

# Trauma Informed Teaching

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After a violent campus event, many students may experience shock, grief, fear, difficulty concentrating, or emotional numbness. Trauma-informed teaching helps create a learning environment that promotes safety, trust, transparency, flexibility, empowerment, and connection—without requiring faculty to act as counselors. Here are a few practical classroom strategies that can be incorporated:

one



## Acknowledge the Event

- Briefly recognize what occurred at the start of class
- Use simple, compassionate language
- Avoid graphic details or speculation

*Example:*

“I want to acknowledge the tragic event on our campus. It may affect each of us differently, and support is available.”

two



## Offer Academic Flexibility

- Extend deadlines when possible
- Allow alternative participation options
- Consider pass/fail, recorded lectures, or adjusted workloads
- Let students choose how they engage

*Flexibility supports learning—it does not lower standards.*

three



## Create Predictability

- Clearly outline weekly expectations
- Post agendas and assignments in advance
- Maintain consistent class structure when possible
- Avoid calling on students unexpectedly

four



## Support Regulation & Focus

- Allow brief breaks during class
- Normalize difficulty concentrating
- Use grounding strategies (deep breathing, structured activities)
- Do not require students to share personal experiences
- Share campus resources regularly (CAPS, TimelyCare, etc.)

### What Faculty Are Not Expected to Do

- ❌ Provide therapy
- ❌ Push students to “move on”
- ❌ Minimize emotional responses
- ❌ Require emotional disclosure

### Faculty Well-Being Matters

- ❤️ Acknowledge your own reactions
- ❤️ Seek peer or professional support
- ❤️ Set realistic expectations
- ❤️ Compassion fatigue is real—care for yourself

**Your presence matters.**

Even small acts of understanding can significantly impact student recovery and academic persistence.