Utilizing a Wholeness Framework in Learning Spaces

Kristina J. Mereigh

Director of Wellness Services

Presentation Agenda

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- **Who/ What is wellness services?**
- **Wellness vs. Wholeness**
- **What does that have to do with learning/teaching?**
- **Wholeness Integration Ideas**

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Who & What is Wellness?

What do they believe?

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What does Wellness Services Do?

Ono-on-Ones with Students	Health Education, Programming, Research	Departmental Consultations & class visits	Holistic Care	Passive Programming
Stress, time management, sleep, sex, etc . **Open Hours :** Tu: 10am-12pm Wed: 1pm-5pm	2 Peer-Ed teams Follow current campus trends on health topics to inform Smith-specific curricula & programming Wholeness Wednesdays: 4:15-5:15 in CC103/4	Utilizing wholeness frameworks, reducing stress	**Nutrition** By referral from medical or counseling staff **Acupuncture** Mon and Fri: 1pm-5pm in Schacht Center Room 218	Sleep and Stress Kits Social Media Programming Latex Reusable Menstrual Products

How is Wellness Services Staffed?

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01 Director of Wellness
- Kris Mereigh

02 Casual Employees
- Acupuncturist
- Nutritionist

03 Student Groups
- Peer Health Educators
- House Wellness Liaisons
- Volunteers
- Adjacent Student Groups: Active Minds, Menstrual Cup Project, Students Against Sexual Assault

What are the Guiding Beliefs?

- Mind, Body, Soul, Spirit, Intellect, Community are all aspects of our lives that need to be cared for equally. Harmony rather than balance is key!
- Wholeness is a right and is <u>accessible</u> for all.
- Wholeness is intersectional. Queer. POC. Trans. Disabled. Fat.
- All bodies are good bodies.
- All bodies are worthy bodies.
- Food is fuel, but it is also pleasure, and a source of community. Food is not a punishment or a reward.
- Moving your body is important but it is also a choice. People get to engage in movement the way that they would like to and are able to.
- What you eat or how you move your body is not associated with a moral judgement. Your choices do not make you a better or worse person.

Inclusion

Equity

Social Justice

+

Partnership, Collaboration & Action

Accessibility

Campus-wide culture shifts & reduction in stigma/barriers, loneliness, isolation & increase in resiliency

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Wellness vs. Wholeness

Is there a difference?

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Table Brainstorm

Take 2 minutes at your table and compile a list of images, connotations, that defines "wellness" in American Society today. Commonalities?

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What do you notice about the list that you compiled? If you did this again with the word "wholeness", would the list change?

Wellness

- One-directional
- End-point or goal
- "White" Standard

Wholeness

- Multi-directional
- Non-judgmental
- Bring who you are today with you
- Accessible for all
- Each person's life is their own benchmark and pillar.

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ACADEMICS   ADMISSION & AID   STUDENT LIFE   ABOUT SMITH

Empower the whole you.

