



## TAKE A STAND POLICY

On April 1, 2016, the School of Health and Exercise Sciences on UBC's Okanagan campus passed a policy to support standing and movement breaks for students during lecture-based classes. If you are a faculty member who teaches a lecture-based class, we encourage you to consider ways to support student wellbeing by incorporating standing or movement breaks into your classroom.

### THE POLICY

*Instructors will support/facilitate at least one short standing/movement break in all lecture-based classes for every 50 minutes of class time and will allow students to stand for parts of class where appropriate.*

### IN SUPPORT OF MOVING MORE AND SITTING LESS

Physical activity plays an essential role in increasing overall wellbeing, impacting mental wellbeing and academic and professional success. We spend 50-70% of our time sitting, and research shows that these long periods of sedentary behaviour can have negative health outcomes. Moving more and sitting less is crucial to improving health, supporting academic and professional success, improving mental health and increasing the overall wellbeing of our community.

40% of our students want to increase physical activity to achieve a balanced lifestyle, a sentiment echoed by our staff and faculty. However, while many workplace health initiatives have encouraged standing breaks for employees, our students, who spend hours in classes, studying and commuting may not have these options.

Promoting student wellbeing is essential to UBC's success. To learn well, you must be well and therefore it is important that teaching and learning environments, where students spend much of their time, help support this. Movement breaks in learning environments can:

- Improve cognitive function and attention span after the break;
- Make classes more enjoyable and foster social connection among classmates;
- Provide students with a much-needed mental break;
- Improve vascular blood flow;
- Show students that instructors care about them, a key factor for enjoyment and retention.

We challenge all departments to adopt the "Take a stand" policy and encourage your faculty to include this in course syllabi and their classrooms and lecture halls.

### UBC WELLBEING

UBC Wellbeing is a cross-campus effort to create a cultural shift that makes the University a better place to live, work and learn through a systems-wide approach to embedding wellbeing across our campuses.

For more information on mixing movement into your classrooms and lecture halls, please contact Dr. Sally Willis Stewart [sally.willis-stewart@ubc.ca](mailto:sally.willis-stewart@ubc.ca).

