VITALITY
Weekly VITAL Teaching Ideas

Carving Out Time to Recharge, Hit Pause, and Support Our Well-Being

How might we support our well-being as we continue to teach our courses in multiple (mainly online) modalities and manage added workload and fatigue? The following teaching strategies offer some ways that faculty can use to support their well-being while being 'present' to their students. We invite you to share with us your thoughts on how you manage your well-being and we promise to share back via VITALITY.

Plan a schedule for yourself and try to keep it. Block out time during the week for giving feedback, grading, preparing course materials, quizzes, sending communications, and meeting with students. Try to protect your evenings and weekends.

Hit pause. Let the students know that you will be off-line in the evenings and/or over the weekend. Inform them when you will be back online and available for them again. With advance notice, students will respect your decision and you may feel absolved of 'guilt.'

Communicate one to many. Communicate in ways that help many students all at once. Send an announcement with feedback on the most common mistakes in a given assignments, such as writing a lab report. Provide explicit instructions, checklists, guiding questions, rubrics, and examples for your students to consult. Create a voice-over ppt slide with step-by-step instructions on how to annotate text, augment arguments with evidence, and complete an assignment. Create a discussion board for Q&As about the course. Create a pool of stock answers to common questions which you can copy and paste into reply emails to individual students, and also to post as generic announcements to the whole class.

Be kind to yourself! Carve out time during the upcoming Working Break for a walk, time to meditate, stretch your body and rest your mind. This music by Tim Janis might help you recharge.

Adapted from Darby, F. Eight strategies to prevent teaching burnout, Chronicle of Higher Education, January 13, 2021 – accessed 02/11/21