

## **An Eight-Week Yoga Program to Support Undergraduate Academic Aptitude**

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Current studies indicate mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, are the leading impediment to academic success for U.S. students (Eisenburg), which have increased dramatically since COVID-19 (Son). Additionally, successful adaption to undergraduate life reduces the dropout rate (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center). Fortunately, there is a growing trend in undergraduates seeking mental health through their initiative (Ketchen). The eight-week Yoga program supports this ever-increasing interest by proactively teaching clinically proven breathwork, postures, and meditation to foster physiological shifts in offsetting anxiety and depression (Breedvelt, Elam, Tripathi). The program encourages student self-empowerment to support academic aptitude, healthy campus culture, and student retention.

Designed to be tested for validity, the effectiveness of the classroom content can be evaluated by the Depression Stigma Scale (DSS), the College Learning Effectiveness Inventory (CLEI), and the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I 2.0). The program emphasizes the development of social intelligence through group activities and experiential learning. Private reflective journaling will support students' emotional intelligence development, and cognitive intelligence will be exercised by learning to customize Yoga techniques for personal needs.

In a group setting, the eight-week program is cost-effective and intranet-friendly. Complete with weekly handouts, easy-to-use journaling charts, and accessible resources, the full transparency makes for a low stress, high reward experience. Led by a certified Yoga instructor/meditator, the class is more than content-driven. A nonjudgmental experienced Yoga practitioner will ensure that the postures, breathwork, and meditations are effective and safe for everyone.

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