Increasing Student Motivation: Strategies That Work



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Motivation

"Motivation refers to the *personal investment* an individual has *in reaching a desired state or outcome*.

(Ambrose et. al, 68)

"In the academy, the term 'motivating' means *stimulating interest in a subject* and, therefore, the *desire to learn it*."

(Nilson, 57)

Why Is It Often Difficult to Motivate Students?

Characteristics of many students:

- Working more hours
- More diagnosed ADHD
- Interested in obtaining credentials
- Feel entitled to an A or B if they consistently attend
- Few time management skills
- Few learning skills





Ambrose, S.A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M.C., Norman, M.K. (2010) *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Three Important Levers that Influence Motivation

- Value the importance of a goal (attainment, intrinsic, instrumental)
- Supportive Nature of the Environment the instructor is approachable, support is available from peers and others
- *Efficacy Expectancies* the belief that one is capable of identifying, organizing, initiating, and executing a course of action that will bring about a desired outcome

Ambrose et al., 80

Motivation Principles

Students' motivation generates, directs, and sustains what they do to learn

Concepts important to understanding motivation: *subjective value of a goal* and the *expectation for successful attainment of the goal*

Ambrose et al., 69

Learned Helplessness*

Based on prior experience, the feeling that no amount of effort will bring success

Destroys motivation to attempt a task





Sometimes the chains that prevent us from being free are more mental than physical

*Martin Seligman and Steven F. Maier

Solving Anagrams

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTqBP-x3yR0

Remediation of Learned Helplessness Requires That We:

- Understand the causes
- Help students understand the distorted beliefs and misperceptions that are causing their current deficits

Provide students the tools to change their behavior and refute their distorted beliefs

The Cure for Learned Helplessness

- Understanding your "explanatory style" To what do you attribute failure or success?
- Changing the negative, self-destructive things you say to yourself when you fail
- Making the new statements a permanent part of your explanatory style
- Recognizing that perception of ability has the most influence on the amount of effort you will expend on a task!

Ways to Create A Supportive Environment

- Introduce engaging, fun activity if possible.
- Provide clear grading schemas and rubrics if possible
- Emphasize the importance of effort, rather than prior experiences, in performance
- Show the instructor's human side hobbies, past academic struggles, etc
 - Demonstrate confidence that every student can succeed!

Lubbock Christian University Faculty Obstacles, Barriers, Failures



How Lubbock Christian University Faculty Overcame Struggles



Email from Lubbock Christian University Professor about Impact of Faculty Sharing Struggles and How They Overcame Them

March 2, 2018

I wish I could put into words the impact that it had on students. We received emails, texts, comments from students that some of them were in tears, some said it was the most meaningful chapel we'd shared. They loved to see that we are all human and that the road to success is a winding one.



Raffini, James P. (1995) *150 Ways to Improve Intrinsic Motivation in the Classroom.* New York, NY: Allyn and Bacon.

Five Bases of Intrinsic Motivation

- Autonomy (Control One's Own Destiny)
- Competence (Do Things that Help One Feel Successful)
- Belonging (To Feel Part of a Group Effort)
- Self-Esteem (To Feel Good About Who They Are)
- Involvement and Enjoyment (To Find Pleasure in What They Do)

James Raffini, Allyn and Bacon, 1995

Strategies for Enhancing Student Autonomy

Student Choice in Research Papers, Groups, Projects, Discussion Topics

Goal Setting Activity



Strategies for Enhancing Competence

- Clearly articulate expectations
- Provide Early Success Opportunities
- Discuss the way many students explain success and failure – attribution theory
 - (e.g. success attributed to luck or ability, rather than effort; failure attributed to lack of ability or factors beyond their control, rather than lack of effort)

More Strategies for Enhancing Competence

- Provide Targeted Feedback and Rubrics
- Describe Effective Learning Strategies
 - Introduce Metacognition
 - and Bloom's Taxonomy
 - Implement Cooperative Learning
 - Games (e.g. Jeopardy, Millionaire)

Metacognition

The ability to:

- think about your own thinking
- be consciously aware of yourself as a problem solver
- monitor, plan, and control your mental processing (e.g. "Am I *understanding* this material, or just *memorizing* it?")
- accurately judge your level of learning
- know what you know and what you don't know

Flavell, J. H. (1976). Metacognitive aspects of problem solving. In L. B. Resnick (Ed.), The nature of intelligence (pp.231-236). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum



http://www.odu.edu/educ/llschult/blooms_taxonomy.htm-

The Study Cycle





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Before and After Scores Are Very Motivational

- Robert, freshman chemistry student
 42, <u>100, 100, 100</u> A in course
- Michael, senior pre-med organic student
 30, 28, <u>80, 91</u>
 B in course
- Miriam, freshman calculus student
 37.5, <u>83, 93</u>
 B in course
- Ifeanyi, sophomore thermodynamics student

67, 54, 68, <u>95</u> B in course

 Terrence, junior Bio Engineering student GPA 1.67 cum, <u>3.54</u> (F 03), 3.8 (S 04)

2008 NCLCA Website Award Winner! 20?? NCLCA Frank L Christ Outstanding Learning Center Award Winner



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SSC Hours

Mon - Thurs 9am - 9pm Fri: 9am - 3pm Sun: 5pm - 9pm

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT >

Welcome to the Student Success Center

The Student Success Center (SSC) provides academic support programs that empower individuals to realize their potential as self-directed learners and professionals.

American, Japanese, and Taiwanese Mothers' View of Mathematics Achievement*

- American mothers rated effort as significantly less important than Asian mothers
- American mothers rated ability as significantly more important than Asian mothers
- American mothers said it was **possible to predict a child's high school math performance much earlier** than Asian mothers said was possible
- American parents are satisfied with their children's mediocre performance, whereas Asian parents express much less satisfaction with their children's higher achievement.
 - American parents and children **believe that Asian children are more talented in mathematics** than American children.

*Uttal, D. H. (1997). Beliefs about genetic influences on mathematics achievement: A cross-cultural comparison. *Genetica*, *99*, 165–172.

Mr. Lorenzo Foster's Physics I AP Class Test Scores Strategies, Dedication and Hard Work PAID OFF!

Exam 1	Exam 2	Exam 3	
73	95	100	
90	86	100	
50	90	67	
83	100	100	
57	98	93	
80	85	100	
50	95	100	
37	89	100	
89	100	100	
47	79	100	
95	98	100	
67	74	78	
39	87	84	
43	64	95	
40	90	100	
85	100	100	
90	75	100	
84	94	100	
67	94	93	
90	97	93.5	
100	85	88	
42	100	100	
22	86	98	
99	100	100	
53	69	100	
66.88	86.786	95.58	

Physics I AP Students After Learning Their Test 2 Scores



Physics I AP Students After Learning Their Test 3 Scores



Strategies for Enhancing Belonging and Relatedness

Create a community of scholars in the classroom where students are accountable to each other

e.g. Team based learning

Provide authentic, real world tasks
 e.g. Service-learning, problem based
 learning,

Strategies for Enhancing Self-Esteem

- Have students share answers to:
 - What is one thing do you do very well? How did you learn to do it well?
 - How can you relate this to academic success?
- Identify an appropriate level of challenge
- Provide Early Success Opportunities



Strategies for Enhancing Involvement and Enjoyment

- Introduce Engaging and Fun Activities
- Connect to Students' Interests
- Switch Days (Student becomes teacher; teacher becomes student)
- Reduce Student Anxiety
- Use Strategies from Skip Downing at www.oncourseworkshop.com

Teacher's Role in Student Motivation Eric Hobson, Albany College of Pharmacy

Positive Motivation

- Teacher's attitudes 27%
- Course structure 22%
- Intrinsic 20%
- Course content 17%
- Performance meas. 10%
- Financial 1%
- Parents/Others 1%

Negative Motivation

Teacher's attitudes	32%
Course structure	26%
Learning environ.	13%
Course content	11%
Intrinsic	10%
Parents/Others	1%
Financial	0.3%

Faculty *can* significantly increase student motivation by...



- Teaching students they can make themselves smarter by spending time on the material
- Testing early and often, providing early opportunities for success
- Conduct a class session on the importance of metacognition after the first exams are returned
- Express our confidence that *every* student can succeed
- Introducing a metacognitive get-acquainted activity on the first day of class

Metacognitive Get Acquainted Activity*

- What do you believe is important to understand and learn in
- What do you believe to be critical characteristics of successful students in ?
- How will you study and prepare for exams in _____?

*Simpson, M. & Rush, L. (2012) in *Teaching Study Strategies in Developmental Education*, Hodges, Simpson, Stahl eds. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's

Reflection Activity

 Pick an activity or assignment from your class or your interaction with students.
 Using the ideas on the previous slides, describe how you could enhance that activity or assignment to increase student motivation.

Share this activity with the group

References

Ambrose, S.A., Bridges, M.W., DiPietro, M., Lovett, M.C., Norman, M.K. (2010) *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

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