

Cockrell School of Engineering Menu of Wellness Activities

Each of the following is an activity a faculty member can use to support their students' wellness within a course. All of these can occur whether in an in-class, hybrid, or virtual environment. Please choose at least one activity to implement in your course.

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Informal discussion times, "walk-in" visits, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up a time for students to meet with you informally as a group (e.g., coffee chat, O's hours) ▪ Allow/encourage students to meet with you informally one on one to discuss their personal interests, goals, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content 	Weekly
Allow excused absences for mental health days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In your syllabus, allow for a certain number of absences to be excused to support students' mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content 	Throughout semester
Create policies/procedures that demonstrate your belief in student integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create attendance policies that give students the benefit of the doubt (e.g., don't require a doctor's note when they say they were sick) ▪ Build flexibility into the assignment/exam schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student autonomy and motivation ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content 	First class day Throughout semester
Talk directly with students about the importance of mental health and self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss ways you practice self-care ▪ Encourage students to practice self-care ▪ Have students write reflections about ways they're practicing self-care (maybe build these into class grading system) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student autonomy in caring for themselves ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content 	First class day Throughout semester
Reach out to students when you notice they're struggling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Don't wait for students to come to you ▪ Send an email to students who you see struggling (failing an exam, missing several classes, skipping assignments or labs, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content 	After exams or assignments Throughout semester
Share effective methods for being successful on specific exams or assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When preparing students for an exam or assignment, share specific ideas that have helped other students to succeed on that specific exam/assignment ▪ Be sure to do with especially difficult exams or assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Builds social connection ▪ Teaches self-regulation 	Before exams or assignments

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Encourage students to participate in Cockrell School Cares (CSC) activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide students information about the Cockrell School Cares activities ▪ Post information in Canvas course and at the start of classes ▪ Give students extra credit for writing reflections about their experience in the activity(ies) they chose to participate in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content ▪ Helps them learn about self-care, mental health strategies, etc. 	<p>As CSC events are scheduled</p> <p>Throughout semester</p>
Have students practice expressing gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give students time in class to write in a gratitude journal, reflect on something they grateful for, or write a gratitude letter to someone ▪ Encourage students to continue practicing gratitude outside of class ▪ Import or create an online module related to expressing gratitude for students to take part in and receive credit for completing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content ▪ Gives them a specific self-care strategy to use ▪ Boosts student happiness 	<p>Throughout semester</p>
Have students set goals and monitor their own progress toward achieving these goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students set mastery goals on at the start of the semester ▪ Include academic goals along with personal, social, and professional goals ▪ Throughout the semester, have students revisit their goals and reflect on their progress, obstacles to achieving the goals, and adjustments they may need to make 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Can boost student happiness ▪ May build social connection if you have students discuss their goals with one another 	<p>First class day</p> <p>Throughout semester</p>
Encourage students to engage in activities that allow them to enter a “flow” state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have students reflect on and brainstorm activities that they lose themselves in ▪ Encourage students to spend a certain amount of time each week engaging in these activities ▪ Have students write a reflection about one or more of these experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them beyond learning the content ▪ Gives them a specific self-care strategy to use ▪ Boosts student happiness 	<p>First class day</p> <p>Throughout semester</p>
Talk with students about the necessity of failure and struggle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share times when you’ve failed or struggled with students, how you worked through it, and how you came out better on the other side ▪ Have students write a reflection about times they’ve failed or struggled and discuss them with others ▪ Import or create an online module related to making failure okay for students to take part in and receive credit for completing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation by helping them develop a growth mindset ▪ Builds social connection 	<p>First class day</p> <p>Before or after exams or assignments</p> <p>Throughout semester</p>

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Provide time at the start of each class for students to check in with each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give students 2-5 minutes to talk with each other at the start of class in partners or small groups ▪ May want to provide a specific prompt to discuss with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Builds social connection 	At least once a week or every class
Use cooperative learning activities every class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After lecturing, showing a video, etc. for 5-10 minutes, have students spend 5-15 minutes in groups of 2-4 to discuss a concept, apply their learning, solve a problem, etc. ▪ Can randomly group students or group them based on some criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows students to apply learning and scaffold thinking for each other ▪ Allows you to see where students are struggling and provide immediate feedback ▪ Builds social connection 	Every class
Provide your pronouns in your syllabus and Zoom name and have student provide their pronouns in their Zoom names	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include your pronouns next to your name in your syllabus ▪ Edit your Zoom profile to include your pronouns ▪ Or, rename your Zoom name each class to include your pronouns and ask students to do the same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creates a more inclusive environment 	Every class
Offer choices in assignments, tasks, exams, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allow students to complete a task or assignment on their own or with a partner or group ▪ Give students options for exams – multiple-choice vs. open-ended response ▪ Let students choose the final product for an assignment (e.g., an essay vs. a video vs. a presentation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Allows for creativity ▪ Creates a more inclusive environment ▪ Builds social connection 	On at least one assignment, task, exam, etc. during the semester

Online Canvas Modules

Choose one or modules to import into your Canvas course for students to participate in and reflect on.

