



Student Affairs Leaders Health and Wellness Professionals Well-Being Taskforces

# Expanding Well-Being Initiatives Through Faculty Partnerships

#### A Reader's Guide to This Resource

#### Partnering with Faculty on Well-Being Initiatives

Demand for campus mental health services continues to grow, prompting campus leaders to consider how they can proactively reach students with mental health and well-being support before they reach a point of crisis or require clinical support. Many institutions have explored well-being initiatives to help students develop the resilience and coping skills they need to manage everyday challenges and succeed on campus both personally and academically.

These initiatives are often led by student affairs, but progressive institutions recognize the importance of going beyond student affairs to integrate these skills into the classroom, curriculum, and other academic settings.

Faculty are a key group whose central role in the student experience make them prime candidates for collaboration on helping students build the resilience and coping skills they need to succeed on campus. This white paper outlines EAB's three recommendations for partnering with faculty and academic colleagues on well-being initiatives.

#### **Summary of Contents**

Recommendation 1: Generate Campus Buy-In for Well-Being Initiatives
Campus stakeholders may not understand how resilience and coping skills impact student success or how they can contribute to these initiatives on campus. Simon Fraser University uses a multi-pronged approach to cultivate faculty partners and garner buy-in for well-being initiatives.
Recommendation 2: Equip Campus Partners with Resources to Make Participation Easy $\dots 11$
Busy schedules, perceived lack of expertise, and resources that are difficult to use may prevent faculty from incorporating well-being concepts into their interactions with students. Providing easy-to-use resources and guidance can facilitate higher participation rates. This section profiles three universities' strategies to give faculty the tools they need to make participating in well-being initiatives an easy choice.
Recommendation 3: Integrate Well-Being Concepts into the Classroom
Progressive institutions infuse well-being concepts into the curriculum. Over 150 faculty members at Georgetown University have embedded well-being topics into their existing courses through The Engelhard Project.
Diagnostic Exercise
Supplemental Resources

## Resilience in the News and on Campus

#### No Shortage of Commentary Highlighting Skill Gap Among Students

Driven in part by the escalating demand for campus mental health services, many are asking questions about students' grit, coping skills, and resilience (or lack thereof). Current articles, books, and discussions highlight how today's college students are struggling to cope with everyday setbacks. On campus, administrators, faculty, and staff share stories about students struggling to manage day-to-day challenges. Common examples include students struggling to manage their work and responsibilities without parental oversight, not bouncing back after failing a test, or clashing with new roommates.

#### Headline News: Grit, Coping, and Resilience



The Coddling of the American Mind



Top Students, Too, Aren't Always Ready for College



Students Should Be Taught Resilience, but Educators Struggle With the Best Way Forward



Succeeding in the Global Economy: The Skill Employers Really Want From New Recruits



Homework Therapists' Job: Help Solve Math Problems, and Emotional Ones



Declining Student Resilience: A Serious Problem for Colleges

#### Students Struggle to Cope with Day-to-Day Challenges

Representative Examples

- Students struggle to prioritize their work with a lack of parental oversight
- Students clash with new roommates who they do not know
- High-achieving students struggle to persevere after they **fail a test**
- Students **blame their professors** when they struggle to learn content

## Digging into the Skill Gap

#### Two Theories on Why Students Lack Resilience and Coping Skills

Within the discussions happening on campus and in the media, there are two prevailing theories about why students struggle with everyday setbacks and challenges. Some believe today's students are "soft" when compared to previous generations. This change is often attributed to changing parenting styles and failure-averse social expectations. Others believe that today's students face unprecedented challenges that make it difficult to respond to setbacks.

Across both theories, most believe that today's students are lacking adequate coping and resilience skills to successfully navigate life on campus.



## Today's Students Are 'Soft'

- "Helicopter" parents contribute to lack of independence
- Parents are reluctant to see their children struggle and step in to shield them from consequences
- Students lack experiences and coping skills that help them to bounce back from challenges
- Failure-averse students shut down when they do not succeed



#### Today's Students Face More Challenges

- Student feel uncertain about the future in a charged and tumultuous political climate
- High cost of college and the burden of student debt adds to students' stress and anxiety
- **Social pressures and FOMO** present 24/7 through social media
- Competitive job market magnifies student anxiety

## "We Have to Address This Challenge Now"

Three Factors Are Driving Institutions' Urgency to Build Students' Resilience

Colleges and universities face growing pressure to help students develop stronger resilience and coping skills. Pressure comes from the increasing demand for campus services, the focus on student success outcomes, and a shifting enrollment landscape.



