

**Teaching Culturally and Linguistically Diverse International Students in Open and/or
Online Learning Environments: A Research Symposium**

Pedagogy of Care: Emerging from The Crisis

Zareen Amtul
Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry
University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario
Email: zamtul@uwindsor.ca

Abstract

This paper proposes to embed structured social, emotional, and professional learning tutorials in one of the core-courses that this author teaches to international students enrolled in the Master of Medical Biotechnology (MMB) program offered by the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Windsor. The broad overarching goals are to offer emotion regulation, stress management, resilience, and work-life balance strategies for international students to feel greater autonomy in their lives, in mitigating pandemic-related anxiety, and a sense of ownership in the Canadian economy. New, emerging trends, structural changes, and circumstances redefine how institutions should be organized tomorrow to become the nexus of a new educational model emerging from the crisis and built for the next normal.

Keywords: social, emotional professional learning, pedagogy, international, COVID, COVID-19

Introduction

The rapid meltdown of economies and stock markets amid the COVID-19 pandemic represents a new kind of global societal threat to international students, in particular. There is no denial about the harmful mental health effects, unprecedented levels of pandemic-related anxiety, and global instability this crisis has caused in international higher education. The lives of our culturally and linguistically diverse international students, who account for \$4 billion of annual revenue to Canada's post-secondary institutions in tuition fees alone, and make up around 16.2% of all enrolments (*The Daily — International Students Accounted for All of the Growth in Postsecondary Enrolments in 2018/2019*, n.d.) have become lives of stress and hopelessness, amplified by the strain of unreasonable academic pressures, heavy workloads, and technical difficulties with online schooling (*New Workloads Causing Anxiety, Despair for Montreal's University Students | Montreal Gazette*, n.d.) through no fault of their own (Liang et al., 2020).

Besides getting the academics right, a solution to this gridlock would be to take sweeping actions, not only to halt the health and economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, but also to offer emotion regulation strategies to international students, so that they feel greater autonomy in their lives, and in mitigating anxiety, as a way of problem-focused coping to alter the source of the stress.

Literature Review

Emotion suppression is the key manifestations of health anxiety (Cisler et al., 2010) that diminishes the capacity to accomplish different tasks by impairing the memory recall, problem-solving, and thought processes (Tyng et al., 2017). It can also worsen our motivational state of psychological need fulfillment to socially connect with others (*The Relationships Between Need Fulfillment and Motivation*, n.d.), and leave us with a reduced sense of control. This feeling of helplessness not only has damaging ramifications for our competency at work and interactions at home, but also leads to a host of physical discomforts, including, but not limited to, impaired sleep quality, frequent headaches, increased neck and back pain, and prolonged recovery times (Drugan et al., 1997; Lumley et al., 2011).

Due to the current pandemic, students as the future job seekers, are especially under tremendous anxiety and stress, due to the rapidly evolving norms around educational learning environments, social interactions, emotional development, and professional requirements, which feel more unpredictable than ever. As an initiative to incorporate some social, emotional, and professional learning (SEPL) in this author's teaching, these tutorials are proposed.

Through these tutorials, students will be exposed to the information that they find useful for their own social, emotional, and professional development related (may include, but not restricted) to networking, internships, interview preparation, and seeking jobs. The tutorials can also be structured to invite guest speakers.

Methods

A structured integration of equity-centered, anti-oppressive, and antiracist social, emotional, and professional learning into our curriculums at the foundational level will appreciate

how mindsets and moods shape students' attitudes towards learning, as well as help students to recognize their aptitudes and the rapidly-evolving world around them (*Emotion and Cognition In the Age of AI*, 2019). Here, this proposal is to first build resources, then trial embedding social, emotional, and professional learning tutorials in one of the core courses that is taught to international students enrolled in the MMB program, assessing/evaluating the impact of these tutorials, and finally, disseminating the findings. Pre- and post-tutorial surveys, and students' performances, in various elements of the tutorial-associated course, were analyzed using SPSS software, chi-square, and binary multivariable logistic regression, and can be used as primary and secondary data sources, respectively, to assess an improvement in students' social, emotional, and professional learning.

Results

The foundational integration of social, emotional, and professional learning in the MMB curriculum tends to complement/augment the current learning of international students. This model also offers an ownership sense to international students in the Canadian economy.

