

YU Assessment Tip of the Month!
January 2017

Please share with your faculty:

Fostering Students Motivation to Master Learning Material by Providing Timely and Concrete Assessment Feedback

Research has shown that the type, extent, and timing of assessment feedback can greatly influence students' motivation, and how they approach academic tasks. In general, students' motivation can be characterized as either performance oriented or mastery oriented. Those with performance oriented motivation focus mostly on performance outcomes, such as earning good grades, and demonstrating high competence to others. Research has shown that students with performance oriented motivation may be at greater academic risk because of their fixation on outcomes and grades. If these students receive a bad grade, they tend to equate this with low ability, and as a result, don't try to understand their mistakes and how to improve.

On the other hand, those with mastery oriented motivation focus mostly on mastering the learning content, independent of performance. If these students receive a bad grade, they tend to revisit their mistakes, with the goal of improving their learning and mastering the material for next time. Instructors' feedback on assessments can greatly influence the development of these types of motivation orientations. In order to prevent performance orientation mindsets and encourage mastery motivation mindsets, formative assessments accompanied with sufficient, timely, and concrete feedback should be given. This type of feedback informs students about how to improve their performance. Using rubrics can be a helpful way to provide students with organized and specific feedback on projects, papers, and tests. Equally important is providing students with sufficient opportunities to demonstrate their learning, such as with periodic assessments throughout the semester, and opportunities to revise their work.

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

Please share examples of effective ways faculty in your program provide feedback to students on assessments, and I will feature those examples on [YU's Learning Assessment Website](#).

Important reminder: Please remember to submit to me an end-of-semester Assessment Activity Report using either the reformatted report form or the previous assessment activity report form. Both versions of the form are attached in the accompanying email.

Please contact me if you need any assistance with completing your report.