Navigating Health and Safety

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Office location: Usdan 130 (Academic Services)

Weekly Meeting time: Wednesdays 10 a.m.
Meeting Location: Pearlman Lounge 113

Course Overview

In this course, you will engage in self-reflection, participate in meaningful class discussions, and apply the knowledge you have gained from the Navigating Sex, Substances, and “Speaking Up” online training and at Orientation.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (August 28): Navigating This Class
• Icebreakers
• Community Agreements
• Syllabus review

Week 2 (September 4): Navigating Social & Emotional Well-being
• Social & emotional factors impacting academic performance
• Growth mindset
• Reframing negative thoughts

Week 3 (September 11): Navigating Alcohol and Cannabis
• Alcohol expectancies and the BAR Lab experiment
• What would you do? (Scenarios)

Week 4 (September 18): Navigating Boundaries and Relationships
• Healthy relationships
• Boundaries and consent

Week 5 (September 25): Navigating Difficult Situations
• “Intervene” bystander videos and discussion

Week 6 (October 2): Navigating Campus Resources
• How to support a friend and refer them to a resource
• Campus Resource Trivia Game
• Submit final project
Homework and Final Project

Each class has a small homework assignment. All homework assignments are to be turned no later than the beginning of the next class. For reflections, submitting homework online via LATTE is preferred when possible, but physical copies will be accepted in class. Some assignments will require showing completion in class. Refer to specific assignments for more detail.

Homework Assignments:

- **Week 1: Respond to the following prompt.** Format can be a 1-2 page paper, video, poem, or any other creative interpretation of the prompt as long as it can be turned in.
  - What do you anticipate your challenges might be in your first year at Brandeis? How will your personal strengths help you overcome those challenges? What social supports and resources will help you overcome those challenges?

- **Week 2: Self-Care Assessment Worksheet**

- **Week 3: Substance Use Self-Assessment Worksheet**
  - There is one worksheet for students who do choose to use substances, and another worksheet for students who choose not to use substances. **You may do either one**, and do not have to disclose which worksheet you chose.
  - Your responses are private; these will not be turned in to your instructor or shared with anyone in the class. In order to get credit for the assignment, quickly wave or show your worksheet—or part of your worksheet—so that the instructor can see that there is writing on the page.

- **Week 4: Respond to one of the following prompts.** Format can be a 1-2 page paper, video, poem, or any other creative interpretation of the prompt as long as it can be turned in.
  - Reflect on a relationship you admire (romantic, platonic, or familial). What do you admire about that relationship and why? Think specifically about the way they set boundaries and how consent is used.
  - Reflect on a boundary you’d like to set with someone you know at Brandeis. It could be a new friend, a roommate, or someone else. Think specifically about why this boundary will be good for you and for your relationship with that person.

- **Week 5: Five D’s Worksheet**

Final Project

The final project for this course is to complete a three-page personal reflection essay on one of the following topics:

1. **Growth Mindset:** Reflect on a time that you failed at something that was important to you. How did you handle it? What did you learn from that experience? Would you do anything differently knowing what you know now? What strategies and supports helped you move forward?
2. **Substances:** What “college party” myths are perpetuated about student alcohol, cannabis, and other drug use in popular movies, tv shows, and songs? What might a more realistic portrayal look like? How do these media shape students’ expectations of what the “college experience” should be, and what impact does that have?

3. **Consent:** Using examples from movies, TV shows, or another form of media, compare and contrast one scenario that demonstrates affirmative consent for a sexual interaction and one that does not. What differences do you observe in the verbal communication and the body language of those involved in each scenario? What impressions might this example leave on a viewer who doesn’t know about affirmative consent?

4. **Bystander Intervention:** Reflect on a time that you witnessed something and chose not to intervene. (Hint: this does NOT need to be a high stakes situation!) Why did you make the decision you made at the time and what—if anything—would you do differently if given the opportunity?

This essay, and all other writing assignments, should be completed using Times New Roman font, double-spaced, size 12, with 1-inch margins.

**Grading**

This module is Pass/Fail. If you attend every class, participate, and complete your homework assignments, you will pass. If you have more than one unexcused absence, you will not pass. If you do not complete the final project, you will not pass. If you do not complete the online training *Navigating Sex, Substances,* and “Speaking Up” (a prerequisite for this module) you will not pass.

Completing this module in your first semester is a mandatory requirement for graduation.

**Attendance and Expectations**

Success in this course is based on the expectation that you will spend 1-2 hours of study time per week on weekly homework assignments, your final project, and practicing the skills you are learning in class.

Your attendance is crucial to this course. A large part of what makes this course special is the community we build over our six weeks together, and each member’s presence is vital to that process. As such, the **only absences that will be excused are for illness and emergencies, such as a death in the family or other major life disruptions.** More than one unexcused absence will result in a failing grade in the class.

**A note about sensitive topics:**

In this course, you will be asked to engage in self-reflection and participate in group discussions about potentially emotional topics.

- You are never required to share personal information, and remember that you always have the option to “pass” on a question or activity.
- You also are free to leave the room if at any time you feel uncomfortable. You will not be penalized for doing so.
• If you anticipate that a specific week will be difficult for you to participate in, please reach out to your instructor to discuss an alternate assignment.

Instructor Responsibilities

By University policy I am considered a “responsible reporter,” meaning that any information you share with me about an instance of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct I will be obligated to share with the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). If you’d like my support in reaching them, I am happy to help. If you are not sure you want to speak with OEO, please consider reaching out to a confidential resource (below).

Faculty are not required to report instances of underage alcohol/cannabis use or related policy violations. However, the health and safety of students is our first priority. If I were to hear anything that made me feel concerned for a student’s health and safety, I would act to connect that student to the appropriate resources. This might include submitting a CARE Report and/or connecting that student with a campus resource like the confidential Alcohol and Other Drug Specialist at the BCC.

Confidential resources:

- Prevention, Advocacy & Resource Center (PARC)
- Counselors at the Brandeis Counseling Center (BCC)
- Medical practitioners at the Brandeis Health Center
- University Chaplains in the Center for Spiritual Life
- University Ombuds

Communication Preferences

I do not consistently check work email after 5pm on weekdays or on the weekends. While it’s possible I may respond to your email in the evening or on a weekend, do not expect this. However, I will be sure to respond to your emails within one business day.

Accommodations

If you are a student who needs accommodations as outlined in an accommodations letter, please talk with me and present your letter of accommodation as soon as you can. I want to provide your accommodations, but cannot do so retroactively. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Support (SAS) at 781.736.3470 or access@brandeis.edu

Texts

There are no required course texts for this class to purchase. All readings and presentations will be distributed in class and or via email.

Prerequisites

Completion of the online training Navigating Sex, Substances, and “Speaking Up” is a prerequisite for this module. Instructors will be given notice of any student who has not completed the training. Students who have not successfully completed the online training will not meet their Health, Wellness, and Life Skills requirement or pass the Navigating Health and Safety module.
Academic Integrity

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides.

Prioritizing Wellness

Your health and wellness is a priority. I encourage you to take advantage of all the resources on campus to help support your physical and mental/emotional health and wellbeing this semester, and throughout your time at Brandeis.

www.brandeis.edu/support