A SMITH EDUCATION WILL PUSH YOU BEYOND YOUR INTELLECTUAL PASSIONS. YOU'LL DELVE DEEPLY INTO THE WORLD OF IDEAS. YOU'LL DISCOVER WHAT INSPIRES AND EMPOWERS YOU.
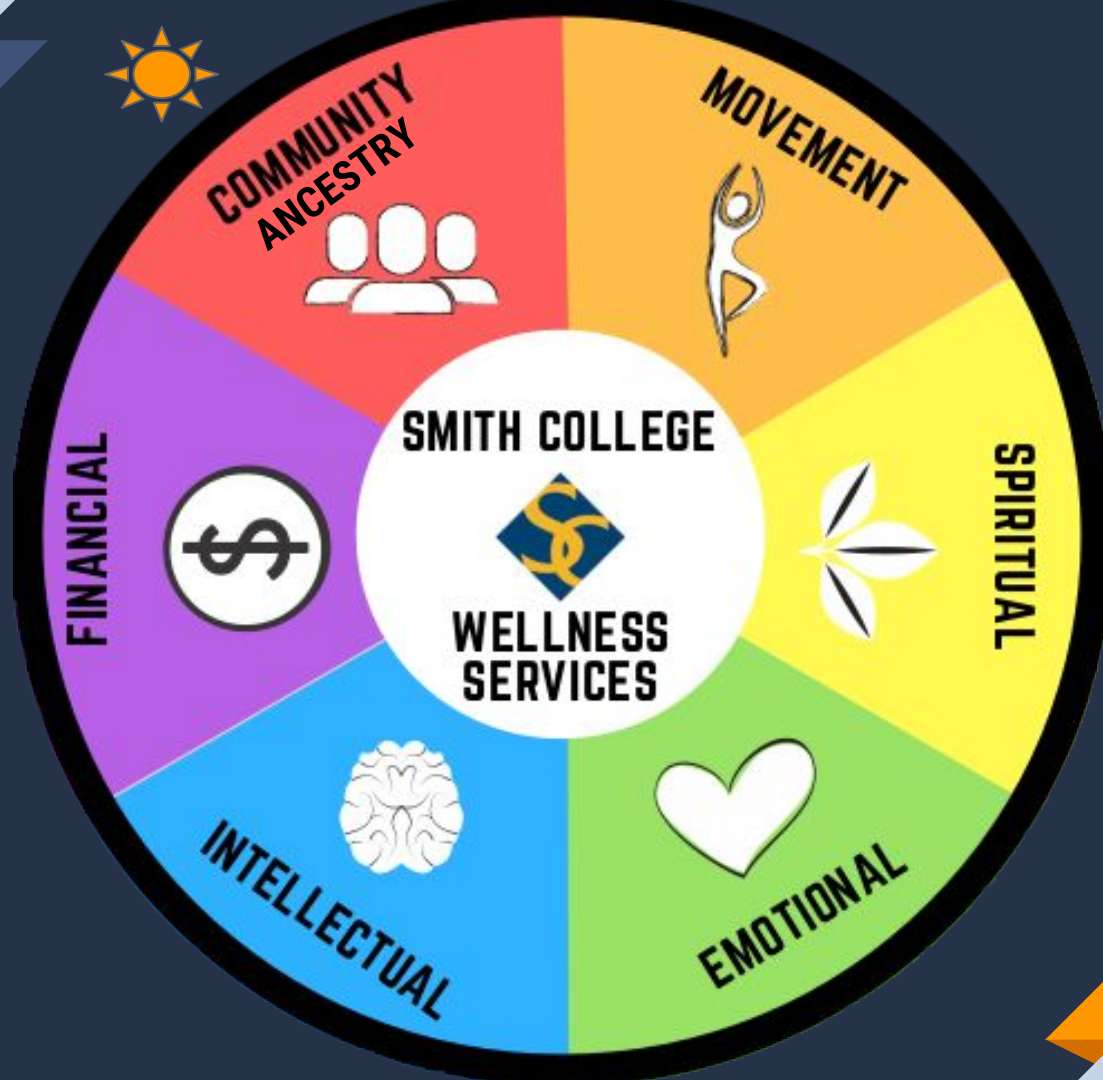
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Whole Campus

International S.

