

KIN 371 - Exploring Self-Compassion in an Undergraduate Statistics Course

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Faculty lead – Carolyn McEwen

Carolyn works towards creating connections between course content and students’ personal experiences and future goals to develop understanding of the application of acquired knowledge. She is committed to curriculum design that challenges students to develop information and research literacy skills.



Project Introduction

The focus of KIN 371 is to develop students’ research literacy skills. Statistics anxiety has been identified as a key challenge for students in similar courses (Tishkovskaya & Lancaster, 2012).

Increased self-compassion has been associated with adaptive outcomes in academic/performance environments such as goal setting and emotion-regulation.

In addition, self-compassion has been found to be positively associated with various indicators of wellbeing, including life satisfaction, connectedness, self-efficacy, and decreased worry (Smeets et al., 2014) and negatively associated with anxiety and self-criticism (Neff, 2003).

Research Question

Does an embedded self-compassion program in an introductory statistics course relate to students’ changes in emotion regulation, sense of belonging, mental well-being, academic buoyancy, academic performance, and statistics anxiety?

Educational Strategy

Students participated in six five to ten minute self-reflection activities across the term using Mentimeter and small group discussion. These activities prompted students to think about and develop self-compassion (Mosewich et al., 2013; Desmond, 2017).

Evaluation

Students answered surveys at both the beginning and end of term focusing on

- Self-compassion (Raes, et al., 2011),
- Emotional regulation (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006),
- Sense of belonging (UBC, 2018),
- Mental well-being (UBC, 2018),
- Academic buoyancy (Martin & Marsh, 2008),
- Academic performance
- Statistics anxiety (Baloğlu, 2002).

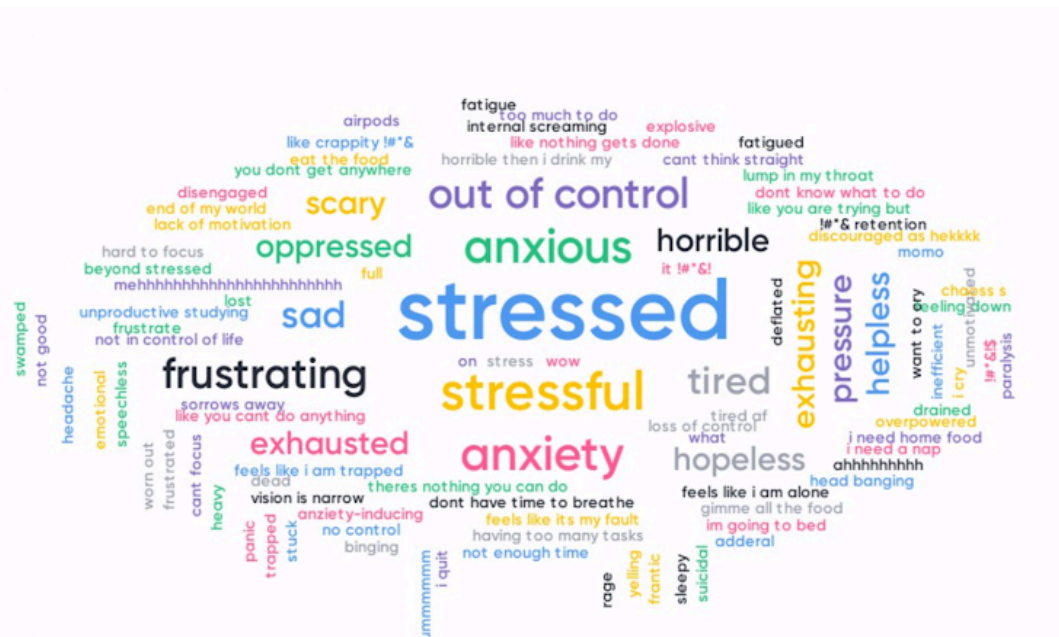
Sample Activity

Mentimeter questions:

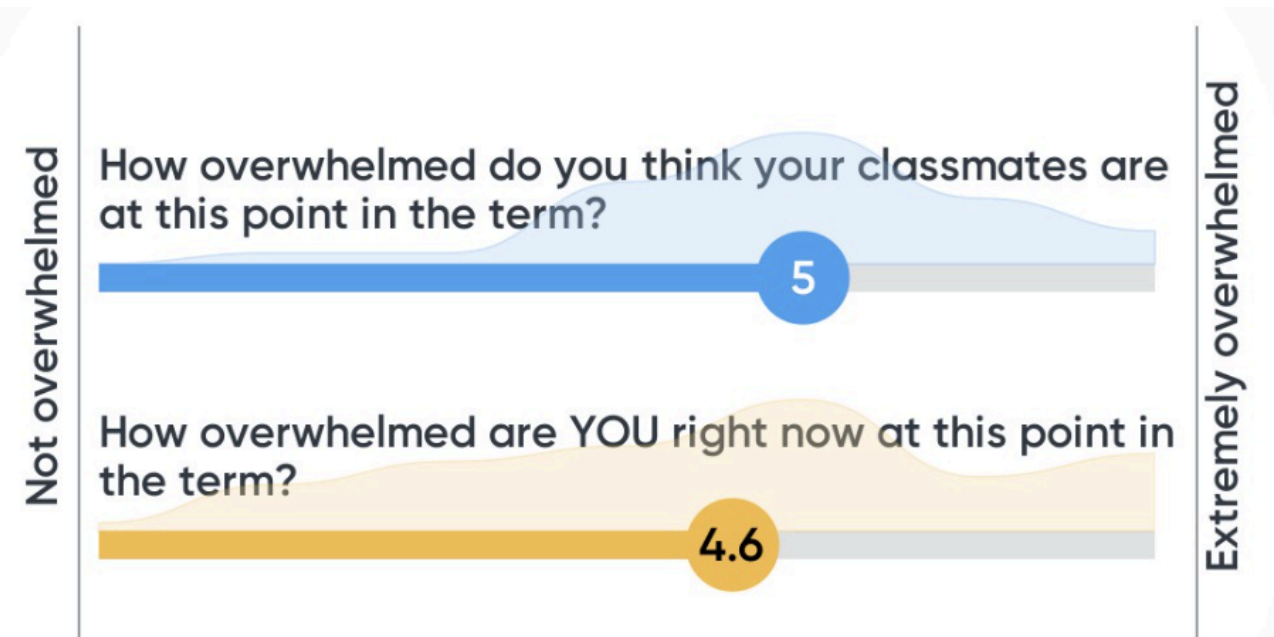
1. What does it feel like to be overwhelmed?
2. Please respond to the following questions: How overwhelmed do you think your classmates are at this point in the term? How overwhelmed are YOU right now at this point in the term?

Partner discussion questions:

3. What advice would you give to a classmate if they were feeling overwhelmed?
4. How could you apply the advice you would give to a classmate to yourself? What are some challenges associated with applying this advice to yourself?



Responses for question 1



Responses for question 2

Next Steps

- Complete quantitative and qualitative analyses
- Develop resources for faculty members who would like to explore embedding self-compassion in their classrooms
- Assess impact in additional contexts



Acknowledgement

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