

ARConnections



*A publication of the
Academic Resilience
Consortium,
dedicated to
promoting academic
resilience in higher
education.*

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Upcoming Webinars

**April 30, 2021
1-2PM EST:**
Resilience Programs in
the Context of
COVID-19

May:
Racism & Resilience

June:
LGBTQ+ Resilience

Greetings from the Steering Committee Chair

As the new ARC Steering Committee Chair, my mission is to spread the word about college resilience to every corner of the globe. One of my first goals in this new position was to launch a newsletter that highlights the work of our diverse and impressive membership, and I'm thrilled to present Volume One, Number One of ARConnections! Special thanks to PH.D. students Ashley Hufnagle from University of Minnesota and Tyheem Cooper from Indiana State University for bringing it to life.

*If you attended the fabulous **What Works Conference** in March, you know that the presentations were fascinating, edifying, and engaging. We received extremely positive feedback from participants. April begins our membership drive, so please take a moment to join as an individual, and remember that you will receive a discount if your institution is already a member. Don't let this be the first and last newsletter you receive! Beginning April 15, only members will receive the benefits of ARC, including newsletters. More information about membership is on page 2. Our Membership Co-Chairs are Caroline Umeda Ph.D. from Dominican University and Myrna Cohen Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.*

The Steering Committee and Leadership Council elected in February have worked hard to create a Spring/Summer webinar series, "ARC Explores." Laura Johnson Ph.D. at Boston University leads the Webinar Team. Learn about the exciting upcoming webinars for members on page 5.

ARC represents the cutting edge of resilience work in higher education. When you join, you help advance our shared vision and add your unique perspective to this vital, groundbreaking work.

Please reach out to me at Chair@AcademicResilience.org if you have any questions.

--Karen Oehme, J.D.

JOIN TODAY!

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

In the Academic
Resilience
Consortium

(AcademicResilience.org)



Annual Membership includes:

- Access to new free resources each month
- Quarterly newsletter **ARConnections**
- Free webinars (no masks required); 2021 topics include:
 - Lessons from COVID-19
 - How Anti-Racism Supports Resilience
 - LGBTQ+ Pride and Resilience...
 - And Many More
- Access to colleagues' pioneering, cutting-edge interventions & research, including resilience efforts world-wide
- Downloadable ARC posters for new knowledge/skill building
- Opportunities to present at conferences/workshops
- Membership/Training recognition
- Advance your scholarship; spotlight your campus innovation
- Avoid FOMO (fear of missing out)

Don't miss out! Join today for 2021
<https://academicresilience.org>

(Individual membership may be discounted depending on institutional membership)

Resilient Teaching Online (RTO): The Impact of Communities for Faculty Resilience

Judit Török and Maura Conley

Center for Teaching and Learning,
Pratt Institute, New York
ctl.pratt.edu

In March 2020, Pratt Institute pivoted quickly to online teaching. As a Center for Teaching and Learning, we felt it necessary to facilitate faculty adjusting to online teaching - which most of them have never done before - while also holding space for the traumas that were largely becoming a part of everyday life. We first responded by hosting regular online, unstructured Coffee Chats three times weekly to address our faculty's needs in a responsive and supportive manner. With no agenda to the meetings, faculty freely shared their stresses, worries, fears as well as failing systemic structures in higher education, as all of our realities and futures were in flux.

These informal meetings over the Spring semester clarified our next action. We created a more intentionally designed and formalized series that joined learner-centered course design, active online learning practices, with trauma-informed pedagogies. The Resilient Teaching Online (RTO) series was a natural transition to faculty development and support, heavily informed by the Coffee Chats.

Resilient Teaching Online (RTO) is a workshop series designed to instruct and support faculty in the development of inclusive, engaged, high quality classes online and in hybrid format. Faculty came away understanding best practices for online course design and facilitation, created a plan for

building an online classroom community by keeping classes accessible for all, providing meaningful feedback and modeling and responding to complicated scenarios (most of them specific to COVID) with resilience.