Domestic SOC

2017-2018

18 Months Later

32% → 67%

5% → 25%

12% → 49%

89 %

3

Grounding Data

Tier 3:
Universal or Indicated Preventions

Tier 2:
Secondary or Targeted Prevention

Tier 1:
Primary or Universal Prevention

5%

15%

80%

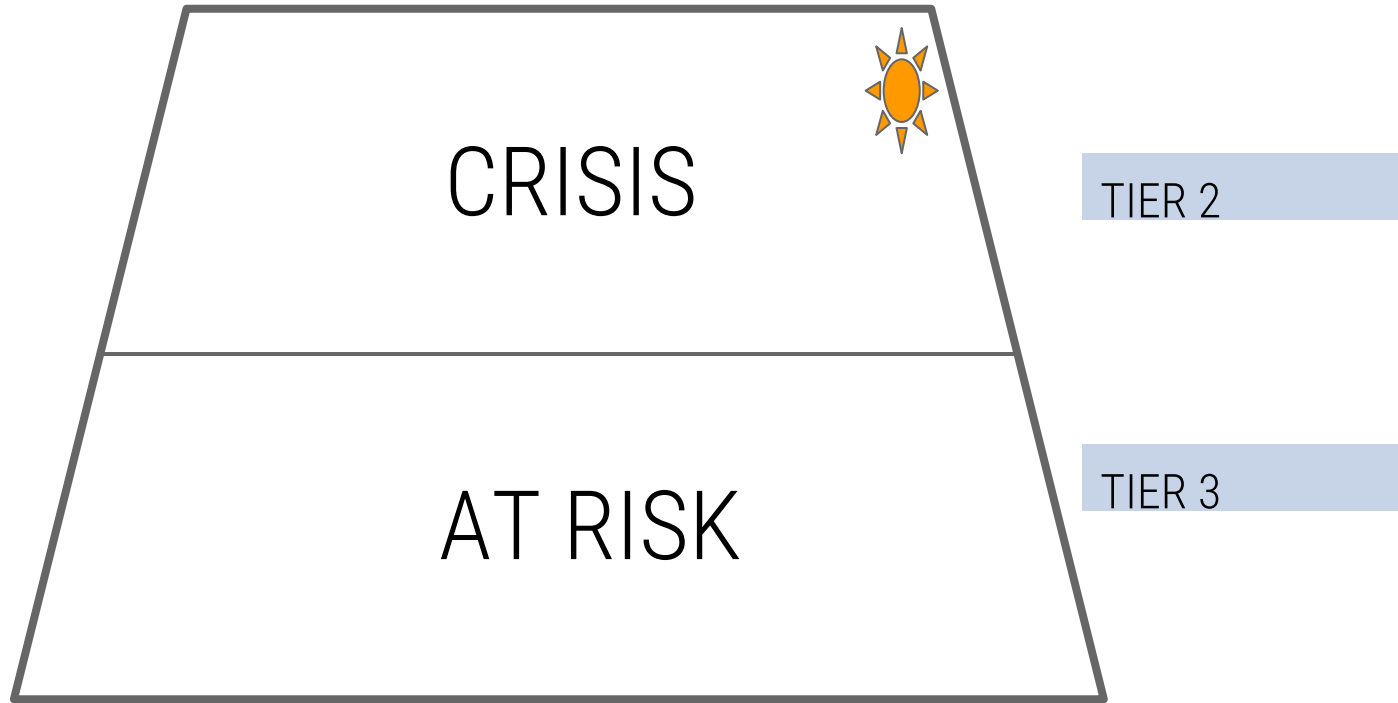Three Tiered Prevention Model

Experiencing Significant Issues

Showing some concerns of risk or future risk.

**Students doing well in school.
They're okay, not experiencing significant issues.**

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Merrell, Kenneth W., and Barbara A. Gueldner. *Social and emotional learning in the classroom: Promoting mental health and academic success*. Guilford Press, 2010.

CRISIS

TIER 2

AT RISK

TIER 3

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Quick Snapshot of the Health of Our Overall Student Body

24.6%

- ~600 Students

Counseling Services

61%

~ 1525 students

Visited Medical Services

25%

~ 600 Students

Working with Office of Disability Services

81%

Percent of the campus seen overall in Schacht without wellness data (2017/18)

Quick Snapshot of Our First Year Class (2022)

28% Self-identified having a mental health concern

17.3% Psychotropic Medications

17% Allergy Concerns

5% Chronic Migraines

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Emotional and/or mood changes
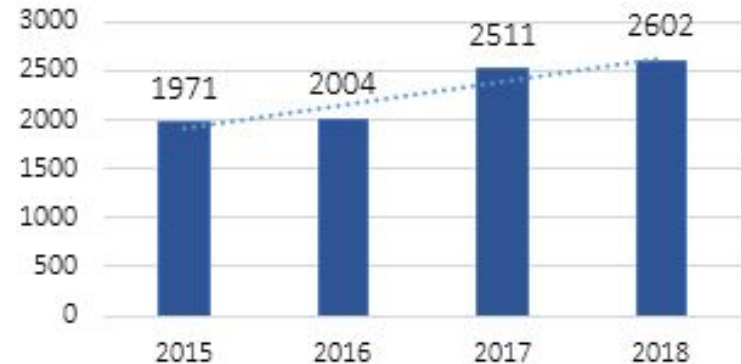- Bipolar
- Disordered Eating Pattern