#### **Increasing Demand for Campus Services**

Demand for campus services is surging as students increasingly seek support for mental health and well-being concerns from the counseling center, residence life, academic support and advising, and disability support services. Progressive institutions are investing in proactive supports to help students build the skills they need to manage everyday challenges.



5x

Rate at which counseling center utilization **outpaced enrollment growth**, 2009-10 to 2014-15

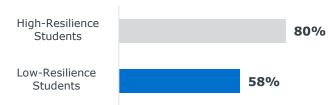


#### **Student Success Outcomes**

Resilience has a strong impact on student success, including academic performance, retention, and likelihood to persist. Bouncing back from failure, persevering in the face of challenges, and practicing healthy coping strategies are important to succeeding academically and personally.

#### **First- to Second-Year Retention**

By Resilience Level, 2014-15





#### **Shifting Enrollment Landscape**

As the number of high school graduates shrinks, institutions struggle to meet enrollment goals. Campuses are pursuing distinctive competitive advantages, and a comprehensive well-being framework can help colleges and universities stand out among their peers.



64%

Of colleges did not meet new student enrollment targets in 2017

## Partnering with Faculty on Well-Being Initiatives

#### Amplify the Reach of Your Institution's Current Efforts

In recognition of these high stakes, progressive institutions create multiple opportunities to infuse resilience and coping skills across the student experience. Common initiatives include resilience trainings, student success coaches, and group workshops dedicated to stress management or coping with setbacks.

Partnering with faculty on well-being initiatives can extend the reach of existing efforts into the classroom and curriculum. This white paper outlines EAB's three recommendations to successfully partner with faculty on well-being initiatives.

#### EAB's Three Recommendations



Recommendation 1

Generate Buy-In for Well-Being Initiatives



Recommendation 2

Equip Campus Partners with Resources to Make Participation Easy



Recommendation 3

Integrate Well-Being Concepts into the Classroom

## Generate Buy-In for Well-Being Initiatives



Cultivate campus-wide buy-in for well-being initiatives through training and education initiatives tailored for faculty and academic partners. Leverage faculty and campus influencers who are already interested in well-being to enfranchise others to participate and target specific populations to extend the reach of education efforts.

#### Rationale

Maximum impact of well-being initiatives requires cross-campus collaboration between student affairs and academic colleagues. Faculty and academic partners can extend the reach of existing efforts by integrating these concepts in the classroom, curriculum, and other academic settings.

However, it can be challenging to build cross-campus support because potential collaborators may not understand how well-being impacts student success or how they can play a role in helping students build resilience and coping skills.

#### Recommended Tactics

Ask students to nominate faculty who are already incorporating well-being into the classroom. Use this group to help create and refine programs and resources that will resonate with their faculty peers.

Build Larger Network with Peer Support

integrates these concepts into the classroom.

**Source Warm Leads for Faculty from Students** 

After gathering an initial group of supportive partners, leverage their enthusiasm and credibility to enfranchise other faculty to participate in well-being initiatives.

Partner with Teaching Assistants to Extend Reach
Provide teaching assistants with training and resources to support their own well-being and that of their students. Partnering with teaching assistants strategically

## **Identify Faculty Partners Through Warm Leads**

#### Simon Fraser University Crowdsources a Network of Collaborators

Simon Fraser University's (SFU's) Well-Being in Learning Environments Initiative works with instructional staff to create conditions for well-being in classrooms, curriculum, and other learning environments on campus. The initiative started with Health Promotion and Teaching & Learning staff, who knew they would need faculty guidance and buy-in for the initiative to succeed.

To identify faculty collaborators, student volunteers in the Health Promotion Office were asked to identify faculty who were already incorporating well-being concepts into their courses. Then, staff reached out to faculty to inform them they were nominated by students and invite them to participate in the initiative. These warm referrals from students resulted in a better response rate from faculty than traditional and generic outreach messages.

