



FACULTY TEA BREAKS

INNOVATIVE NEW IDEA

Photo credit: [Praveen](#)

DEPARTMENT

Community, Culture, and Global Studies

CAMPUS

UBC Okanagan

FUNDING YEAR

2017

ABOUT HWIP

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. The program provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives.

www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Recognizing that there is substantial evidence that friendly workplace relationships focused on non-work issues enhance employee wellbeing, the Community, Culture, and Global Studies Department at UBC Okanagan scheduled three “tea breaks” each term to provide opportunities for faculty to informally connect with one another.

The breaks featured fairly traded tea from a local tea shop, snacks, and a door prize draw for a copy of the book “The Slow Professor,” which had inspired the initiative through its theorization of the importance of time and space for reflection and connection for university professors today.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Faculty often express a desire to socialize with colleagues, but rarely take a break to do so.

The quality of the teas made it feel special and provided an incentive to take a break with colleagues.

“The most valuable outcome was the creation of unpressured time for faculty to connect on non-work-related topics. It really allowed for the fostering of positive relationships.”

SUSTAINABILITY

While the monthly tea breaks came to an end during a time of staff and leadership transition, tea making equipment is still used for department meetings and events.

Workplace relationships built and strengthened during the tea breaks continue to be friendly, making for a more positive working environment.

UBC WELLBEING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PRIORITY AREAS

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework