Keeping Students Motivated

Why is this important?

Attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (the ARCS) are keys to student motivation, according to author John Keller.

Try these strategies:

Attention	Relevance
How can your class engage and keep students' interest? • Find ways to hook your students into the material, such as posting interesting visual examples or startling facts. • Ask a question or pose a problem, like a mystery that needs solving. Students' curiosity and desire for an answer will help sustain their attention. • Mix it up: vary the activities, visuals, and pacing of each module.	**How can your class fit what students want and need?** • Help students set goals that align with the skills they are developing in class, such as getting and keeping a job. • Raise students' awareness about their learning styles and the ways they learn best. Ex: Do they work most efficiently with in-class activities that are cooperative, competitive, or individual? • Connect new material with information or skills that students already know. One good technique for doing this is Think-Pair-Share Activities.
Confidence	**Satisfaction**
How can students feel successful even when a task is difficult? • Clarify what students are going to learn and how to measure success. Showing work from past students and using rubrics are excellent ways to do this. • Build skill difficulty incrementally and allow for success at every stage. This can be as simple as an in-class task that focuses on developing skill in one procedure. • Allow students some control over their learning. Let students choose some projects or contribute questions to an upcoming test.	**How can students' satisfaction with their work spur even more learning?** • Tie projects into real-life, professional contexts and inspire them further by showing them what expert artists and designers. • Use positive feedback and rewards along with constructive criticism. Try sandwiching any negative feedback between positive comments. • Make sure that grading is fair and consistent and check in with students individually throughout the semester to avoid unpleasant surprises at the end. Using Easy Grade Pro can help you track student progress and provide them clear, official results.

Learn more

John Keller's ARC Model