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Growth mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page describing what growth mindset means and how it impacts academic learning ▪ Article by Carol Dweck about growth mindset and using the word <i>yet</i> ▪ Activity changing fixed mindset self-talk into growth mindset self-talk ▪ Discussion about growth mindset for students to participate in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Helps students focus on learning over performance compared to others ▪ Helps students set mastery goals 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>After difficult exam or assignment</p>
Failure is Okay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page discussing failure as part of the learning process ▪ Article about things colleges are doing to let students know it's okay to fail ▪ Activity to go with article that has students consider different "okay to fail" activities and evaluate them ▪ Discussion about making it okay to fail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Eases anxiety and stress about failing ▪ Helps students detach failure from self-worth ▪ Supports students in developing self-compassion 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>After difficult exam or assignment</p>
Resilience for college students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document with a list of strategies for bringing out your resilience ▪ Links to websites that discuss <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Rejection and Failure</i> ○ <i>Perfectionism vs. Healthy Striving</i> ○ <i>Anxiety and Ways to Cope</i> ○ <i>Test Anxiety</i> ○ <i>Managing Stress</i> ○ <i>Model Minority Stereotype of Asian Americans</i> ○ <i>Cultural Adjustment: A Guide for International Students</i> ○ <i>Free Strengths Finder</i> ▪ Exam autopsy activity to examine your performance on an exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Eases anxiety and stress about failing ▪ Helps students identify and focus on their strengths 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>After difficult exam or assignment</p>
Physical health	<p>Videos, website links, discussions, activities, and other resources related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mindful eating ▪ Sleep ▪ Movement, physical activity, and exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Video discussing the importance of sleep and research connecting sleep with academic success ▪ Handouts with sleep resources (e.g., ABCs of ZZZs sleep tips, sleep diary, sleep apps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for helping them improve their sleep hygiene and practices 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p> <p>Before finals</p>
Mental health	<p>Videos, website links, discussions, activities, and other resources related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental health during COVID-19 ▪ Self-compassion ▪ Mindfulness ▪ Community ▪ Gratitude ▪ CMHC resources ▪ Substance use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Social connections and community care	<p>Videos, website links, discussions, activities, and other resources related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social connections ▪ Social circles ▪ Community and self-care ▪ BeVocal Bystander Intervention Program ▪ Additional bystander intervention resources ▪ Be That One – Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention Program ▪ CMHC resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves ▪ Builds social connection 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Healthy relationships	<p>Videos, website links, discussions, activities, and other resources related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication ▪ Compassion ▪ Consent ▪ Check-in ▪ Courage ▪ Conflict resolution ▪ Celebration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves ▪ Builds social connection 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Identifying and practicing happiness strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page discussing the research behind using happiness strategies ▪ Person-fit diagnostic for students to take to identify the top four happiness strategies that they're most internally motivated to use ▪ List of specific activities to use within each happiness strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with ideas for practicing self-care 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Self-care: General resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page discussing the importance of self-care ▪ Self-care assessment for students to take ▪ Self-care maintenance plan for students to help them make a self-care plan ▪ Other websites, resources, etc.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UT CMHC's self-care website ○ UT Austin's Thrive app ○ Kirsten Bradbury's Self-Care Toolkit ○ University at Buffalo's School of Social Work Self-Care Starter Kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Counting your blessings and practicing gratitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page discussing how expressing gratitude supports well-being ▪ Link to electronic gratitude journal ▪ Template for writing a gratitude letter to someone ▪ "Grateful Day" video ▪ Slides presenting the research behind expressing gratitude and specific gratitude activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people ▪ Provides students with resources for taking care of themselves 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Learning during disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Slides discussing the difficulty of learning during disruptive times ▪ Document with a list of strategies for bringing out your resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lets students know that everyone struggles during disruptions ▪ Provides specific tips for handling disruptive situations and maintaining resilience 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Online courses: Successful participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chart with ideas for successful participation in online classes for students to analyze their approach to online courses ▪ Online Course Self-Analysis Tool ▪ Setting Yourself up for Study Success: Environment for students to use to analyze their learning environment ▪ Find Your Motivation and Translate it into Action activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Helps students to develop self-regulation ▪ Provides specific tips for being successful in online courses 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Revisit 2-3 more times throughout semester</p>
UT campus resources for student success & well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where do I go for...? document with list of resources ▪ Websites for 20 wellness resources at UT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides students with wellness resources ▪ Lets students know you care about them as whole people 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Revisit 2-3 more times throughout semester</p>

Activity	Description	Benefits	When?
Impostor syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page discussing impostor syndrome in higher education ▪ Video about impostor syndrome ▪ Article about one higher education administrator's experience with impostor syndrome ▪ Activity to go with video and article that has students reflect on impostor syndrome in their own lives ▪ Discussion about impostor syndrome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Builds social connection 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Middle of semester</p>
Motivation and self-regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Page defining motivation and self-regulation and discussing different factors that impact them ▪ Video discussing motivation and self-regulation ▪ Activity to go with the video that has students reflect on their own motivation and self-regulation ▪ Discussion about motivation and self-regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supports student motivation ▪ Helps students to develop self-regulation skills 	<p>Beginning of semester</p> <p>Revisit 2-3 more times throughout semester</p>