Students Served Mental Health (Fall 2018)

602 students (24.6% of students based on Noho headcount) were seen for a total of 2602 appointments for and average of 4.32 appointments per student.

Total Number Students Served: Fall Semesters

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Students	435	489	521	569	582	602

Total Mental Health Appointments: Fall Semesters

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018
Appointments	1971	2004	2511	2602

Average annual increase: 6.6%

Slide Provided by Counseling Director- Kris Evans

Frequency and Use of Services

	Frequency of Diagnosis (Percentage)	Average Appointments/Student
Anxiety	27.0	3.2
Adjustment	22.0	2.9
Depression	15.0	3.5
Trauma	7.0	5.3
Relationship Issues	6.0	3.0
ADHD	6.0	2.7
Sleep Difficulty	3.0	4.0
Mood Disorders	3.0	3.2
Eating Disorders	3.0	3.0
Bipolar Disorders	2.0	4.2
Environmental Stress	2.0	2.7
Identity Development	1.0	6.8
Substance Abuse	1.0	5.2
Personality Disorders	1.0	4.8
Autistic Spectrum	1.0	2.2

Slide Provided by Counseling Director- Kris Evans
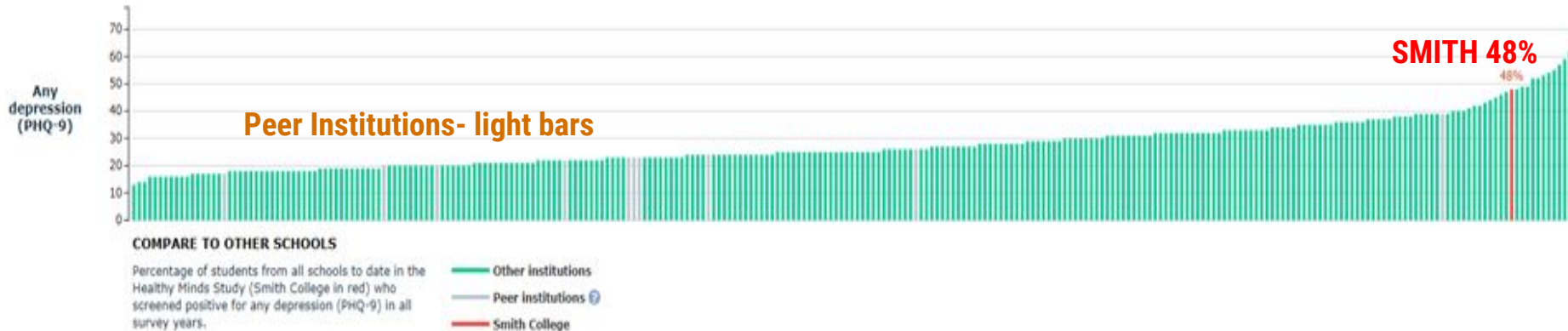
Depression

48% of survey respondents in the Healthy Minds Survey screened positive for depression placing Smith in the top quartile nationally and with the highest frequency as compared to peers.

Smith College (2018)

SMITH 48%

Peer Institutions- light bars

Any depression (PHQ-9)

COMPARE TO OTHER SCHOOLS

Percentage of students from all schools to date in the Healthy Minds Study (Smith College in red) who screened positive for any depression (PHQ-9) in all survey years.

