

Resources for Addressing Student Isolation

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The issue of student struggles with isolation is one that is especially critical right now. I have been particularly aware of this as I try to support a first-year student living in central Asia. He lives with one person who he sees for five minutes per day, and his friends are in Europe (where he went to high school). Basically, his biorhythms, school work, and social life are in three very different time zones, and he has resorted to telling me (who he barely knows) how isolated he feels.


Some research has been done on the UCLA student experience during COVID-19:

https://www.sairo.ucla.edu/Portals/107/Data%20Bite/Covid-19%20Briefs/UCUES2020BriefCO VID_Exp_Final.pdf.


So, if you have students in this situation, whether they are letting you know or not, it may be helpful to share with them some of these campus initiatives and support groups. For example, I have put a separate tab on my course website called “Wellness: offer help, increase our awareness, share what works.”

Here’s what it looks like so far, but I intend to add the other resources below.


Wellness (offer help, increase our awareness, share what works)

 Sharing things that make us happy, or advice about how to survive the quarter [Access restrictions](#)

You can start a new discussion topic, or you can respond to someone else's. The Forum allows you to upload many kinds of documents, including photos. You can share stuff from your field journal, pictures of your pets, or just a lovely sunset. If you find a good game, a good way to spend time, a good recipe, or something else that has comforted you recently, please share it with us. Use your judgment about what would be appropriate, of course.


 OPTIONAL: Book reviews (or other reading/movies/podcasts etc) [Access restrictions](#)

Tell us what you loved, and why you think we should read/watch it, too!


 OPTIONAL: Things you wished your instructor knew (but want to say anonymously) [Access restrictions](#)

All the entries on THIS Forum are anonymous.

This is a standard discussion format, which means anyone can start a new discussion on it.

 The Real Campus Scourge: Loneliness [Access restrictions](#)

This is about the way that students AT college can become very lonely...sometimes hiding out online. Now that we are only online together, perhaps we can use the online platform to overcome that problem...let's try!!

 My letter to the NYT about campus loneliness: more specific to UCLA [Access restrictions](#)

Helpful Resources for Addressing Student Isolation

1) [*UCLA's Healthy Campus Initiative*](#)

There are several different ways that the UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative is trying to promote health, and students may be interested in joining one of these groups to try to increase health in one of these ways. Engage Well previously ran Thursday games in the Court of Sciences, and now they are planning to put together some online games.



2) *The New Student Network*

New Student Advisors (NSAs) work as mentors during Fall Quarter, and they meet regularly with their first-year groups as well as with other students for social connections. The NSAs often address the loss of connection, answer questions about UCLA, and help students manage the quarter. This year, the New Student Network also has a speaker series in which people from across campus speak about different topics each Friday. In the past, there have been talks on UCLA History, Traditions, and Spirit; research; the Career Center; the library; self-care; enrollment; housing; and more. All lectures will be recorded to accommodate for students in different time zones.

3) *Student-led Group Chats*

Many students have set up group chats outside of class to communicate with each other using platforms such as Discord and GroupMe.

4) *Online Games*

There are many games that students can play online together to cultivate community. One that is particularly popular right now that is supposed to be good at helping people make friends is

Among Us. Here is [an article](#) about it in the New York Times. Some have said that “It’s easy enough for a five-year-old to play on an iPhone” and one person says, “There’s more natural conversation that arises from it. It’s more of a party game. You’re kind of just hanging out with friends and the game is secondary.”

5) [*Campus Ambassadors at the UCLA Dashew International Center*](#)

The campus ambassadors may be able to help students meet other UCLA students from where they live. That way, they have a point of commonality, and/or they would be studying remotely from the same time zone. (My student in Taiwan is part of a group of new and continuing UCLA students from Taiwan, who are studying from there now; I think they’ve even gotten together in person.)

6) [*UCLA Counseling and Psychological Services*](#)

CAPS is not able to provide clinical services to anyone who is not residing in California due to licensing regulations. However, students living anywhere can connect with CAPS for a screening and recommendations. Even though they cannot provide ongoing care, CAPS can make recommendations and help them link to services near them if needed. There is coverage through SHIP. CAPS also offers many [workshops](#) and individual appointments. These workshops are a great way for students to get help and meet people at the same time.

Students not in California may also benefit from some of the programming through the [RISE Center](#).

7) [*Therapy Assistance Online’s Self Help Library*](#)

UCLA offers access to Therapy Assistance Online’s (TAO) Self Help Library. You can find instructions on how to use this resource [here](#).

8) [*Student Resources for Remote Learning*](#)

The UCLA Center for the Advancement of Teaching has compiled a helpful [list of student resources for remote learning](#), which includes information on recommended activities for adjusting to learning remotely.

9) [*UCLA Student In Crisis*](#)

If you’re especially concerned about a student, you can tell a UCLA caseworker about your student, and they can try to reach out and help them. These caseworkers are part of the UCLA Consultation & Response Team (CRT).

10) [*#BruinsTogether*](#)

Social media platforms can help bring students together, even if they are not physically together. This hashtag, which exists on multiple platforms, is devoted to spreading information on this issue.

11) [*UCLA Recreation*](#)

UCLA Recreation has begun a channel of exercise routines and [cooking lessons](#), which might help students learn a skill or meet others. They also have classes for children, too, in case your students (or you) could get a bit of work done while their/your children are learning about cooking.

12) [*Community Calendar*](#)

UCLA has a new community calendar that is supposed to act like a virtual Bruin Walk. Lots of activities there!

13) [*Student Affairs Guidebook*](#)

This information on resources also exists in the form of a guidebook for undergrads and grads. Some of the information above is linked to from this site.