"We are committed to continuing to build on resilience-informed faculty development models while keeping faculty and student wellbeing at the forefront of our work."

We offered the RTO series three times in 2020: in May with 22 participants, again in June with 87 participants, then as a self-paced model in July and August with 164 participants. As we scaled the model to incorporate and "catch up" more of our colleagues before Fall's start, what we noticed was that the probability participants would complete the series was inverse to the number of participants in each of the cohorts.

Resilient Teaching Online, continued

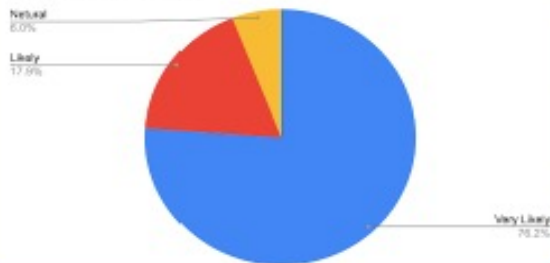
Our main takeaway after examining the data and faculty feedback is that a small and cohort-based model worked best for colleagues. Especially when considering such careful topics like trauma (topics that this year has shown us are impossible to push aside) the consumer model of “training” simply does not work. Although our ability to offer a stipend is a huge factor in our enrollment, its influence is ultimately limited. At first we attributed the jump in enrollment from May to June to the fact that in summer we are able to pay all faculty, part-time and full-time. But upon closer examination, the promise of a stipend was ultimately not motivating enough to get participants to completion.

Generally, what we know from our 2020 programming is that people are in dire need of both knowledge and how-to, but maybe more importantly, a community of others with which they could resonate out their classroom solutions and connect on a personal, human level - albeit virtually. We are committed to continuing to build on resilience-informed faculty development models while keeping faculty and student wellbeing at the forefront of our work.

Impact of the RTO on Faculty and Students

Faculty Textured Feedback Survey

Count of: How likely are you to integrate the RTO materials into your next course?



"How did your classroom practice change?"

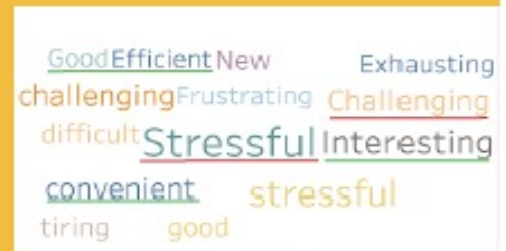
- "I changed my syllabus and policies to be less punitive"
- "I updated my diversity statement to consider access and equity in online teaching"
- "I gained better understanding of Trauma Informed Pedagogies and UDL"
- "I am much more sensitive to the students' needs"
- "I now integrate more community building exercises into my course"
- "I am spending more time discussing students' exterior circumstances influencing motivation and well-being"

Fall 2020 Student Survey

Students whose faculty completed the RTO were more satisfied with their online learning, rated their professors more positively as competent online teachers, reported stronger connection with their peers, and felt that their professors were better supporting their overall wellbeing - compared students from the rest of Pratt faculty.



Students whose professors **did not** participate in RTO



Students whose professors **did** participate in RTO

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

Margaret Mbindyo Ph.D.
Millersville University, Pennsylvania

Growing up in Kenya where we did not have the comforts of a good school or adequate resources, and where the culture favored males, I knew I had to work hard despite the many challenges. My typical weekday in middle school included two important chores apart from going to school. These included fetching water every morning in a 4-gallon gourd from a dam which was 2 miles away from my home. Later, after school, I would go to look for firewood which would be used to cook dinner. By the time I returned home from each of these missions, it was time to do something else. We did not have electricity which meant any homework would be done using light from the fire or a lamp using kerosine. I remember listening to my teachers and taking in every word they said. One teacher stressed the importance of focusing on our studies despite our circumstances. He hoped that one day we could do well and live a better life. He would ask us to envision ourselves living in houses with electricity and running water. He challenged us to dream big, cheered us on by telling us that here is a power within us which can enable us to do great things or apply to various life situations in order to succeed. That power, I came to learn later, was resilience.

