

FOSTERING ACADEMIC TENACITY: SELF-COMPASSION

Increased [self-compassion](#)  has been associated with adaptive outcomes in academic and 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).



PLAN

Integrating self-compassion activities in your teaching practice can be done in a variety of ways.

- How can you promote self-compassion when working with students in your course?
- How can you promote self-compassion using technologies and activities that students are already familiar with?

IMPLEMENT

When implementing this strategy, consider the term cycle and how you will deliver the content.

- How do students experience critical periods within your course?
- What kinds of content can be both meaningful for your students and make sense within the context of your learning environment?



REFLECT

As you try this strategy, make time to reflect on your practice.

- How has the strategy been working for you?
- How has it been working for your students?
- What might you try next?

Scan here to view this toolkit online.



PLAN

As you consider how you would like to embed self-compassion in your course and what tools and activities might work best, consider the following.

WHAT

- Reflect on your understanding of [self-compassion](#)
- Would you like to encourage self-compassion explicitly or implicitly?
 - If you are introducing the concept of self-compassion to students, consider also sharing why you are talking about this topic - what could you say?
 - If you are integrating activities to promote self-compassion without calling it by name, how can you frame activities so students see value in the activity?

WHEN

- Would you like to introduce this content at one, some, or many points in the term?
- When could you introduce the self-compassion activities and why?
- How much time are you able to commit to engaging with self-compassion activities within your course?

HOW

- Would you like students to engage with the activities independently or collaboratively?
- What kind of activities might prompt meaningful reflection or discussion?
 - For example, [Mentimeter](#) is a tool that can lend itself to independent and collaborative engagement.



IMPLEMENT

You may find it helpful to draw on the following prompts (adapted from Mosewich et al., 2013; Desmond, 2017) when embedding self-compassion activities within your course.

Beginning of the Term

- What are some of the things that you tell yourself about this course and your ability to learn the material?
- What could you tell yourself about this course and your ability to do this course, that would help your learning?
- Is there alignment between what you currently tell yourself, and what would be helpful?
- Write something in your notes that you can return to when you study for your first midterm to remind yourself of how you might talk to yourself about learning in this class.

Before the First Midterm

- How nervous are you to take the midterm?
- How would you support a friend who was nervous about the midterm?

Middle of the Term

- What does it feel like (physically, emotionally etc.) to be stressed during an exam?
- How have you managed your exam-related stress in the past?

Before the Second Midterm

- What does it feel like to be overwhelmed?
- 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?
- What advice would you give to a classmate if they were feeling overwhelmed?
- 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?

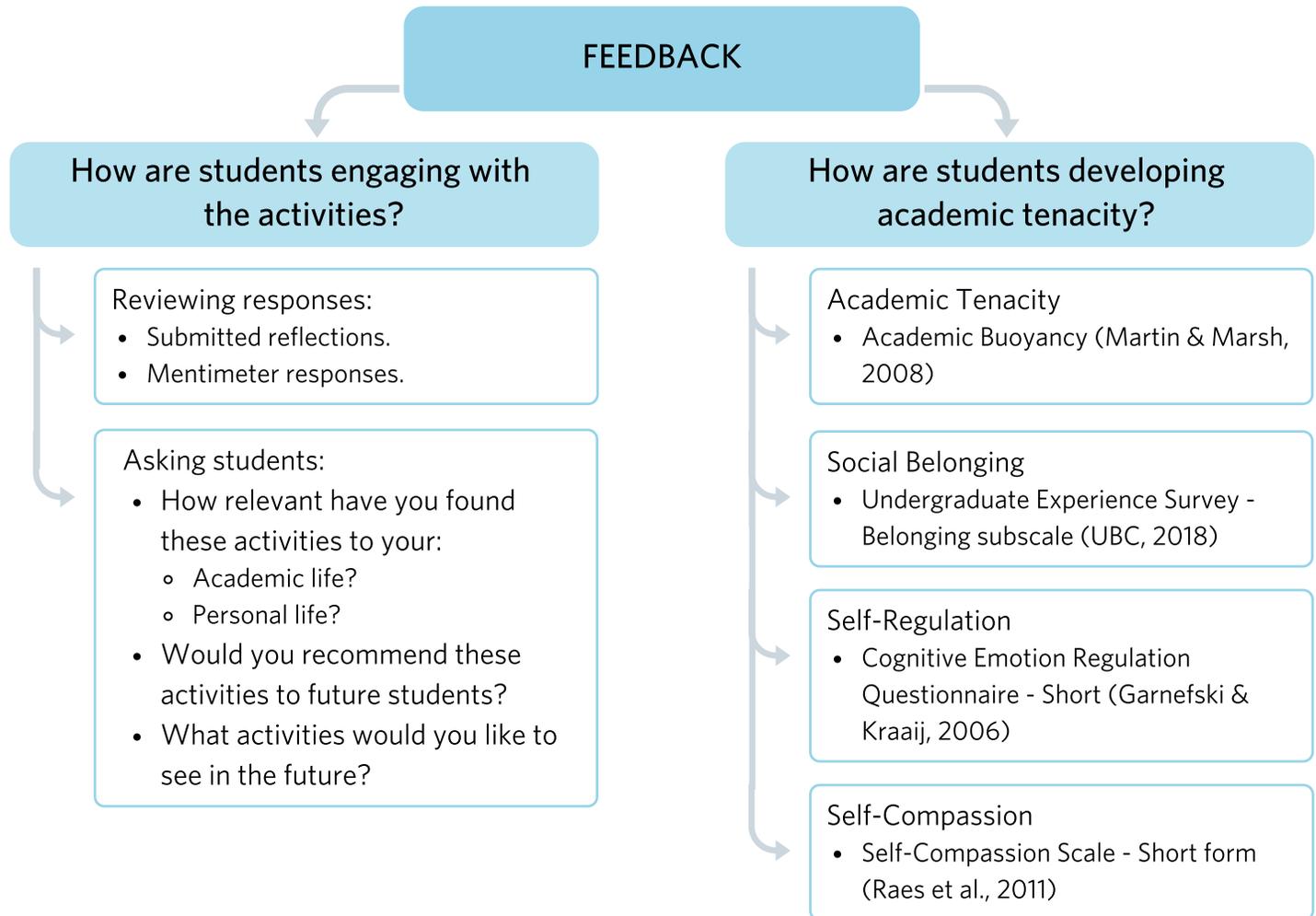
Before the End of Term

- What are some of the things that you tell yourself about this class and your ability to learn?
- What could you tell yourself about this class, and your ability to do this class, that would help your learning?



REFLECT

As you consider how this strategy is working for you and your students, consider gathering feedback to inform what you might try next.



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