**March 2022**

*Please share with your faculty:*

**Tips for promoting mastery motivation over performance motivation**

Students tend to approach school-based tasks from two motivation mindsets -–a mastery orientation or a performance orientation (Dweck, 2006). Those with a mastery motivation mindset focus on mastering the learning content, independent of performance. Students with this mindset who receive a bad grade, are more willing to revisit their mistakes with the goal of improving their learning and mastering the material for next time. On the other hand, those with a performance motivation mindset tend to be fixated on performance outcomes, such as earning good grades, and demonstrating high competence compared to others. Those with a performance orientation tend to be at greater academic risk because they equate performance with ability (Dweck & Master, 2007). For example, a student with this mindset who receives a bad grade may assume that they have low ability, and as a result will likely not see the point of trying to understand their mistakes and how to improve.

According to research by Stanford psychologist Paul O’Keef one’s learning environment can play an important role in shaping motivation mindsets (Donald, 2012). The following kinds of instructional practices can play an important role promoting the development of mastery motivation mindsets:

* Praising students on effort and strategies used vs. ability
* Providing students with specific, timely, and concrete feedback
* Using rubrics to make expectations transparent, and to provide concrete and specific feedback
* Providing students with opportunities to demonstrate their thought processes, vs. just providing the answers
* Providing students with opportunities to self-assess their work
* Allowing students to have opportunities to revise their work

By encouraging students to approach academic tasks with a mastery motivation mindset, they will be more likely to take ownership over their learning and demonstrate academic success.

**References:**

Donald Brooke (2012). Stanford psychologist: Achievement goals can be shaped by environment. *Stanford Report*. Retrieved March 1, 2022 from https://news.stanford.edu/news/2012/may/shape-achievement-goals-051012.html

Dweck, Carol (2006). Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. New York: Penguin Random House LLC.

Dweck, C.S. & Master, A. (2007). Self-theories motivate self-regulated learning. In D. H. Schunk and B. J., Zimmerman (Eds.). Motivation and self-regulated learning: Theory, research, and applications (pp. 31-51). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates/Taylor & Francis Group.

**Check out!** Strauss, V. and St. George D. (2022). Teachers second guess letter graders as a search for a fairer way. *Washington Post.* Retrieved March 1, 2022 from https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/02/28/letter-grades-grading-a-f/

**Please share examples** of how your program provides strategies to promote mastery motivation and I will post those examples on [YU’s Learning Assessment Website](http://yu.edu/provost/assessment/).

**Important reminder:** If you have not already done so, please email me your Fall 2021 program assessment report, and please contact me with any questions about your Spring 2022 assessment report.