Mindfulness is a cognitive training process that enhances awareness, attention, and the ability to bring mental and emotional processes under greater voluntary control. Over the last 25 years, research in a multitude of fields including neuroscience, medicine and the health sciences, psychology, and education has demonstrated far-reaching benefits of mindfulness on health, learning, and well-being, including:

- Ameliorating symptoms of chronic illness
- Enhancing mental health as a therapy for anxiety and depression
- Increasing focus, attention, and critical thinking
- Improving academic learning
- Improving social well-being by managing emotions and instinctive reactions
- Managing stress and stress-related disease

But much more remains to be learned. This conference will convene the many state-wide SUNY projects on contemplative pedagogy, mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques (MBSR), mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), and other research to identify the range of existing SUNY work on mindfulness, identify gaps in the research, and begin to develop a SUNY-wide research agenda on mindfulness and all forms of well-being.
David Vago, Ph.D.
Psychiatry and Neuroscience
Brigham & Women’s Hospital
Harvard Medical School

David Vago is an associate psychologist in the Functional Neuroimaging Laboratory, Brigham & Women’s Hospital, and an instructor at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Vago’s research interests broadly focus on utilizing translational models to identify and characterize neurobiological substrates mediating psychopathology, to better predict outcomes and potential biologically-based diagnostic and therapeutic strategies for those suffering with mental illness. He aims to clarify adaptive mind-brain-body interactions and their therapeutic relevance in psychiatric settings. In this context, Dr. Vago has been specifically focusing on the study of mindfulness-based interventions in clinical settings, and the basic neuroscientific mechanisms by which mindfulness-based practices function.

Daniel Barbezat, Ph.D.
Economics, Amherst College
Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

Daniel Barbezat is Professor of Economics at Amherst College where he specializes in economic history. He is also Executive Director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, the national hub for contemplative teaching and learning in higher education. The Center is committed to the positive transformation of the education system by supporting the use of contemplative/introspective practices to create active, engaged learning environments. Dr. Barbezat has lectured on contemplative learning and pedagogy at more than 60 Teaching & Learning Centers nationally. His latest book, *Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Powerful Methods to Transform Teaching and Learning* (Jossey-Bass), was released last winter.

Joseph Belluck, Esq.
Trustee,
State University of New York

SUNY Trustee Joseph W. Belluck is a founding partner of Belluck & Fox LLP, a nationally-recognized law firm that represents individuals with asbestos and mesothelioma claims. A dedicated, compassionate attorney recognized for high ethical standards, Mr. Belluck has spent his entire legal career representing injured consumers and workers. A graduate of Binghamton University and the SUNY Buffalo Law School, he is an advocate for contemplative pedagogy in higher education.

Attending the Conference

This one-day conference will begin at 9 a.m. on March 4, 2016 at the Center for the Arts at the University at Buffalo, State University of New York.

The Center for the Arts is located on the University’s North Campus. Blocks of rooms are reserved at the Comfort Inn Amherst ($85/night) and Candlewood Suites Amherst ($95/night) nearby. Mention “UB’s Mindfulness & Health Conference” for these special rates when you call to reserve.

Click here for directions to the University and maps of campus.

Why Mindfulness & Health?

U.S. expenditure on health care is greater than any other country, yet statistics related to life expectancy and other health and well-being indices are disproportionately low. Chronic disease is the leading cause of death and disability in the U.S. New York’s medical and healthcare dilemma mirrors that of our nation; its costs are overwhelming our state budget.

A shift in focus from illness to prevention and wellness is paramount. Such a shift requires the collective research, activism, and organization of individuals and groups across campuses, institutions, disciplines, cultures, and ethnicities, from practitioner and pedagogical perspectives.
Fostering multidisciplinary research and education in mindfulness across the SUNY system will provide a foundation for New York State to lead in the development of solutions not only for our nation’s burgeoning chronic health problems but also for global health concerns.

Request for Poster Proposals

Do you work with mindfulness-based approaches to health and well-being?

The Planning Committee for Launching SUNY Initiatives on Mindfulness & Health invites proposals for the poster session of this one-day multidisciplinary conference on March 4, 2016.

The conference will convene the many SUNY projects on contemplative pedagogy, mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques (MBSR), mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), and other mindfulness-related research. In the poster session, the Committee seeks to showcase the breadth of mindfulness-based work being conducted state-wide by faculty, staff and students. Thus, we welcome a wide array of topics, including campus-, classroom-, clinical-, therapy-, and research-based initiatives.

Proposals are due here no later than January 10, 2016.