

FOSTERING ACADEMIC TENACITY: MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY

In recent research, post-secondary students at a Canadian institution reported negative attitudes towards help-seeking and interest in learning about symptoms of declining mental health and coping strategies (Armstrong & Young, 2015). There is value in embedding context specific, [Mental Health Literacy \(MHL\)](#) content in regular classes, delivered by the regular teacher (Kutcher et al., 2015, 2016). One component of MHL is teaching about coping strategies which are key for navigating stress, cognitive motivation, and achievement (Hsieh et al., 2012).



PLAN

Embedding mental health literacy in your teaching practice can be done in a variety of ways.

- How can you teach mental health literacy in your course?
- What kind of technology and activities are students familiar with?

IMPLEMENT

When embedding this strategy, consider the student life-cycle and how you will deliver the content.

- What are the key times in 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?

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PLAN

As you consider how you would like to embed mental health literacy in your course and what tools and activities might work best, consider the following.

WHAT

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

WHEN

- Would you like to introduce this content at one, some, or many points in the term?
- When is one key time that you could introduce this content?
- Are there additional times that you would like to introduce this content?

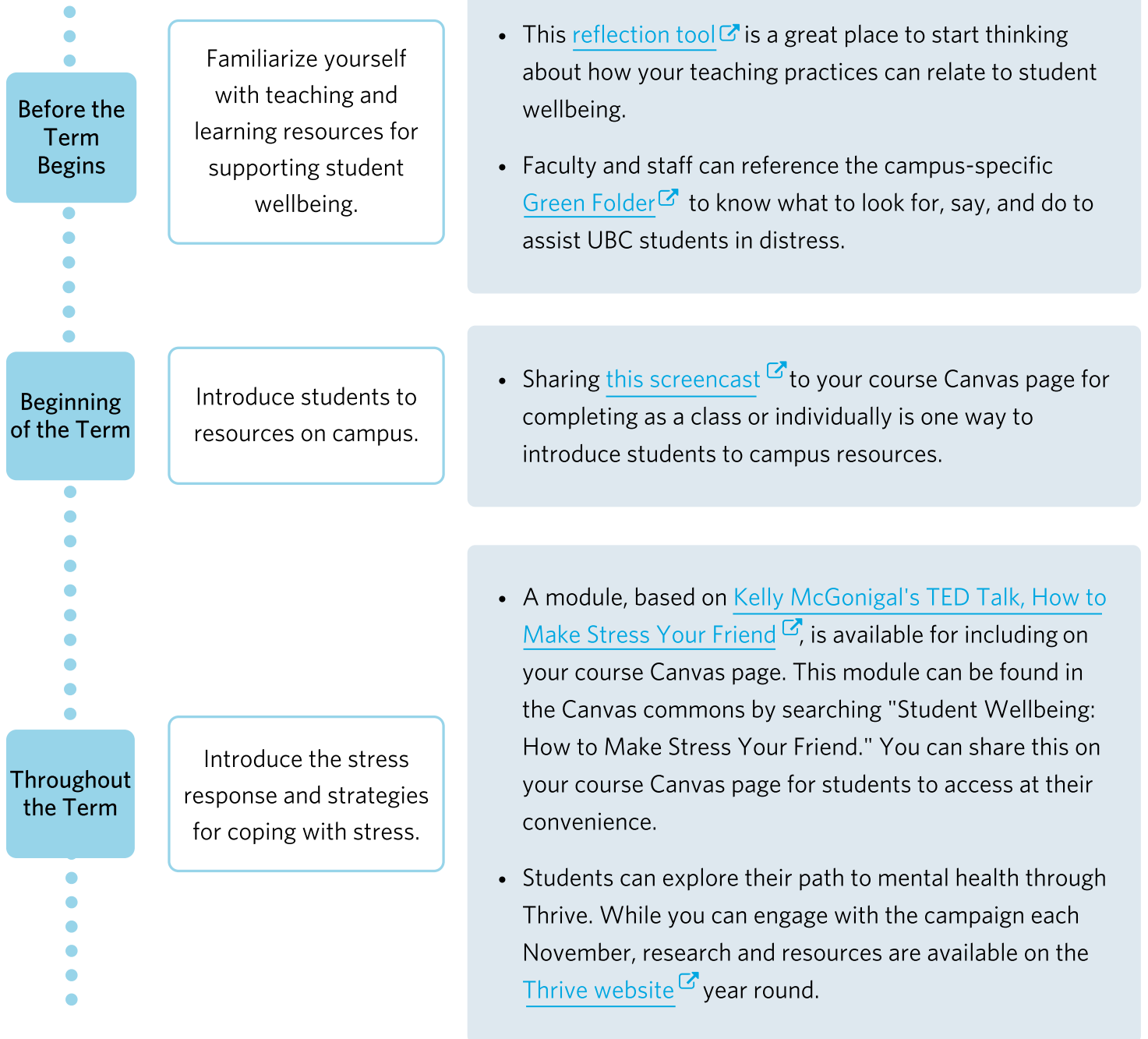
HOW

- Would you like students to engage with an activity or learn about resources?
- Would you like students to engage with activities independently or collaboratively?
- What kinds of activities might prompt meaningful reflection or discussion ?



