Got Motivation?
Strategies for Empowering First-Year Students
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Dennis Learning Center
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Self-Regulated Learning

Student Success
Session Overview

I. Introduction – What is Motivation?

II. Theory and Practice of Developing Academic Motivation

III. How We Can Help

The Dennis Learning Center
Part 1

What is Motivation?
No Motivation?

PROFESSOR PLEASE BE MORE SILENT

IM TRYING TO SLEEP
What is Motivation?

“Motivation can be described as something that energizes, directs, and sustains behavior toward a particular goal”

(Van Blerkom, 2012, p. 3).
Motivation & First Year Students

- Persistence
- Grades
- Sense of Belonging
Many Types of Motivation

- Attributions
- Self-Efficacy
- Extrinsic
- Value
- Intrinsic
- Goal Types

GOT MOTIVATION?
Part 2
Theory and Practice
Developing Academic Motivation

4 Types

Value

Self-Efficacy

Attributions

Goals
1. Value

Why should I do this?

The perceived usefulness of a task in terms of an student’s future goals (Eccles, 2005).
Value & First Year Students

GECs?

FYE Success Series?

Survey?

Get Involved?
Value & First Year Students

(Jones, 2009; Simons et al., 2004; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990)

- Effort on Tasks
- Intentions
- Choice of Activities
- Learning Outcomes
Tip for Boosting Value

Tell Them Why It Matters

“This will help you…”

“This relates to your major…”

“You will need this skill when…”
2. Self-Efficacy

Can I do this?

Confidence in your ability to achieve specific academic outcomes.
Self-Efficacy & First Year Students
Self-Efficacy & First Year Students

Self-Efficacy

- Task Selection
- Engagement
- Persistence

Cognitive Development

Performance

(Schunk & Pajares, 2009; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008)
Tips for Boosting Self-Efficacy

#1: Remind Students of Past Success

“If you were capable of earning A’s before, you are just as capable now.”

“You said you had plenty of friends in high school, which means you are likeable and can make friends here.”
Tips for Boosting Self-Efficacy

#2: Start With What They DO Know

“What do you currently do to take notes in class?”
#3: Let Them Know That YOU Believe
How a student explains their academic outcomes affects their motivation

**Attributions**

**Growth**

Ability is the result of effort

**Fixed**

Ability is innate
How a student explains their academic outcomes affects their motivation

Attributions

Why was Michael Phelps so successful?
First year students are especially vulnerable to maladaptive attributions.

### Attributions

**Typical Student**

- Barely Studied in High School
- Received good grades anyway

- Strong affirmations of intelligence without the need for effort,

**First C/D/F?**

- “I must not be as intelligent as I thought.”
- “I’ll put more effort in next time.”
Fostering healthy attributions in first year students

Attributions

Place incentives on effort when possible,

Homework points were earned by both attempting to solve and asking insightful questions about problems in class

Fostering healthy attributions in first year students

Create content congruency between tasks rewarded by effort and tasks rewarded by grades.

Pre-emptively consider obstacles, helping students to develop action plans for challenges that may arise.
Fostering healthy attributions in first year students

Successful/unsuccessful students

Expectations for performance

Criticism
Mindsets affect goal descriptions, which are also vital to student motivation.

**Goals**

Growth
- Goals become those which demonstrate developed ability

Fixed
- Goals become those which demonstrate innate ability,
Mindsets affect goal descriptions which are also vital to student motivation,

Goals

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<th>Mastery</th>
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Goals

Even a student who has high self-efficacy will lean into performance-avoidance goal orientations in the face of an unsatisfactory GPA.

They become more concerned with not failing and looking incompetent than with learning,

They are also less likely to seek help, making them high-risk population for dropping out.

Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS) measures can illuminate best practices,

**Goals**

**Mastery**

“My Teacher wants us to understand our work, not just memorize it.”

“My advisor recognizes that I’m trying hard”

“My TA really wants us to enjoy learning new things.”

**Performance**

“My teacher points to those with good grades as an example to all of us.”

“My advisor makes it obvious that some students simply won’t do well on their work.”

“My TA let’s us know how we compare with other students.”

First Year Student A

I'm not sure why this matters,
I'm not sure that I'm capable of success,
I'm not sure I'm as smart as I need to be,
I don't want to be incompetent, I'm afraid I'll fail

First Year Student B

I've chosen this major, I see reasons for these assignments,
I believe that I'm able to do well,
I attribute doing well to the effort I put in,
I want to become skilled in these areas, I want to achieve high grades,
Part 3

How We Can Help
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How we help first-year students succeed!

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Academic Coaching
2 Types
Requested and Signup

Procrastination
Memory Tools
Don’t Stress!
Note-Taking Strategies
Effective Study Groups
Master Your Exams
Learning Styles
Preparing Papers
Secrets of Academic Success

Workshops
ES EPSY 1259 - Individual Learning and Motivation Strategies for Success in College

- 3 credit elective
  - Overcome procrastination
  - Build self-confidence and resilience
  - Gain effective study strategies
  - Master communication

- Leads to higher GPAs (Tuckman & Kennedy, 2011)
1159 Online Learning Strategies & Skills
- Using the web to attain academic goals
- Online tools for more effective studying, time-management, and communication
- 2 credits, Summer (5 weeks)

1359 Technology-Enhanced Learning Strategies
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Opportunity to engage with diverse set of professionals.

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THANK YOU!!! Go Bucks

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