Based on my life and academic experiences, the concept of resilience is important to me, especially in my work with students.

As educators we can teach our students to have a mindset of resilience. In 2019 with the support of my Dean of Student Success at Millersville University in PA, I launched the academic resilience initiative, which is centered around short video clips of resiliency by faculty and staff on campus. Just when that was kicking off, we were all thrown off schedule by the pandemic. My colleague Dr. Anne Gaudino and I wanted to do something to continue connecting and motivating our students, so we started the Academic Resilience Speaker Series, an initiative that brings in speakers to meet with our students virtually and share their own experiences and knowledge.

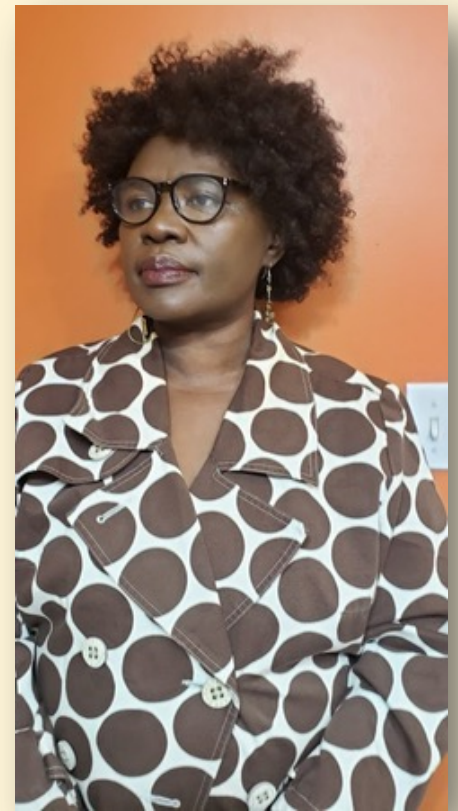
“One thing that I truly appreciate about the speaker sessions is that our speakers address topics that are not typically taught in classroom sessions.”

Last Fall, we had the honor of listening to seven great speakers who addressed our students on issues related to academic resilience during a pandemic. While the sessions ran every other week last semester, this Spring semester we agreed to have them once every month. These speakers are carefully selected based on their expertise, experiences, and interest in the academic resilience topic. We project that by the end of this academic year (2020-2021) we will have reached a good number of students, not to mention those who have viewed the videos in Youtube. Given this kind of engagement and in response to the pandemic, I believe there is need for resilience programming in our universities. This notion is also supported by the results of an academic resilience survey we gave recently. Students identified mental health wellness as a popular session they would attend. This speaks to the mental challenges the pandemic has unleashed on students who cannot interact with others freely as they are used to. One thing that I truly appreciate about the speaker sessions is that our speakers address topics that are not typically taught in a classroom sessions. Some of the topics included mindfulness, setting goals, failing to excel, and overcoming anxiety. Students share their thoughts in the zoom chat and share their experiences freely which is encouraging to the participants to know that others are going through similar struggles and experiences.

When I reflect upon my life, I see the power in the words of that teacher who spoke to us many years ago. The adage “words have power” is so true! Resilience has taken me through school and through tough personal and life situations. My hope is that all academic resilience initiatives can continue to encourage and motivate students to never give up and to focus on success despite the odds!

For more information, please visit -

<https://www.millersville.edu/advisement/academic-resilience-initiative/academic-resilience-series.php>



Margaret Mbindyo Ph.D.

Spotlight Your Resilience Project!

Newsletter Submission Guidelines

ARConnections is a forum for members to share experiences and projects related to their work in academic resilience. In addition, it provides members and prospective members with news about ARC events. ARC is not responsible for ideas and opinions expressed by the authors. Authors are not compensated for publication of their material. Only current members of ARC are eligible to submit articles. *ARConnections* is not a formal scholarly journal. The Steering Committee can decide to reject or accept any proposed submission, and can edit for brevity and clarity. Authors are encouraged to submit brief articles of 250-750 words to Chair@AcademicResilience.org for consideration.