— Other institutions
— Peer institutions
— Smith College

Slide Provided by Counseling Director- Kris Evans

Higher rates of:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Suicidality

Lower rates of:

- Hostility
- Alcohol Abuse

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Slide Provided by Counseling Director- Kris Evans

Jed Data, 2017: A Survey of 65,177 Faculty, Staff, and Students in 100+ Colleges and Universities

50%+
More than half don't feel adequately prepared to recognize when a student is exhibiting signs of psychological distress including depression, anxiety, and thoughts of suicide (58% of faculty/staff and 51% of undergraduate students).

60%+
More than 60% don't feel adequately prepared to approach at-risk students to discuss their concern (66% of faculty/staff and 61% of undergraduate students).

~50%
At least half don't feel adequately prepared to recommend mental health support services to students (49% of faculty/staff and 52% of undergraduate students).

87%+
More than 87% say that it is part of their role as faculty, staff, or student to connect students experiencing psychological distress with mental health support services (95% of faculty/staff and 87% of undergraduate students).

Albright, Glenn, and Victor Schwartz. "Are campuses ready to support students in distress." (2017).

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What Does this Have to do with my Teaching?

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NAVIGATION OF...

01	**Identity Politics**	• Race • Gender/ Sexualty • Socio-economic class • Perception of community/ family status • Disability, Accessibility
02	**Navigating Normal Adolescent Development & Well-Being**	• Relationship Building • Learning how to communicate • Learning how to take care of themselves for the first time
03	**Fear**	• Fear of failing • Impostor Syndrome • Fear of disappointing self/ others

What do the Students need from you?

01 Identity Politics

"Having a work-study job makes it harder to go to TA hours or office hours. Having to pay for part of my own education, as well as medical costs associated with my physical and mental illness and my gender transition, has meant that majors without good summer job and future career prospects were not accessible to me."

"There's a good chance that not all the people in your class are women. Even if they are all Smithies, please don't assume their gender/pronouns. Making this assumption can be quite hurtful."

Pathways Survey 2016 & What I want my professors to know?

What do the Students need from you?

02

Navigating Normal Adolescent Development & Well-Being

"I take lots of hard classes. Not just the one you are teaching. I try my hardest to balance everything, but if I ask for an extra day, or turn in something that isn't great, it's not because I'm lazy or don't care. I spend every moment trying to balance my classes and get everything done on time."

"I do care about and want to be engaged in discussions in your class, but low self-esteem, stress and symptoms from my invisible chronic health conditions often prevent me from being totally involved. I have ideas I want to share, but I'm struggling to share them."

Pathways Survey 2016 & What I want my professors to know?

What do the Students need from you?

03

**Fear
Impostor Syndrome**

"Sometimes I wonder if it was all a mistake and they are going to realize that I'm not actually smart and I got in by mistake… Can my classmates tell? My teachers? If they can, I wonder if they'd ask me to leave?"

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Get Real Smith Data, 2015 (359 students)

Top 5 Reasons Students Considered leaving Smith by Demographics
Pathways Survey 2017 Responses

0% [gradient] 100%

Respondents of Low Income	%	n
Lack of a sense of belonging	76%	51
Climate was not welcoming	54%	36
Lack of support group	43%	29
Lack of support services	37%	25
Financial reasons	33%	22

First Generation Respondents	%	n
Lack of a sense of belonging	76%	68
Climate was not welcoming	52%	47
Lack of support group	47%	42
Financial reasons	38%	34
Lack of support services	36%	32

Respondents with One or More Disability	%	n
Lack of a sense of belonging	70%	105
Climate was not welcoming	50%	75
Lack of support group	45%	67
Lack of support services	39%	58
Financial reasons	28%	42

Non-Cis Female Respondents	%	n
Lack of a sense of belonging	67%	32
Climate was not welcoming	56%	27
Lack of support group	42%	20
Lack of support services	35%	17
Financial reasons	29%	14

URM Respondents*	%	n
Lack of a sense of belonging	75%	30
Climate was not welcoming	50%	20
Lack of support group	48%	19
Financial reasons	35%	14
Lack of support services	38%	15

*URM includes Domestic African American, Hispanic, and Native American Respondents

