EXPLORING ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: RESEARCH AND STUDENT EXPERIENCES

Welcome!

While we wait to get started, please say hi in the chat and tell us something you like about spring!
WHO WE ARE: THE ACADEMIC RESILIENCE INITIATIVES TEAM

In our work at U of T, we support students in becoming resilient learners.

1500+ students
60+ workshops
8 cohort programs

Partnerships with courses and unique communities
Review and generate data on the student experience at U of T

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In this series, we will build our understanding of academic resilience by looking at experiences of student learning, practices for teaching and course design, and approaches for curriculum design.
OUR PLAN FOR TODAY'S SESSION

Learning Outcomes
- Understand a definition of resilience in the academic context
- Explore dimensions of academic resilience that support student engagement and well-being
- Identify practices to support academic resilience in the classroom

Agenda
1) Defining Academic Resilience
2) Student Experiences at U of T
3) Fostering Academic Resilience
4) Sharing Practices & Discussion
5) Take-aways & Wrap-up
MENTI POLL: WHAT ARE THE FEATURES OF RESILIENCE?

Scan the QR Code or visit menti.com and enter code: 4804 0490
RESILIENCE DEFINED

- Resilience is the capacity to meet and positively adapt to adversity and the capacity to bounce back from setbacks.
- Resilience is not just an individual capacity – it is also the capacity of a community to provide relevant and accessible resources of support.

"We are resilient when the world around us provides us with the resources we need to do well."

-Michael Ungar

(Ye, Strietholt, Blömeke, 2021; Holdsworth, Turner, and Scott-Young, 2018; Ungar, 2016; Martin, 2013.)
WHAT IS THE ADVERSITY?

- It’s hard work!
- Struggling to meet new challenges
- Cycle of stress, overwhelm, and burnout
- Risk factors impacting academic engagement and preparedness
- Pandemic fatigue and learning loss
- What experiences of adversity are students facing? How are they feeling right now?

Learning and mental health literature is two references.

(Assif, Nikkila, Sue-Chee, 2022; Dunn, 2022; Gallagher-Mackay and Brown, 2021; Lederman, 2021; Edwards, 2015; Horton, 2015)
SO, WHAT CAN WE DO?

Support positive adaptation!

**Positive adaptation looks like:**
- Adapting to and learning from academic challenges
- Sustaining academic engagement despite risk factors
- Successfully access and navigate resources of support

**We can support positive adaptation by:**
- Integrating academic resilience within curricular spaces to support equitable learning
- Focusing on resources that are within our control as educators

(Martin, 2013; Ye et al., 2021; Meneghel, 2019; Brewer et al., 2019; Holdsworth et al., 2019; Horton, 2015; Ungar, 2018)
RESOURCES TO FOSTER ACADEMIC RESILIENCE

Based on our experience, the aspects we want to discuss are:

- Metacognition
- Self-efficacy
- Resourcefulness

We have prioritized these because:

- They support and reinforce one another
- They are relevant to the context of student learning
- They are doable!
THIRTY-SECOND POWER STRETCH!
Metacognition is thinking about one's own thinking – the process of planning, monitoring, and assessing one's own learning.

- Increases student's abilities to adapt learning to new contexts and challenges.
- Involves becoming consciously aware of oneself as a problem-solver.
- Is most effective when adapted to reflect specific learning contexts for a topic or a discipline.

"Even more than learning tangible study strategies, I really valued the opportunity for self-reflection each week that I otherwise would not have taken the time to do by myself." – Y2 undergrad
BUILDING RESILIENCE WITH... SELF-EFFICACY

Academic self-efficacy is a personal belief in one’s capability to organize and execute effective action for academic engagement.

- Positively influences motivation and perseverance
- Is a strong predictor of academic success
- Can be developed vicariously, through reflection, and through direct instruction

“For a long time, I was just floating around doing work without much thought to it, but after this program I feel way more confident with developing strategies to tackle assignments and deal with stress and motivation.” – Y2 undergrad

(Artino, 2012; Kapur, 2016; Chowrira, 2019; Hayat, 2020; Cassidy, 2015)
BUILDING RESILIENCE WITH... RESOURCEFULNESS

Academic resourcefulness is the ability to problem-solve and find ways to overcome academic challenges.

- Requires students to understand the multiple dimensions of a challenge or problem they face (prior knowledge, effective learning strategies, time management, mindset, and community)

- Effective navigation of resources (not just awareness)

“I wonder if I had learned some of these strategies in my first year, maybe I would’ve been more well-equipped for this year.” – Y2 undergrad

(Tanner, 2012; Kennett and Reed, 2019)
LEARNING PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT...

- **Metacognition**
  - Support the application of effective study strategies
  - Engage students in the classroom in active reflection
  - Provide opportunities for students to share muddy points and acknowledge desirable difficulty

- **Self-Efficacy**
  - Provide opportunities for productive successes and productive failures
  - Explore opportunities for students to learn from others with role modelling to normalize difficulty
  - Provide exemplars before or after an assignment or exam

- **Resourcefulness**
  - Encourage students to identify their needs and access relevant resources
  - Model the thinking processes involved in your field
  - Encourage positive coping strategies – for both learning and well-being
DISCUSSION

How are the practices we shared similar to what you're currently doing?

What are your thoughts and reactions to the idea of "academic resilience"?

How are the practices we shared similar to what you're currently doing?
A MODEL FOR FOSTERING ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: STATISTICS

Connected with faculty & departmental staff to discuss student challenges

Surveyed first-year students & held a focus group with upper-year mentors

Facilitated sessions to address course-specific learning experiences and challenges in STA303 and STA490

Developed workshops through the first-year mentorship program to support transition challenges in STA130
MENTI: FINAL REFLECTION

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Academic Resilience Series
Partnership with Academic Success, CTSI & OVPIUE

Session 2: Academic Resilience in Teaching Practices & Course Design
May 4, 10-11:30 am | Register

Session 3: Building Academic Resilience Across the Curriculum
May 25, 10-11:30 am | Register
THANK YOU!

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REFERENCES


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APPENDIX: ASSESSMENTS AND DATA

- 2021 University of Toronto Innovation Hub "Let's Talk About Failure" report
- 2020 University of Toronto Innovation Hub How Are You Doing report
- 2020 University of Toronto Faculty of Applied Science and Engineering – Transition to Remote Learning report
- 2020 University of Toronto Accessibility Services Report (St. George)
- 2019 Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey
- 2019 University of Toronto Presidential & Provostial Task Force on Mental Health Report
- 2018 University of Toronto Innovation Hub Resilience Project
- 2018 National Survey of Student Engagement
- 2017 Graduate Student Experience in the Research University Survey
- 2017 University of Toronto Student Health and Well-being Report
- 2016 Canadian Graduate & Professional Student Survey
- 2010 University of Toronto In Their Own Words report