



About this column

This is the first in an ongoing series of columns supporting wellbeing strategies in the classroom, prepared by Dr. Sally Willis-Stewart from the School of Health and Exercise Sciences. Future columns will be highlighted in the [Healthy Campus Newsletter](#), distributed by UBC Okanagan Human Resources.

An Introduction to the Classroom Edition

Addressing wellbeing in the classroom is highly supported in the research literature as positively impacting learning and the learning environment of our students. Classroom culture, course design and curriculum, assignments and assessment, the physical space of the classroom, and the instructors themselves may all influence and impact student well-being.

Our students today are faced with many pressures around success, including financial stability, job and career markets, technology, and a general pressure to succeed all round. Combine this with a very competitive higher education environment, student health and learning can be negatively impacted.

The recently released [Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges](#) has two calls to action with the first being to “embed health into all aspects of campus culture, across the administration, operations and academic mandates.”

The UBC Wellbeing initiative is taking action on this; to educate faculty, provide resources, and to share and celebrate current classroom health initiatives fostering wellbeing in all classes at UBC Okanagan. One of the ways we

will do this is through this new column, which will appear monthly in the Healthy Newsletter.

We hope you will look to this column to learn research-based and experience-based ways to foster wellbeing for your students in your classes. If you have suggestions and/or comments please contact sally.willis-stewart@ubc.ca

We will address different topics and resources each month and keep you abreast of the UBC Wellbeing Initiative: Classroom Edition.

Our tip for this month follows up on a note from Centre for Teaching and Learning Director Dr. Peter Newbury in a recent CTL newsletter, about not having to “wait until the clock strikes to start teaching.”

These few minutes before class starts is also an opportunity to engage with students, welcome them to class, talk about the course or the weather! It brings a sense of belonging for the student; a key aspect for fostering wellbeing and class retention. They feel welcome and it helps build a connection between student and faculty. I know some faculty who have music playing as students come into the class.