Exclusive member content online!

The Brain's Reward System

Oxytocin

(the love hormone)

- Do something nice for someone
- Get a massage
- Spend time with a friend



Dopamine

(the reward chemical)

- Eat enough protein
- Exercise
- Spend time outdoors



Serotonin

(the mood stabilizer)

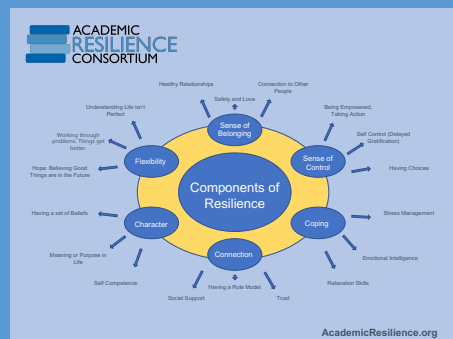
- Listen to music
- Meditate
- Practice gratitude



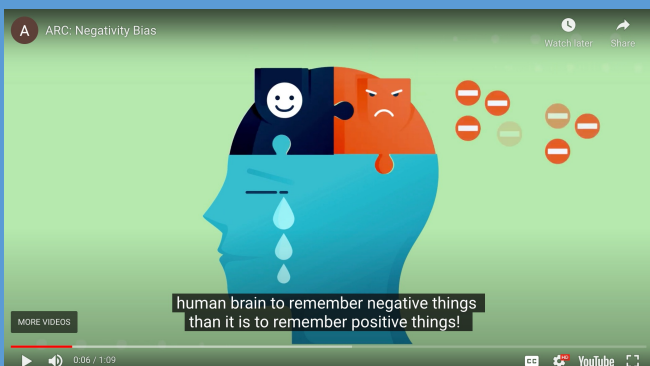
Endorphines

(the pain killer)

- Create art
- Dance
- Eat spicy food



AcademicResilience.org



Free Resiliency Resources Presented By:



RESILIENCY PROJECT

Student Resilience Toolkit Webinar and Q&A

What: Free webinars showcasing a custom student resilience toolkit led by Dr. Oehme, the toolkit's developer and primary researcher.

When: April 30th and May 28th
from 2 pm to 3 pm EDT.

Where: Register at
<https://resiliencyprojects.com/2021/04/06/april-30th-webinar/>

Resilience Best Practices Blog

What: Blogs produced by researchers and experts in student resiliency. Our bi-weekly posts cover best practices in addressing student resiliency.

When: Posts drop every other Wednesday at 9:30 AM.

Where: Check us out at
<https://resiliencyprojects.com/blog/>

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with point-of-need support.**

At EVAN360, we are focused on transforming the way we think about connecting students to the resources they need to be successful. To learn more or partner with us, visit evan360.org.

For ARC Members Only:



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Context of COVID-19

May: Racism and Resilience

June: LGBTQ+ Resilience

Members will receive the dates/times in an email

Our ARC Sponsors

Inspire. Energize. Champion. Transform.

ARC sponsors are valued partners who share and support the mission of the Academic Resilience Consortium. Sponsorship donations inspire, energize, champion, and transform the capacities of higher education to understand and promote academic resilience and create equitable educational environments.

The Benefits of Sponsorship

- ✓ Associate your brand with a thriving and forward-thinking coalition of leading faculty, student affairs professionals, students, and decision-makers in higher education. Elevate your brand recognition and promote your reputation as an innovative force in a shared mission.
- ✓ Interact closely with ARC members to develop your client/colleague relations and promote the intersections between your mission and priorities and ours.
- ✓ Stay attuned to the current and emerging trends, concepts, and language related to student resilience and success, to position your services or products at the forefront of your market.
- ✓ Access the expertise of the ARC membership to inform and develop the mission, staff, and products of your organization or institution.

Contact chair@academicresilience.org