



An Introduction to Trauma-informed Principles and Teaching Practices

This resource offers principles of trauma-informed teaching and recommendations instructors might consider as they are developing trauma-informed practices for their own courses.

Trust & Transparency

- Build consistency and predictability into your courses and establish routines.
- Be transparent about your reasons for teaching the way you do (assignment choice, topic choice, etc.) and in the grading and feedback process.

Safety (physical, emotional, social, academic)

- Signal to students that you will do your best to provide a socially and emotionally safe learning environment, e.g., intervene to stop microaggressions.
- Help students know where they stand academically and what they might be able to achieve.
- Cultivate a sense of belonging in your class.

Support & Connection

- Increase your awareness of available resources (academic, professional, personal) at Penn State.
- Facilitate opportunities to develop networks and connections with peers and others to build positive relationships.

Collaboration & Mutuality

- Invite students into the conversation about course policies, expectations, group work, etc.
- Demonstrate that student feedback is valued.
- Affirm that peer feedback holds value and that peers can learn from each other.

Empowerment & Choice

- Provide students with choices (readings, assignments, etc.).
- Identify where flexibility possible in your courses (e.g., due dates)—for you as well as for students.

Purpose and Meaning

- Help students identify purpose in/for their learning in your class.
- Communicate purpose around topics and assignments in our class (See: Trust and Transparency).
- Support students in becoming more aware of their own learning practices and nurture meta-cognitive reflection and mindsets.