#### **How SFU Builds a Group of Champions Why It Works Warm Referrals Surface Best Partners** Student volunteers in Staff contact faculty, **Health Promotion Office** commending their Better response rate from faculty efforts and requesting nominate faculty who than cold outreach input on well-being in already promote wellbeing in the classroom learning environments initiative Increased Credibility Faculty are more likely to respond to research, resources, and outreach from their peers Health Promotion, Teaching Faculty network grows & Learning Center, and Alignment with Faculty Needs from 10 in 2012 to selected faculty collaborate 100+ active members to create research and Group explores supporting wellin 2018 resources specific to being in academic contexts with faculty concerns faculty in mind

Interested faculty worked with the Health Promotion Office and Teaching and Learning Centre to create a suite of resources that help their faculty colleagues integrate these concepts into their courses. For example, they created an online toolkit on Creating Well-Being in Learning Environments, which outlines tools, tips, and information for ten areas related to well-being in the classroom (e.g., positive classroom culture, instructor support, optimal challenge).<sup>1</sup>

While many universities are interested in incorporating well-being concepts into the classroom, it can be challenging to get faculty buy-in. SFU's efforts to involve faculty in designing resources lent peer-driven credibility to the initiative and helped ensure the tools aligned with faculty needs.

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## Create Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities

#### SFU's Interactive Event Leverages Faculty Enthusiasm to Expand Reach

To expand the reach of existing efforts on campus, Simon Fraser University (SFU) developed an annual event to leverage the enthusiasm of involved faculty to nurture a wider group of supporters.

These "Building Connections" events are an opportunity for faculty to connect and share ideas on how to best integrate well-being in the classroom. For example, instructors give 10-minute minipresentations on a teaching practice they use to influence student well-being. Another element of the event, Design Labs, provides space for instructors to brainstorm and workshop ideas to implement in their own classes.

#### **Building Connections Event**

Key Components



Simon Fraser hosts Building Connections events for faculty to learn from one another



Instructors give 10-minute minipresentations on a teaching practice they use to influence student well-being



Interactive Design Labs encourage faculty to workshop ideas and get peer feedback

**Teaching Practices Featured at Event Include...** 

Use comment cards to create a flexible and **responsive learning environment** 

Boost students' **social connection** by having students create groupgenerated study guides

Offer Skype-in office hours as a way to stay connected and flexible

SFU hosts this event annually. So far, there have been 150 participants and the feedback has been positive: 95% reported learning something new about the links between teaching practices and well-being, and 84% plan to try something new to impact well-being through their teaching practices.<sup>1</sup>

These events at SFU are successful because they tap into instructors' stated desire to connect with peers and facilitate peer-to-peer learning about well-being.

## Target Training and Resources to Key Groups

#### SFU Teaching Assistants Reinforce Well-Being in the Classroom

Beyond faculty, Simon Fraser University (SFU) also targeted graduate teaching assistants (TAs) to reinforce well-being in the classroom. TAs are an ideal population to target with training and resources for two reasons. First, they frequently interact with undergraduate students and can be among the first to notice signs that a student is struggling. Second, programming related to mental health and wellness often misses graduate students. By targeting graduate students, SFU provides students with resources they can use to promote well-being in the classroom and in their own lives.

## SFU's Teaching Assistant Well-Being Project



#### **Program Recruitment at Orientation**

Health promotion staff present at graduate student orientations



#### **Well-Being Workshop**

TAs learn about program and available resources/strategies



#### **Just-in-Time Tips**

TAs receive weekly emails with resources and well-being exercises to try in class



"Training graduate teaching assistants helped us **amplify the concepts of cultivating well-being in the classroom** by providing resources and activities for them to use with their students."

Alisa Stanton Associate Director, Health Promotion Simon Fraser University

SFU's TA Well-Being Project consists of an orientation workshop and weekly emails with resources and well-being exercises for TAs to use in class. For example, one exercise suggests asking students to say one word that describes how they are feeling at the beginning of class and, as needed, follow up by connecting students to support services on campus.

Graduate students have given the program positive feedback. Eighty-seven (87) TAs participated in the 2017-18 cohort and 91% of participants learned new strategies for supporting well-being through their role as a TA. Seventy percent have seen positive benefits to their students.

## Make It Easy for Faculty to Participate



Boost faculty participation by providing modularized resources that are easy to use with students. Equipping faculty with guidance around how to discuss sensitive topics with students will help faculty feel prepared and qualified to broach topics they might avoid otherwise.

#### Rationale

Even if faculty are generally aware and supportive of well-being initiatives, there are still barriers to participation. Faculty maintain busy schedules that can make it difficult to commit to another campus initiative. Moreover, addressing student well-being or mental health can be a daunting task as some feel unprepared to discuss these issues because they are afraid they will say something wrong, insensitive, or unhelpful.

