Supporting Student Mental Health During COVID-19

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REALITIES FOR SOME STUDENTS

- Spring commencement ceremony cancelled
- Essential workers
- ‘Overloaded’ internet at home
- Wi-Fi connection issues
- Difficulty managing time (nearly 50%) & routine
- Family, friend deaths due to COVID
- Physical symptoms: sleepy, restless, headaches
- Space not conducive to learning
- Managing family relationships
- Delayed communication with faculty/friends
- Workload (virtual and increased)
- Navigating different Blackboard content
“Being a college student and a kid at home at the same time. Helping my family understand my needs and what I’m going through.”
“I deal with mental illness and all the changes happened very fast and I did not have the chance to cope and adapt. I am feeling a lot of stress and I do not have the right skills to navigate these new challenges. I think as long as the professors understand that we are going through a lot that is all I need. Just for them to be understanding and flexible in these new times.”
“Not being able to ask questions face to face with teachers. Makes it difficult to complete assignments.”
How reality manifests for students

- Loneliness
- Lack of motivation
- Increased severity of pre-existing mental health issues
- Difficulty concentrating
- Disrupted sleep patterns
- Increased substance use
- Worry about: health (own and family members), finances, academics, employment (own and family members)
SELF-REFLECTION

How is COVID-19 impacting your world?

- Shift to virtual teaching
- More grading
- Children at home
- Isolation
- Worry/stress
- Routine
This is your pilot speaking. I'm working from home today.
Strategies for Supporting Students

> Recognize the students' concerns (give opportunity to express them)
> Offer predictability (consistent class schedule, assignments)
> Respond to students in a timely manner
> Offer opportunities for students to interact in real-time with you and classmates
> Monitor student efforts as you would in a brick and mortar classroom
> If you have a concern about a student, reach out to him or her
SAMHSA’s National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.
The World right now

Teachers teaching online
**Self-Care**

**Enjoy Favorite Activities**
Create a list of activities you enjoy e.g., exercising, reading a book, baking, lawn care... then do some of those activities.

**Maintain Social Connections**
The app, Houseparty, allows you to play games with others virtually. Host or join a virtual lunch date through Zoom or Facetime. You can also explore a Netflix party.

**Journal**
Journaling boosts memory and comprehension, increases working memory capacity, which may reflect improved cognitive processing.

**Moderate Exposure to Media**
Schedule time at the beginning and end of your day to catch up on news.

**Use Relaxation Techniques**
Download apps to help you relax such as Calm or Headspace.

**Learn Something New**
Watch CUAA’s own Suzy Siegle’s videos for tips about telecommuting to work!

In this time of grieving many losses, focus on the small joys.
You’re not expected to be a counselor. Utilize resources around you.
Thanks!

Any questions?

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