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Pathways Survey, 2017 (n=1,057 students) 29
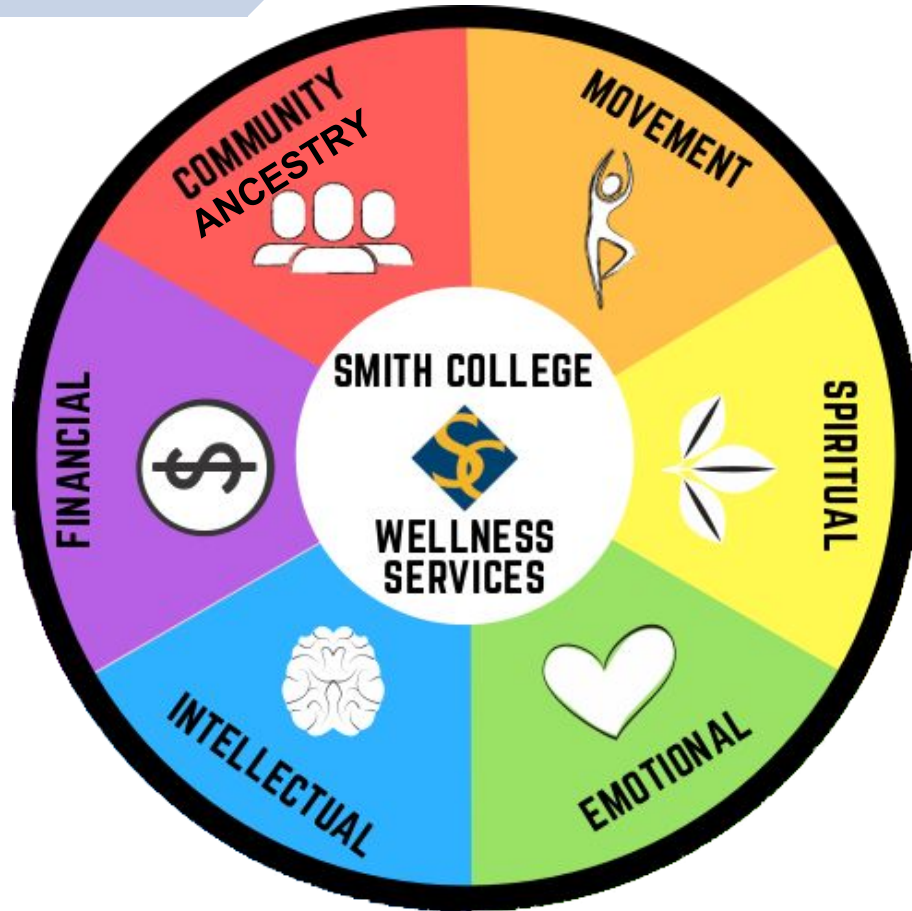
What do the Students need from you?

EMPATHY
- UNDERSTANDING, AFFIRMATION OF THEIR IDENTITIES

People First

Students Second

Encourage harmony and Work/ Life integration

Our Students are more than just future prodigies or world leaders.

They are young people learning to navigate complicated whole lives.

Your career is finite and your body and mind is supposed to transcend your career, so why is it that we spend more time investing in our careers and not our bodies and minds?

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Wholeness Integration Ideas

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Affirming Identities- Passive Techniques

- Pictures of People with Diverse Identities in your Field.

- Be aware of common microaggressions.

- Be mindful of the diversity of the readings that you may offer and who they do or do not reflect.

Women in Stem Posters (FREE)

GLADYS WEST
MATHEMATICIAN. INSTRUMENTAL IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS)

GLADYS' DETERMINATION TO FIND SOLUTIONS INSPIRES THOSE WHO WANT TO WORK ON PROJECTS THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD IN UNIMAGINABLE WAYS. ALL 'SMART' DEVICES USED IN THE WORLD TODAY HAVE BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE WORK OF GLADYS.

TU YOUYOU
CHEMIST AND EDUCATOR. FIRST WOMAN FROM CHINA TO RECEIVE A NOBEL PRIZE.