#### **Recommended Tactics**

- Provide Facilitation Guidance to Help Faculty Feel Prepared
  Create a go-to resource for faculty who want to help, but don't know how.
- Create Plug-and-Play Lessons
  Use modularized resources to provide an easy-to-implement activity that is more scalable than in-person workshops facilitated by student affairs or health promotion staff.
- Gentralize Resources in a Digital Toolkit

  Highlight key resources in an online platform for easy access and use.

## Make It Easy to Talk About Well-Being

#### Ryerson University's Facilitator's Guide Lowers Barriers to Participation

Ryerson University's Weekly Workbook Facilitator's Guide prepares faculty and staff to discuss well-being concepts with students. The Weekly Workbook is one of the signature resources of ThriveRU, an initiative providing training and resources to students, faculty, and staff to help them thrive personally and academically. The Workbook outlines a well-being exercise for students for each week of the year based on stressors students may face each week (e.g., making friends at the beginning of the year; being optimistic mid-semester during midterms).

#### **ThriveRU**

Initiative providing training and resources to teach resilience and well-being skills

#### **Key Elements**

Wide variety of resources for students, faculty, and staff:

- Workshops
- Flashcards
- Weekly workbook of resilience exercises

#### **Facilitator's Guide**

Accompanies the weekly workbook and equips faculty and staff to discuss common challenges with students

Facilitator's Guide Excerpt: ThriveRU Weekly Workbook Week 3 Exercise – Cultivating Optimism

#### **Why is This Important to Students Now:**

By the third week of the term the workload is beginning to sink in and some of our **students may start to question their academic choices and ability to deliver** on the expectations their instructors have for them.

#### **Leading the Exercise:**

Ask yourself when something good happens:

- (1) What role did I play in making this happen?
- (2) ...

Ask yourself when something bad happens:

- (1) How can I keep this temporary?
- (2) ...

Try asking these questions as part of project debriefs during student-staff meetings or during 1:1s. If they struggle to answer the questions, offer alternative views they may not have considered.

The facilitator's guide provides a short description of why each exercise is important, guidance for leading the exercise, and additional resources (e.g., recommended Ted Talks). The guide provides campus stakeholders guidance that is flexible for a variety of time periods and settings and easily incorporated into regular interactions with students.

## Create Plug-and-Play Lessons

#### UNC Charlotte's Video Modules

Plug-and-play resources make it easy for faculty to use existing content in the classroom and scale the reach of well-being programming on campus. The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) created a series of five short videos on resilience for faculty to use in their classrooms. The content was adapted from a popular in-person workshop facilitated by the counseling center. Each video is 5-6 minutes in length and includes built-in discussion prompts. Faculty receive guidance that summarizes each video and provides additional discussion questions.<sup>1</sup>

These videos allowed UNC Charlotte to achieve scale beyond just in-person workshops alone. They also provide faculty with an easy-to-use option that is flexible for a variety of settings.

#### **Easy-to-Use Videos**



- Popular workshop on resilience converted into a series of 5 videos
- Videos are 5-6 minutes long and can be watched individually or at once
- Topics include challenges and stressors, warning signs, and strategies for resilience

#### 2017-18 Pilot Program



20

500+

Participating seminar sections

Students reached

## Ready-to-Go Videos Integrate Resilience Skills into the Classroom



Discussion prompts built into videos to promote meaningful engagement with content



Optional meeting for faculty and CAPS staff to review content, strategize discussion points, and address questions



Flexible format allows faculty to choose their level of investment



Videos incorporated into all first-year seminar courses in the College of Health and Human Services

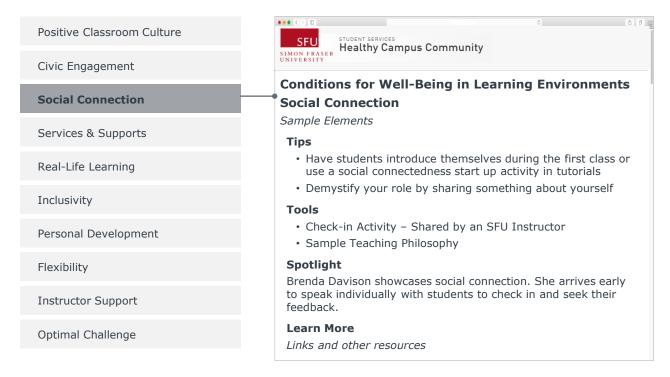
## Centralize Resources for Faculty Use

#### Simon Fraser University's Digital Toolkit Promotes Go-To Resources

Simon Fraser University (SFU) created an easy-to-use interactive digital toolkit organized around their Ten Conditions for Well-Being in Learning Environments. The page is an effective way to centralize the myriad resources SFU developed for faculty to use in the classroom. Each section has quick tips, tools, and a faculty spotlight to emphasize peer participation.

