

SCS WEDNESDAY WIRE | April 21, 2021

A mid-week update from the SCS Dean's Office | [SCS NEWS](#) | [SCS EVENTS](#)

Today I partner with Jodi Forlizzi – who's been leading SCS's diversity, equity and inclusion planning and efforts in recent months – to share a single message. Below has been excerpted by the College of Engineering's associate dean of DEI, Alaine Allen, from guidance distributed by the University of Minnesota for supporting yourself, your students and your colleagues during these challenging times of elevated stress. We want to share it with SCS, as well.

Dear SCS Community,

Today, we pause to reflect on yesterday's verdicts of the Derek Chauvin trial. Our thoughts are with the family of George Floyd and also with the families of those who have not had the same opportunity for accountability or justice.

Many of you may be feeling relief, but many of you may be experiencing stress. Please take time to support yourself and those around you – those you interact with – at this time.

Be observant. Recognize the signs of your body's response to stress such as difficulty sleeping, being easily angered, feeling depressed, having low energy and using any substances to alleviate pain.

Get regular exercise. Just 30 minutes per day of walking can help boost your mood and improve your health.

Explore relaxation activities or wellness programs that may incorporate meditation, muscle relaxation or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy and relaxing activities.

Reduce the amount of time you spend monitoring news and social media. It is important to be informed, but sometimes an endless cycle of daily updates along with associated visuals and opinions can become overwhelming. Know when it's best for you to step away.

Set goals and priorities. Decide what must get done now and what can wait. Learn to say "no" to new tasks if you start to feel like you are taking on too much. Try to be mindful of what you have accomplished at the end of each day – not what you have been unable to do.

Realize that you are not alone. Stay connected to people who can provide emotional support and practical help. To reduce stress, ask for help from friends, family and community- or faith-based organizations.

Know when you need the help of a mental health professional. Treatment from a professional can help if your stress is affecting your relationships or your ability to function. After checking on yourself, encourage students and colleagues to attend to their physical, emotional and mental health. Ask community members directly how they are doing. Take their lead on the conversation and avoid probing if they choose not to respond. For students: [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CaPS\)](#). For faculty and staff: [Employee Assistance Program](#).

Many of our faculty, staff and students will be offering space for students to come together and/or seek support after recent events. We'll do our best to keep you informed.

Take care,

Martial Hebert, Dean

Jodi Forlizzi, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Lead