TU YOUYOU LED A GROUP OF SCIENTISTS TASKED WITH FINDING A CURE FOR MALARIA. WHEN SHE STARTED HER SEARCH, OVER 240,000 COMPOUNDS HAD ALREADY BEEN TESTED, WITHOUT ANY SUCCESS. HER DISCOVERY OF ARTEMISININ HAS SAVED MILLIONS OF LIVES.

ROSALIND FRANKLIN
SCIENTIST. INSTRUMENTAL IN DISCOVERING THE STRUCTURE OF DNA.

DESPITE FACING MANY CHALLENGES THROUGHOUT HER SHORT LIFE, ROSALIND'S CONSTANT CURIOSITY ABOUT THE WORLD HAS LED HER TO BE CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST INSPIRATIONAL FEMALE SCIENTISTS IN HISTORY. HER X-RAY ON THE FIBRES OF DNA PROVED ITS STRUCTURE WAS A DOUBLE HELIX.

https://www.amightygirl.com/blog?p=23086

Affirming Identities - ACTIVE TECHNIQUES

- Work on saying and remembering names correctly
- Own/ Acknowledge your privilege
- Utilize the right pronouns

- Learning Community Entry Google Form prior to beginning of course
- 5 minutes before/after (Highlight a different person in your field)

We Make Mistakes- OWN IT & APOLOGIZE

Sample of Google Form Questions before Wellness Courses/ Workshops

1. What are some identities that you hold dear?

2. Name that you wish to be used in class (pronunciation)

3. Pronouns that you use (list, other, none)

4. Fears, excitements that you may have about this course

4. Are there additional ways that I can support you at this time?

5. Have you reviewed the syllabus? Is there any content that might be sensitive?

6. Is there anything else about you that you think I should know in relation to you being in this class?

Classroom Engagement

- First Five and/or Last Five

- Deload Classes

- Normalize breaks and moments of wholeness:

  Opportunities to Move/ Stretch/ Breathe

- Be transparent.

First Five or Last Five Ideas

First Five:

- Movement
- Breathing
- Discussion about fears
- Asking recap/ retrieval questions
- Quick reflection writing exercise
- Sharing/ Bonding
- Draw connections to the real world

Last Five:

- Most important thing You learned today?
- Need Clarifications
- Tips or preparing for upcoming classes or assignments
- A technique that was difficult to follow or understand - ideas for improvement
- Selfcare check-in

Accessibility

Assume on any given day there are students who are dealing with functional challenges, like distractions, trouble focusing, difficulty processing information.

- Food Politics: Be aware of how much food/ what kind of food you are offering at workshops.

- Provide Content warnings for sensitive topics.

- Use captioned videos and know how to turn on the captioning feature.

- Be Mindful of Accessibility of Bonding Activities

Reasonable Accommodations & Syllabi

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- Provide Diverse opportunities for assessment

- Have clear expectations, deadlines, assessments, assignment outlines

- Use multi-modal methods to present classroom material in order to address a variety of learning styles and strengths (e.g., auditory, visual, kinesthetic)

   Offer one wellness engagement extra credit

- **What does open hours or help sessions look like? What is expected of them? Provide an optional form for how to present questions or materials during the session?**

- **Excused vs. Unexcused Absences**

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https://www.washington.edu/doit/sites/default/files/atoms/files/Academic-Accommodations-Learning-Disabilities.pdf

Reasonable Accommodations & Syllabi

- **Normalize seeking help.**

- Provide information about help resources (counseling services, wellness, jacobson center).

- **Point out campus resources** available to all students such as tutoring centers, study skills labs, counseling centers, and computer labs.

