

Ventura College Sabbatical Leave Project – Fall 2021
Faculty Wellness
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Faculty Status: Full-time, tenured

Hire Date: August 2014

Previous Leaves: 0

Sabbatical Taken: Fall 2021

I. SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT:

This project focused on researching wellness specifically as it relates to faculty, students, and educational institutions as a whole. The project goal was to provide tools and resources that faculty can utilize to support their own wellbeing and that of the students with whom they work. Research was collected and shared through the development of a [Canvas Shell](#) entitled “Wellness Resources” which delineates resources for each of the eight dimensions of wellness: emotional, physical, social, intellectual, environmental, spiritual, vocational, and financial. This Canvas Shell was then imported into a collaborative New Faculty Orientation Canvas Shell to be available for faculty use through the New Faculty Orientation Program at Ventura College. The aim is to provide user-friendly resources for faculty, so that they in turn may share resources with students through counseling appointments, class presentations, and course resource links.

II. COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT:

a. Completion of online courses:

i. Yale University’s “The Science of Well-Being” – Dr. Laurie Santos

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/the-science-of-well-being>

ii. University of Rochester’s “Introduction to Self-Determination Theory - Dr. Richard Ryan

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/self-determination-theory>

- iii. Power of Yoga Community Challenge – An eight-week program focusing on the ten tenets of yoga called the Yamas and Niyamas (online through Big Power Yoga in Houston, TX)

b. Research highlights:

i. Books:

1. Jaffe, S. (2021). *Work won't love you back: how devotion to our jobs keeps us exploited, exhausted, and alone* (First edition.). Bold Type Books.
2. Shah, A. (2021). *I'm so effing tired: a proven plan to beat burnout, boost your energy, and reclaim your life*. Boston, Massachusetts, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

ii. Periodicals:

1. Los Angeles Times Special Edition “Wellness” (numerous articles)
2. McClure, K.R., (2021, September 27). *Higher ed, we've got a morale problem — and a free t-shirt won't fix it*. EdSurge.
<https://www.edsurge.com/news/2021-09-27-higher-ed-we-ve-got-a-morale-problem-and-a-free-t-shirt-won-t-fix-it>
3. Tagle, A. & Schneider, C. M., (2021, October 16). *You can't control time, but you can change your relationship with the clock*. NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/2021/10/16/1045396983/time-management-tips-oliver-burkeman>
4. Numerous websites and research journal articles through Coursera courses (comprehensive notes can be found through Coursera links above)

iii. Podcasts:

1. The Darin Olien Show
2. The Wellness Mama Podcast / Katie Wells
3. The Happiness Lab / Dr. Laurie Santos

4. We Can Do Hard Things / Glennon Doyle

iv. Websites:

1. Review of other New Faculty Orientation Programs:

a. University of Vermont:

[https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-Provost/NFO_Agenda_2021 - FINAL.pdf](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/Office-of-the-Provost/NFO_Agenda_2021_-_FINAL.pdf)

b. The Ohio State University: <https://oaa.osu.edu/new-faculty-orientation-day-2>

c. The University of Arizona:

<https://facultyaffairs.arizona.edu/new-faculty-resources>

d. Penn State: <https://vpfa.psu.edu/new-faculty-orientation/>

c. Resource Development:

- i. Meetings were held in Fall 2021 with colleagues from the VC Student Health Center, Health and Kinesiology Departments, and the Professional Development Committee to gather recommendations pertaining to research dissemination. Based on input from colleagues, development of the Wellness Resources Canvas Shell became a mechanism through which to share information, and I was invited to help with the New Faculty Orientation workgroup (a subgroup of the Professional Development Committee) in planning for the 2022-23 onboarding of new faculty.

III. IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT:

a. Impacts of the project to Students

In my work as a general counselor, I have developed an increased focus on the wellness of my students. Instead of jumping straight into career and educational planning, I have been reminded of the importance of placing the health and wellbeing of my students as the center of every appointment. To that end, I make every effort to check on my students, to provide them with appropriate campus and community-based referrals and

resources to support their wellbeing along the eight dimensions of wellness, and to incorporate their wellness into the plans we make for their future.

By engaging with my colleagues and sharing information about wellness, my hope is they will take-away ideas that they can in turn share with students. Additionally, I have joined an in-house workgroup focused on student success and completion. One of our efforts is to encourage all counselors to utilize “best practices” during each encounter with students, which includes checking on students’ wellbeing and providing wrap-around services, referrals, and support.

b. Impacts of the project to Faculty

The primary goal of this project was to support my colleagues through accessible resources. The challenge with any project such as this is finding a way to encourage people to engage with and utilize the resources that have been provided. I have been able to help facilitate “Team Development” wellness activities with colleagues in my department during professional development events. I have facilitated guided meditations, breathing exercises, workplace yoga demonstrations, and other wellness supportive practices with the intention of supporting the health and wellness of my colleagues. Furthermore, these activities have been demonstrated in such a way that my colleagues could take them back to counseling courses and/or appointments and instruct students on how to utilize them as well.

My resources have been shared via Canvas with my counseling colleagues as well as to the New Faculty Orientation (NFO) participants. Working with a team of faculty members and the Professional Development Coordinator, I have been able to help plan for a year of NFO on-boarding and on-going activities to support our new colleagues. This includes planning presentations for faculty to support their own and their students’ mental health, learn about the various student support services available at Ventura College, and to learn more about the resources I included in the NFO Canvas Shell.

While this year has proven to be a transition one for NFO, and there will be a more permanent plan developed for the next academic year, my hope is that my research and efforts to support the wellness of my colleagues will continue to be a component of this new model for NFO.

c. Impacts of the project to Ventura College & the VCCCD

This project has the potential to impact Ventura College and VCCCD if wellness is encouraged through professional development opportunities on campus and across the district. I will continue to communicate with the Professional Development Committee at Ventura College to encourage wellness as a relevant topic for Flex Day activities and professional development events. The Canvas Shell I created is available through Canvas Commons for anyone in VCCCD to access and utilize.

IV. FUTURE OF THE PROJECT:

The content of the Canvas Shell of Wellness Resources will be updated as additional resources are identified and/or if there is a request from colleagues to contribute, which is always welcome. For the current academic year 2022-23, a presentation on the Wellness Resources will be provided during a New Faculty Orientation session to be held March 27, 2023. The New Faculty Orientation program is undergoing a revamping at Ventura College, and the outcome of the new design will determine if and how the New Faculty Orientation Canvas Shell (inclusive of the Wellness Resources content) will be utilized.