

Resource Guide

Whether a natural disaster, violent event, death, or pandemic, tragic events everywhere from across the globe to individual communities and families effect what happens in our classrooms. Given that most instructors have no formal training as counselors or clinical psychologists, it is difficult to know how to respond to tragic events, and the ways in which those events may be affecting our students. Tragedies may have a severe emotional and cognitive impact on some students. They may find it difficult to concentrate, remain focused on, or complete their academic work; they may feel anxious, angry, or vulnerable. Because of this, and because we are called upon to be in community with one another, especially during difficult times, it is important for instructors to consider our role in supporting students after a tragic event.

Below are a few ways for any instructor to use a small portion of class time to be responsive to the context in which our teaching takes place after a collective tragic event.

Even the small act of acknowledging that something tragic has occurred and making sure students know all of their options for support and assistance through the crisis, can make an important difference in students' lives. Acknowledge that there may be a wide variety in responses to the tragedy and that they are all normal and important. Communicate that you understand that class cannot simply go on in the same way.

Taking a moment of silence interrupts a course very little but gives everyone a chance to reflect as a part of a community and demonstrates the instructor's sense of humanity.

Often putting our own thoughts and emotions into words is too difficult, or too far outside of our comfort zone to be effective. Tur000095152a paTETQ.00000912 0 62 792 reW*nBT

