natural England Commissioned Reports.

³Browning, B. (2019, January 16). Innovation for Wellbeing: Systems and Settings. NASPA Strategies Conference Presentation. Washington D.C.: NASPA.

⁴Social environment influences health and individual mortality (Yen & Syme, 1999).