The toolkit is housed on an easily accessible webpage on SFU's website. In the near future, SFU hopes to move the toolkit to Canvas, the university's learning management system, to allow faculty to easily transfer content from the toolkit directly into their course's specific page.

#### Ten Conditions for Promoting Well-Being in Learning Environments



## Integrate Well-Being Concepts into Curriculum

Case	Study	in	Brief
Case	Study		Dilei

To maximize the reach of well-being messaging, progressive institutions are exploring curricular infusion: infusing grit, resilience, and well-being concepts into class and curriculum. Curricular infusion combines the expertise of student affairs professionals and faculty members for a more holistic approach to addressing well-being.

#### Rationale

Reinforcing messages about resilience and coping skills in and out of the classroom increases the likelihood that these skills resonate with students. Consistent efforts to promote well-being from academic and student affairs support a unified vision for students' mental health and well-being.

## Integrate Well-Being into the Classroom

#### Curricular Infusion Bridges Gap Between Student and Academic Affairs

Since 2005, Georgetown University's Engelhard Project for Connecting Life and Learning has encouraged faculty to integrate health and well-being topics into the classroom and existing curricula. Faculty identify a well-being topic that naturally ties into their course material and, in collaboration with campus health professionals, design course assignments and class presentations to highlight the well-being topic.



#### Georgetown's Engelhard Project

Faculty link academic course content to health and well-being topics through readings, presentations, and reflective writing assignments.

#### **Three Elements of Curricular Infusion**



Targeted readings or writing assignments that link course content with infusion topic



In-class discussions with campus resource professionals (e.g., CAPS, health education services)



Community partnerships that encourage students to reflect on lived experience

#### **Sample Courses**

DEPARTMENT	COURSE TITLE	WELL-BEING TOPIC
Anthropology	Disability and Culture	Mental Health, Relationships
Economics	Healthcare Systems Economics	Stress and Coping Skills
German	Witches	Societal Stigma, Mental Health
Mathematics	Introduction to Math Modeling	Healthy Relationships with Food and Exercise
Physics	Dynamic Processes in Biological Physics	Biology of Depression
Philosophy	Introduction to Philosophy	Human Flourishing
Psychology	Cultural Psychology	Contemplative Practices for Well-Being

Engelhard courses span academic departments and cover a broad set of mental health and well-being topics, including anxiety, depression, eating disorders, adjusting to college, and coping with stress. For example, a neuroscience course on synaptic transmission examines the effect of sleep deprivation on the brain and body, demonstrating the impact of human behaviors on well-being and flourishing.

Campus health professionals and staff from Georgetown's teaching and learning center support the project, providing consultative guidance to faculty developing coursework. Faculty also receive a stipend between \$200 and \$500 to support course development.

The Engelhard project was originally funded by a grant and in 2012, it was endowed through a gift from the Charles Engelhard Foundation.

## **A Success Story**

#### Georgetown Embeds Well-Being into Curriculum and Campus Culture

Since the project started in 2005, Engelhard courses have engaged over 120 faculty and 22,000 students. In 2018, 40 Engelhard courses were offered each semester, up from about 20 courses per semester in 2016. In addition to the courses, the Engelhard Project also offers two faculty grant programs and an annual faculty conversation series on teaching and well-being.

Feedback from students and faculty is positive. Faculty feel students are learning how to address real-life challenges, and students feel faculty care about their well-being beyond their academic success.

Once Engelhard modules were put in place in this course, I couldn't imagine doing without them. I trust that through these experiences, students leave my class more prepared to address life's challenges and more willing and capable of understanding the challenges that others face."

Biology Professor Georgetown University It was great to have a professor bring up issues of wellness in class and demonstrate how we can use statistics to assess mental and physical health. I felt cared for—like the professor was genuinely interested in our well-being rather than us just churning out good grades."