It also affords a brasher perspective by blunting COVID's impact and helping institutions emerge stronger, in a more competitive global market. These emerging trends, structural societal changes, and new circumstances redefine how our institutions and industries should be organized tomorrow.

Discussion and Conclusion

Rather than just bouncing back to the status quo, by reaching out to international students, this crisis was taken as an opportunity to advance forward, and incorporate even further, value and constructive emotional, societal and professional influence in teaching to meet the crisis at hand, while finding opportunities in unexplored areas amid difficult constraints. During the closures it is unrealistic to believe, if social, emotional, and professional learning for students and educationalists are left out of the discussion/classroom. Within the framework of these broad imperatives, it was decided to take specific tactical steps to elevate these qualities in international students, during the current crisis, and propose incorporating regular social, emotional, and professional learning tutorials as the heartbeat in all aspects of classroom teaching and learning pedagogy.

Self and social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and accountable decision-making, the five fundamental competencies recognized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework as to "how children and adults learn to understand and manage emotions, set goals, show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions" (Durlak et al., n.d.) are also the focus of the social, emotional, and professional learning tutorials.

By taking the crisis at hand, as an opportunity to move forward in unexplored areas, amid difficult constraints, even more value and positive social, emotional, and professional learning can be incorporated into classes to impact teaching by strategically elevating these qualities in students. As such, a sharper sense of how to evolve, establish positive and long-

lasting relationships, demonstrate compassion, set goals, learn to register and navigate emotions, making responsible decisions, and transforming enhanced cohesiveness will result (*Purpose-Driven Companies Evolve Faster Than Others*, n.d.).

By incorporating SELP in classrooms, instructors can stay engaged with international students, educational ecosystems, and strengthen the digital capabilities to become the nexus of a new educational model, emerging from the crisis and built for the next normal.

References

- Cisler, J. M., Olatunji, B. O., Feldner, M. T., & Forsyth, J. P. (2010). Emotion regulation and the anxiety disorders: An integrative review. In *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment* (Vol. 32, Issue 1, pp. 68–82). NIH Public Access. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10862-009-9161-1>
- Drugan, R. C., Basile, A. S., Ha, J. H., Healy, D., & Ferland, R. J. (1997). Analysis of the importance of controllable versus uncontrollable stress on subsequent behavioral and physiological functioning. *Brain Research Protocols*, 2(1), 69–74. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1385-299X\(97\)00031-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1385-299X(97)00031-7)
- Durlak, J. A., Dymnicki, R. P., Taylor, A. B., Schellinger, R. D., Durlak, J., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A., Taylor, R., & Schellinger, K. (n.d.). *The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x>
- EMOTION AND COGNITION IN THE AGE OF AI*. (2019).
- Liang, L., Ren, H., Cao, R., Hu, Y., Qin, Z., Li, C., & Mei, S. (2020). The Effect of COVID-19 on Youth Mental Health. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 91(3), 841–852. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11126-020-09744-3>
- Lumley, M. A., Cohen, J. L., Borszcz, G. S., Cano, A., Radcliffe, A. M., Porter, L. S., Schubiner, H., & Keefe, F. J. (2011). Pain and emotion: A biopsychosocial review of recent research. In *Journal of Clinical Psychology* (Vol. 67, Issue 9, pp. 942–968). NIH Public Access. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20816>
- New workloads causing anxiety, despair for Montreal's university students | Montreal Gazette*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://montrealgazette.com/news/online-courses-fuel-stress-despair-for-young-montrealers>
- Purpose-Driven Companies Evolve Faster Than Others*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/caterinabulgarella/2018/09/21/purpose-driven-companies-evolve-faster-than-others/?sh=487bcf5655bc>
- The Daily — International students accounted for all of the growth in postsecondary enrolments in 2018/2019*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/201125/dq201125e-eng.htm>
- The Relationships Between Need Fulfillment and Motivation*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 9, 2021, from <https://fs.blog/2017/01/edward-deci-self-determination/>
- Tyng, C. M., Amin, H. U., Saad, M. N. M., & Malik, A. S. (2017). The influences of emotion on learning and memory. In *Frontiers in Psychology* (Vol. 8, Issue AUG, p. 1454). Frontiers Media S.A. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01454>