Tackling Stress and Anxiety

Practical Tips for Building Resilience

AI Summarization of instructor iClicker responses

During our recent webinar, **221 instructors across disciplines** shared how they support student well-being. We've compiled their top strategies to help reduce stress, build resilience, and foster engagement in the classroom.

Actionable Tips for Reducing Student Stress & Anxiety in the Classroom

1. Build Flexibility into Assignments & Deadlines

- Allow **extended deadlines** or built-in grace periods without penalty.
- Use **multiple low-stakes assessments** instead of a few high-stakes exams.
- Offer **redo opportunities or revision-based grading** to reduce pressure.
- Implement **ungrading strategies** (e.g., pass/fail or self-assessment reflection).

2. Foster a Supportive & Low-Stress Learning Environment

- Normalize **mistakes as part of learning** and encourage a growth mindset.
- Clearly **communicate expectations** and break down assignments into manageable steps.
- Conduct **anonymous check-ins** or surveys to assess student well-being.
- Make yourself **approachable and available**—remind students you're there to help.

3. Incorporate Mindfulness & Stress-Relief Techniques

- Start class with a **breathing exercise or mindfulness moment.**
- Offer **short movement breaks** during long classes (stretching, quick walk, music).
- Share **stress-management resources** (campus mental health services, mindfulness apps).
- Encourage **self-care reflection**—ask students to set small wellness goals. Tools like **Goal Setting and Reflection Surveys** in Achieve can help.

4. Use Humor & Lighten the Mood

- Share **funny memes, GIFs, or short videos** related to class content.
- Use **lighthearted icebreakers or fun polls** to build classroom rapport.
- Play **music before class starts or during short breaks** to create a relaxed atmosphere.

5. Make Assessments More Student-Friendly

- Allow students to **drop their lowest exam/quiz grade** to ease test anxiety.
- Provide **detailed rubrics and model examples** to clarify expectations.
- Give **formative feedback before final grading** so students can improve.

6. Encourage Peer Support & Connection

- Use **peer review or study groups** to reduce isolation.
- Have **students share stress-management strategies** in discussion forums.
- Include **collaborative projects** that promote teamwork and mutual support.

7. Validate Student Experiences & Normalize Stress

- **Talk openly about stress and resilience** on Day 1 and throughout the course.
- Share **your own challenges with stress** as a way to humanize the experience.
- Remind students that **stress is a normal response, not a failure**.

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Technology Tips for Building Resilience

- **Use AI & Automation** – AI tools and automated quizzes can help students study more efficiently.
- **Leverage LMS Features** – Weekly overviews, discussion boards, and reminders keep students on track.
- **Offer Flexibility** – Recorded lectures, adaptive learning tools, and open-access resources reduce stress.
- **Encourage Time Management** – Calendar apps, syllabus quizzes, and task managers help students stay organized.
- **Integrate Mental Health Resources** – Mindfulness exercises, wellness links, and check-ins support well-being.
- **Reduce Assessment Anxiety** – Multiple quiz attempts, flexible deadlines, and AI-generated study guides help.
- **Foster Supportive Communication** – Weekly encouragement emails, virtual office hours, and Q&A chats build connection.

AI-Powered Personalized Feedback for Growth

This guide to using AI to create personalized feedback supports you with a **faster, more effective** way to provide **meaningful feedback** that supports student learning and resilience! 🎯

Instructors suggested the **following activity types** as the most meaningful moments to provide **personalized student coaching**:

- Writing assignments (essays, research papers, literature analyses)
- Case studies and reflections (public relations projects, personal statements, patient care plans)
- Lab reports and technical assignments (coding, chemistry experiments)
- Creative projects (bilingual children's books, artist statements)

To Consider: Do you want to upload student work?

**Option A: No Student Work Upload (Privacy-Friendly)**

✅ **Pros:** Protects privacy, highlights common challenges, aids lesson planning.
❌ **Cons:** Less personalized feedback, requires manual application.

Option B: Uploading Student Work for AI Feedback

✅ **Pros:** Provides tailored feedback, speeds grading, identifies class-wide misunderstandings.
❌ **Cons:** Raises privacy concerns, requires instructor review, AI may lack full context.

Webinar Participant Selections

Option A	50
Option B	28

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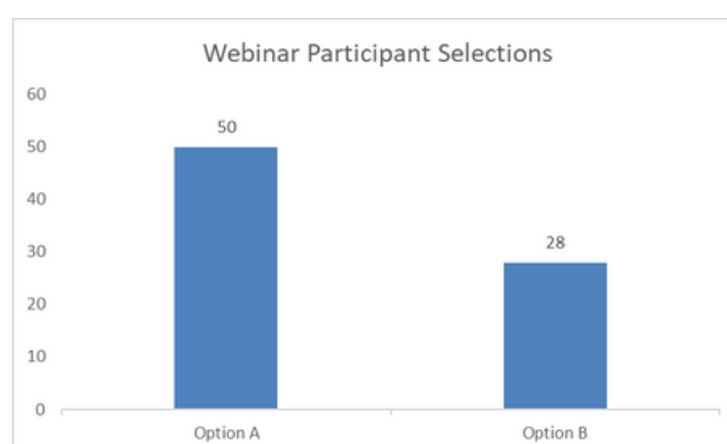
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Crafting your AI Prompt for Growth-Focused Personalized Feedback

✨**AI Prompt** ✨

Upload your assignment and grading criteria or rubric. You can also upload samples of your own writing to train for voice or a sample you'd consider a successful student submission.

Option A: AI-Assisted Feedback Without Student Data Uploads

"I am a **college level [COURSE] instructor** and I would like to **create personalized feedback** for this assignment. Based on what I have given you, **please identify common struggles** students might have and provide feedback I can share for each struggle. Please include **both academic and emotional barriers**."

Option B: AI-Assisted Feedback <u>With</u> Student Data Uploads

"I am a **college level [COURSE] instructor** and I would like to **create personalized feedback** for this assignment. Based on what I have given you, **please review this student response** and provide feedback for **both academic and emotional** challenges. **[Paste anonymized student response here]**."

Continue either Option A or Option B with the following specifications.

My personalized feedback should include :
✅ **Clarity & Specificity**
✅ **Balance between positive and negative**
✅ **Actionable Next Steps**
✅ **Encouraging & Motivational Tone**
✅ **Customization to Student Needs**

Apply the AI Feedback Quick-Check (3-Step Review)

1️⃣ **Does it sound like me?** Adjust for warmth if needed.
- "Your argument is unclear." → "Let's refine your thesis to clarify your main point."

2️⃣ **Is it specific & actionable?** Add examples if vague.
- "Your conclusion is weak." → "Try connecting it to your introduction."

3️⃣ **Will it reduce student stress?** Soften language, reinforce effort.
- "Your grammar is incorrect." → "Your ideas are strong! Reading aloud may help with clarity."

✅ If it checks all three, it's **ready to send**!

This content piece was created using generative AI to summarize the responses shared by fellow instructors during the "Tackling Stress and Anxiety" Zoom conversation.