Engelhard Student

#### 10+ Years of Growth at Georgetown

40

Engelhard courses offered each semester, up from 20 in 2016

120 +

Faculty members taught courses, 2005-2018

600+

Courses offered, 2005-2018

22,000+

Students reached in courses, 2005-2018



## **Appendix**

- Appendix A: Diagnostic Exercise
- Appendix B: Supplemental Resources

## **Diagnostic Exercise**

#### Identifying Strengths and Areas for Improvement

#### **How to Use This Tool**

Curriculum on page 15.

Use these questions as a guide as you assess your institution's current practices in maximizing the reach of well-being initiatives through faculty partnerships. Your responses to these questions can help you identify strengths and prioritize areas of improvement for your campus.

Rating scale: 1) No, 2) Somewhat, 3) Yes

Campus Buy-In	1	2	3
We have formal and effective mechanisms to identify and track faculty who are interested in incorporating well-being in the classroom.			
Faculty on our campus understand and support the importance of well-being initiatives to student success.			
We partner with key groups beyond faculty, like teaching assistants or resident advisors, to reinforce well-being concepts.			
If you answered no to any of the above, see Generate Campus Buy-In for Well-Being Initiatives on page 7.			
Resources and Ease-of-Use	1	2	3
We have go-to resources to equip faculty with guidance around how to discuss mental health and well-being with students.			
Our faculty resources include guidelines around when referrals should be made (e.g., to counseling center or BIT/CARE team).			
We provide modularized resources that are easy for faculty to incorporate into their classes or interactions with students.			
Our faculty resources are located centrally online for quick access.			
If you answered no to any of the above, see Equip Campus Partners with Resources to Make It Easy to Participate on page 11.			
Classroom Integration	1	2	3
Faculty have support (from student affairs, academic affairs, or both) to integrate well-being topics into their curriculum.			
We have a formal program for curricular infusion that is well-known and well-utilized by students and faculty.			
If you answered no to any of the above, see Integrate Well-Being Concepts into			

### Supplemental Resources

#### **About This Section**

This section aggregates materials that are referenced in this publication or supplement the tactics profiled. Access each resource by clicking on the hyperlinked title of each resource, or view a folder with all the materials here.

#### Creating Conditions for Well-Being in Learning Environments

#### **Simon Fraser University**

A collaboration between Simon Fraser University's Health Promotion Office, Teaching and Learning Centre, and faculty, this resource is a comprehensive toolkit that outlines ten identified conditions for well-being and provides instructors with practical suggestions about how to promote these conditions in their classrooms.

#### **Building Connections Report**

#### **Simon Fraser University**

SFU's Building Connections events are an opportunity for faculty to connect and share ideas on how to best integrate well-being in the classroom. Instructors give ten-minute mini-presentations on a teaching practice they use to influence student well-being. Another element of the event, Design Labs, provide space for instructors to brainstorm and workshop ideas to implement in their own classes. This report features event highlights and details presentations and ideas shared through the event.

#### TA Well-Being Project Weekly Email Content

#### **Simon Fraser University**

SFU leverages graduate teaching assistants (TAs) to reinforce well-being in the classroom. TAs are an ideal population to target with training and resources because they frequently interact with students, and are often underserved by traditional programming related to mental health. By targeting graduate students, SFU provides students with resources they can use to promote well-being in the classroom and in their own lives. This document includes the content TAs receive by email each week.

#### Cultivate Your Happiness: A ThriveRU Weekly Workbook, Facilitator's Resource Manual

#### **Ryerson University**

The ThriveRU Weekly Workbook outlines a well-being exercise for students for each week of the year based on stressors students may face each week (e.g., making friends at the beginning of the year; being optimistic midsemester during midterms). The facilitator's guide provides a short description of why each exercise is important, guidance for leading the exercise, and additional resources. The guide provides faculty guidance that is flexible for a variety of time periods and settings and easily incorporated into regular interactions with students.

#### Resilience Flashcards: Building Skills for a Healthy Life

#### **Ryerson University**

Ryerson's resilience flashcards are a quick, easy resource for students, faculty, or staff to use when addressing a specific challenge. Each card presents a situation and offers related strategies and on-campus resources.

#### Faculty Guidance for Resilience Video Modules

#### **University of North Carolina Charlotte**

The University of North Carolina Charlotte adapted a popular workshop on resilience into a series of five short videos for faculty to use in their classrooms. Each video is 5-6 minutes in length. Topics include challenges, stressors, and strategies for cultivating resilience. This document is the guide faculty receive, which summarizes each video and provides additional discussion questions.

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