

BLA Trauma Informed Pedagogical Practices Toolkit

What are 2 ways that you might build flexibility within the existing structure of your courses?

- Work at an emotional level. Emotional tension inhibits cognitive functioning and learning. Find ways to ease that emotional tension/switch to a positive emotional level.
- Collect assignments as and when students submit them (staggered manner); this helps instructor to grade assignments in a way the instructor can handle them.
- Be flexible with assignment deadlines.
- Understand students' situation with empathy; Use this information to organize study materials and provide flexible deadlines.
- Have additional office hours, especially during the beginning of the semester to make sure students know that they can approach the instructor and feel comfortable.
- Scaffold assignments, especially writing assignment.
- Have small group sessions on Zoom (like tutorial sessions): Let's read the chapter together; Let's read and understand the assignment and write an outline.
- Offer additional ways for students to contact the instructor; BlackBoard, email, text message, What's App, etc.
- Flexible due dates. Post dates in the syllabus and course map, but be flexible if students are unable to complete them on time. No points off for lateness.
- Offer multiple options for assignments so that students can select the "best fit" for their learning.
- More frequent individual communication to students. Some students pace will be different than others, and communication of encouragement, or checking in can be helpful.
- Reduce the number of items on final exam/omit midterm. Add weekly lower stakes quizzes. Make exam open book. Offer multiple opportunities for students to compete quizzes.
- Extra time when they need it
- Giving out more INC grades
- Offering more opportunities for revision (multiple attempts)
- Flexibility in content (students access to equipment/etc)
- Making sure there is still structure in the flexibility
- Being even more aware of the scaffolding for the semester
- Offering more choices

Thinking ahead about fall 2020, what are the ways that you can convey a sense of hope to your students and to yourself?

- Use growth mindset principle; design the course work into small sets, so each time the student completes a step, they feel a sense of accomplishment and hope.
- Make students aware that there is no right or wrong in feelings and that feelings inform writing.
- Teachers need to have hope in themselves first. Think of examples of what people did during hard times in history. Orwell, for instance, planted almond trees.
- In introductions, asking for students to identify their assets/strengths that they bring to the course.
- Discussing how students are going to apply what they learn in class to their lives and careers in the future.
- Offer case studies/examples of good work from former students. Invite students to see that their peers succeeded and they can too.
- Conveying a sense of positivity through a hardship, and maintaining a positive attitude as the professor
- Building assignments that look to a positive (imagined) future
- Making sure students know they have opportunities for revisions and extra credit assignments
- Making sure to offer time for non-class related discussion (could also be written)
- Looking forward to the future career paths for students, and allowing time to discuss this

In what ways do you think we can create a trauma-aware campus? Do you have any specific ideas?

- College wide bookclub (reading books on Trauma-based pedagogy)
- Trauma awareness needs to be built into the administration
- Trauma awareness is the responsibility of all of us
- Making all teachers aware of these practices (Adjunct workshops, etc)
- Building a sense of awareness (brief required training)
- More robust trainings on Trauma-awareness workshop (4+ weeks)
- I used to work at an institution that provided a stress management training after 911 and in my opinion, it was helpful. Faculty, staff, and student staff were trained.
- The university also used a branding campaign, which had nothing to do with trauma, but the model they used could assist in reproducing a trauma awareness model on campus. For example, a group of us were trained and became Ambassadors of the said training, who then trained others. The goal would be to have people trained in every department, including maintenance, for example.

- Finally, the same model can also be reproduce to "train" students. Meaning, all of the questions and exercises we did for this training can be modified to apply to students to create awareness among themselves and express how they think we can connect more within the trauma informed pedagogical framework.

Review the handout Trauma Informed Teaching and Learning Principles (short form). For each principle, what are some practices that you embed in your classes?

- Trustworthiness and transparency in consistent communication and clear expectations.
- Empathy in communication and videos I make for students.
- Begin with asking what their lives are like, begin with empathy and equity in designing the course.
- Assign a personal reflection paper early in the semester to get to know students and to let them know you care about them.
- Collaboration and mutuality. More group work. Students write a wiki about content for the course.
- Cultural, historical, and gender contexts. In discussion boards, talk about the impact of these things on how we learn about course content, and that each person has their own personal history and relationship to culture, gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
- Empowerment, voice & choice: Invite students to interview one another and introduce them to the class.
- Remind students about the many resources available from BMCC, counseling, food bank, One Stop, etc.
- Reassure students that they are here to learn
- Mistakes are good!
- SI leaders
- Reassure that the environment is non-competitive
- Allow students to connect with each other, and provide opportunities to create community
- Cognizant of different cultural approaches to learning
- Thinking of this list as a list of values to embed in the classroom
- Using technology like slack or even texting and organizing groups to work with each other to supplement the in-person experience.
- Guest speakers