TRUST

Assume good intentions and real struggles.
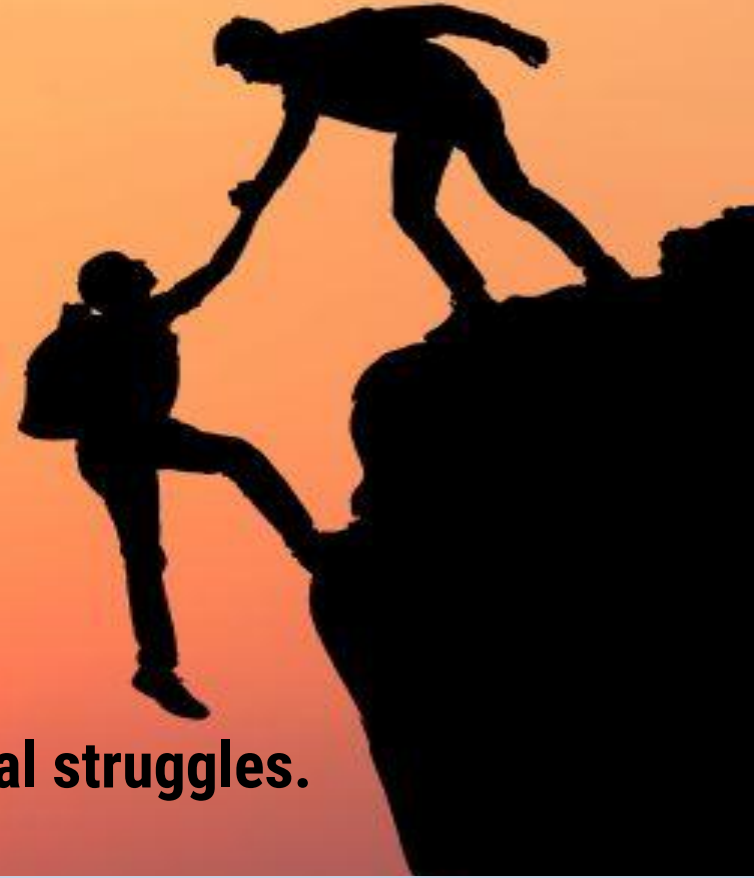
Sample Syllabi Statements

_____ class is a __ level course. It is normal for there to be material that you may need some additional help breaking down. **Having questions is vital to the learning process.** There are a few different types of opportunities to ask those questions:

*Pre-submit questions on Google Form * social media TA sessions (facebook/instagram live)
*In-Person TA sessions * Sign-Up for one-on-one's, other*

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. University Health Services is here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 413-585-2400 or visiting the counseling service page on the Smith Website.
Getting Help is normal and always available."

Recognizing and Responding to Students in Distress

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Distress may manifest in specific student behaviors or may be recognizable by the reactions you have to the student in distress. If you notice any of the behaviors listed here or simply feel concerned that a fellow student is distressed, this guide will may assist you in responding in a way that connects the student with the most appropriate help.

STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- A behavioral or emotional change that is unusual for the student or continues over a period of time
- Social withdrawal
- A change in hygiene or appearance
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- A decline in academic performance or repeated absences from class
- Excessive or inappropriate anger, sadness, or energy
- Unusual thoughts or behaviors

REACTIONS TO A STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR

- Feeling emotional drained by a student
- Feeling as though you are the only one who can help the students
- Feeling alarmed or frightened
- Feeling uncomfortable about a student's comments or behavior
- Concern about a student's ability to function

Be Mindful of Language/ Phrasing

Words are Powerful!

Opt for people first language with students about students. → Person with Dyslexia rather than dyslexic person

Eliminate Use of words like crazy, insane, etc.

Selfcare

For Self:

- Take Breaks
- Refer students that need help
- Create Boundaries
- Seek Social Support
- What activities fulfill you? What frequency do you do them?

For Students:

- Model taking breaks.
- Model not responding to emails late night or on weekends unless it is an emergency
- Clearly state in syllabi

Work as a Department to address inequities within.

We Can

be the Change we Want to See at Smith College.
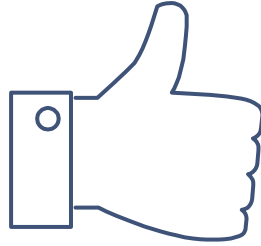
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Pamela McCarthy, Director of Health Services

Laura Rauscher, Director of Disability Services

Lisa Roberge, Administrative Assistant Disability Services

Sherrerd Center for Teaching and Learning

THANKS!

Any questions?

You can find me at
@wellnessatsmith & wellness@smith.edu

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