

## Creating Trauma-Sensitive Yoga Programs for University Students With Stress and Anxiety: Lessons From a Program in the United States

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**Abstract :** Anxiety remains one of the most common mental health disorders in the United States. Many university students report having a high level of anxiety, with additional life stressors that might include being away from home for the first time, being around unfamiliar people, having new expectations placed on them, and often have financial struggles. Universities have the ability and opportunity to form programs that can involve students with activities that reduce stress and teach coping skills. This research includes one example of using a somatic based group format of yoga to teach these skills and assist students in applying these strategies to their daily lives. This study compared a group of 17 students participating in weekly yoga classes to 34 students who did not attend the program. The students who attended the program reported a larger reduction of anxiety on both the BAI and GAD-7 than the control group, and verbally reported additional benefits in relaxation and coping skills. This presentation will review the results of the program as well as detailing the steps taken in creating a yoga program for university students with stress and anxiety. This will include a discussion on the components of trauma-sensitive yoga and the concerns and strategies to consider when developing a program for students.

**Keywords :** yoga, trauma-sensitive yoga, anxiety, students

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