



Interview with Academic Teachers

The following is a transcript of a brief video published in Module 5.1: Managing job demands (<http://unistudentwellbeing.edu.au/your-wellbeing/demands/>). The video includes quotes and comments from experienced academic educators about managing their own wellbeing. In some places, this transcript includes longer responses than included in the video. These extra comments were excluded from the video to avoid repetition but are included here for context. Interviewees are:

- Professor Phil Batterham (PB), Bio21 Institute, the University of Melbourne
- Ms Margot Fenley (MF), Victorian College of the Arts, the University of Melbourne
- Professor Ian Malkin (IM), Melbourne Law School, the University of Melbourne
- Professor Sandra Kentish (SK), Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering, the University of Melbourne
- Professor Kate Darian-Smith (KDS), Historical and Philosophical Studies, the University of Melbourne

What are some of the challenges in academic work?

- PB I think for academics for all sorts of reasons these days, the job is incredibly intense. And academics themselves may need some counselling. We need to be honest here, the job can be challenging. It can cause anxiety, it can be depressing..
- MF I tend to think that those of us who are very concerned about students wellbeing often underestimate the impact of dealing with crying upset distressed students actually has on us. I have this weird thing about thinking of myself as an adult and not thinking of students as the same sort of adult? And I am an adult, but I am an adult with exactly the same susceptibility as they have.
- IM After attending [and speaking about distress in] classes, and getting so many responses [from distressed students], I did get quite overwhelmed. Because it did seem to unearth, even just then, sort of a large number of students in distress, so I myself needed some counselling I suppose from friends about how to respond to all this. So I do think that's all really helpful.
- KDS I think a lot of our junior colleagues are probably under even more stress to perform than possibly my generation was, or its different kinds of stressors, perhaps, rather than more stress.
- PB Research is a bit insidious. There's a detective spirit in us and we become a bit relentless.
- SK It's really hard in terms of managing workload. It's a highly competitive – academic is not a normal workload. It's actually very difficult to maintain it in a reasonable time frame.
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