

Resilience Best Practice: Supporting Frontline Champions



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CHALLENGE: Students as “Frontline Champions”



The triple pandemic of COVID19, racial injustice, and economic disparities has generated unprecedented hardships for our students and faculty. As adult learners, many of Metropolitan State University students are working in various workplace environments in risky “frontline positions” which are necessary to support the rest of society including health care, retail supply chain, security and others.

These additional stressful demands on time, mental health and capacity, emotional labor, family accountability, as well as continuous exposure to trauma and grief can be directly correlated with a potential reduction in student engagement and retention in the classroom.

As stewards, faculty have an opportunity and morale imperative to create a “compassionate learning experience” by offering more inspired support and acknowledgement for these students.

CHALLENGE:

Faculty as “Frontline Champions”

It is important to recognize that Faculty also serve as “frontline workers and champions” as we are required to go beyond our traditional roles as instructional designers and learning facilitators.

While Faculty are challenged to manage their own personal lives in the midst of the pandemic, the incremental impact of serving as “ambassadors of care” for students, as well as providing support as they navigate their own stress, grief, and loss adds to our experience and need for expanded capacity. As we seek to create containers of safety and motivation to keep students committed to their educational pathways, we are actually required to engage in *Innovative Mindset*.

The *Innovative Mindset* competencies are explicitly present as Faculty: expand to new levels of **adaptability** with curricula and performance behavior; employ **creativity**; increase **risk-taking** as new and **innovative** methods are introduced into the classroom; face **non-conformity** as we customize solutions that meet our individual students’ needs for support where written assignments may need to be presented orally or more time is needed to meet course demands; tap on inner resources of **passion and perseverance (or GRIT)**; and **reframe failure** and recognize that there is learning and value in all experiences.

FACULTY INNOVATION

The Metro State Family Cares Card Project

- Goal: Show appreciation and support for students on the “frontline” in the pandemic
- Develop an inspirational communication online “card”
- Use power point as a format for easy customization
- Record personalized Faculty message using zoom; save to media space; include the link in the final product
- Integrate inspiring music, poems, messages from colleagues, humor, or other methods of motivation (sources: youtube or original works)

Sample Online Card



COMPASSION CARD TEMPLATE

The Metro State Family Cares

*Thank you for your self-less service,
unmatched expertise, and
courageous spirit....*

*May these Greetings
bring you comfort!*



Dr. DEW Sends Blessings and Gratitude



https://mediaspace.minnstate.edu/media/Metro+State+Family+Cares+Card/0_1shwozx4



CLICK HERE

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Inspiration by Mariah Carey...“Hero”



Metro State students, you are indeed Heroes. You are taking the road less traveled, standing in boldness and courage despite the challenges. We appreciate you!

Source: youtube: click picture to open

There's a hero
If you look inside your heart
You don't have to be afraid
Of what you are
There's an answer
If you reach into your soul
And the sorrow that you know
Will melt away

And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you'll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you

It's a long road
When you face the world alone
No one reaches out a hand
For you to hold
You can find love
If you search within yourself
And that emptiness you felt
Will disappear

And then a hero comes along
With the strength to carry on
And you cast your fears aside
And you know you can survive
So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be...

Inspiration by Jill Scott

“Living Life Like Its Golden”

Golden by [Jill Scott](#)

- I'm taking my freedom, pulling it off the shelf
Putting it on my chain, wearing it around my neck
I'm taking my freedom, putting it in my car
Wherever I choose to go it will take me far
- I'm living my life like its golden
Livin' my life like its golden
Golden
Livin' my life like its golden
Golden
- I'm taking my own freedom, putting it in my song
Singing loud and strong, groovin all day long
I'm taking my own freedom, putting it in my stroll
I'll be high stepping y'all, letting the joy unfold
- I'm living my life like its golden
Livin' my life like its...



In times like these, it is important to remember to seek the gratitude in each moment...to listen to the stories of all those who dance and cry with you...and to remember YOU MATTER!

Source: youtube: click picture to open

*Thank You
for your
service*

IMPLEMENTATION

- Emails were sent to students in the course to solicit self-identification as a “front-line worker” during COVID19
- Online Compassion Card was emailed directly to students enrolled in courses as well as student advisees by Faculty
- Faculty from other colleges with students predominantly employed in these positions were contacted including Law Enforcement and Nursing/Health and Sciences
- The template was forwarded to interdisciplinary Faculty with instructions on how to integrate their own message directly into the existing format
- In one case, the zoom video was conducted as an interview between two faculty members about the resilience of our students and edited for inclusion
- Power point modifications are easily made by just inserting a new slide where needed and adding desired content
- Alternatively, Faculty can design and utilize their own original material
- The goal: inspire and support our Frontline Champions who are Metro State students

THEORETICAL LENS

- Positive supervisor (faculty) support leads to perceived organizational support (Metro State) which ultimately leads to retention of job (school engagement) (Rhoades et al, 2002)
 - Positive organizational support can indirectly increase work engagement by creating a greater expectation of rewards and signals to employees that their contributions are valued often resulting in greater work engagement. (Brunetto et al, 2013; Zacher & Winter, 2011, Saks, 2006)
 - Positive organizational support also positively influences employee behavior and psychological well-being (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011).
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Questions/Contact Information



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