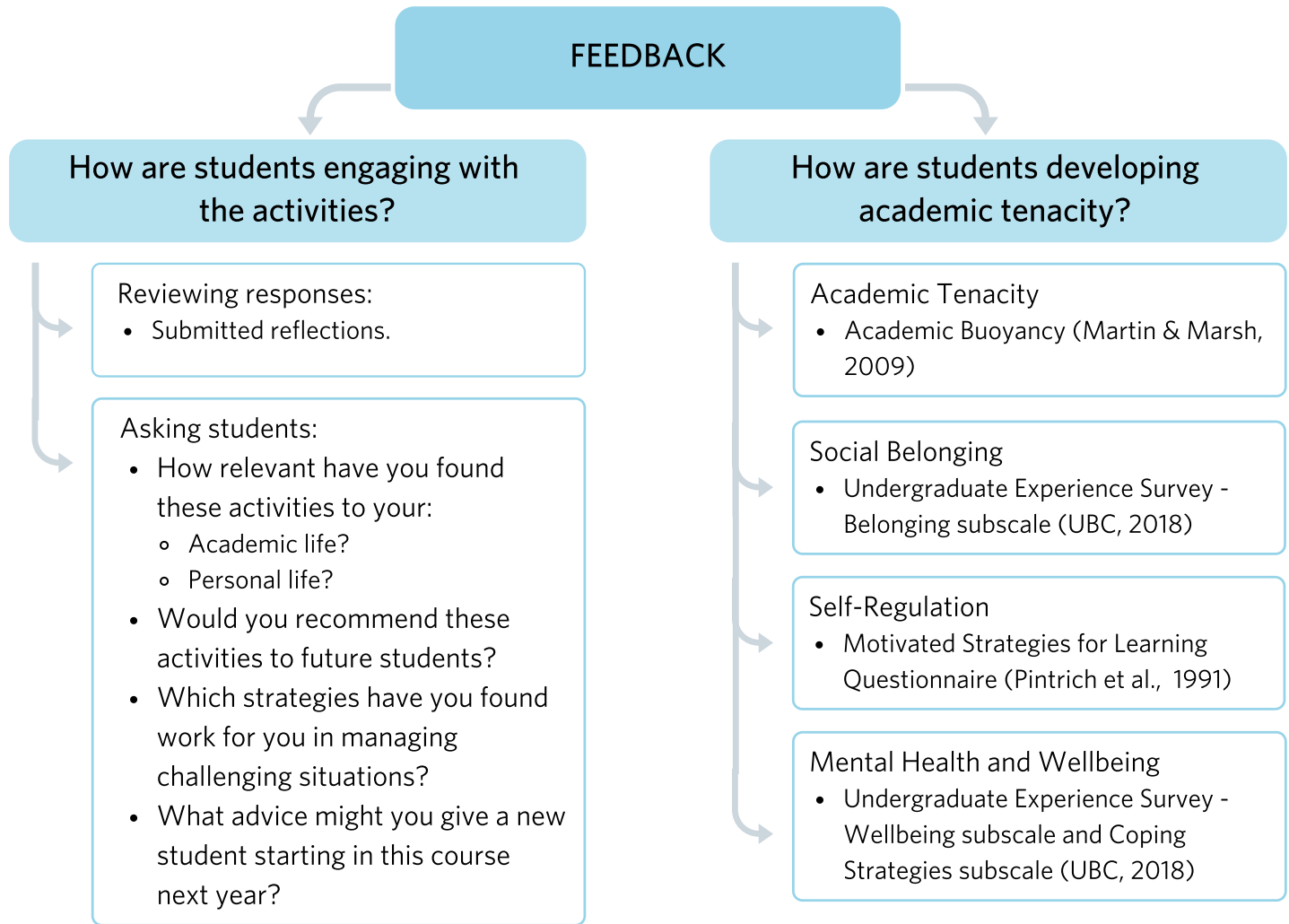
IMPLEMENT

Implementing a new approach for the first time is an experiment. As you consider how you will embed mental health literacy in your course, drawing on these sample activities, may help you determine ways to embed mental health literacy in your teaching and learning environment.



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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