

Strategies for Motivating Students

Motivational techniques and effective teaching strategies typically overlap. So you can motivate students using the same methods and formats you use to teach effectively (Nilson, 2010).

PERSONAL

- Have enthusiasm and energy. Be expressive, vary speaking pace.
- Explain why you are interested in the material to make it relevant to your student's concerns. Be a role model of student interest and involvement.
- Foster good lines of communication. Convey expectations, and invite mid-term feedback.
- Get to know your students and make it personal.
- Maintain civility in the classroom (and virtual classroom). Earn respect and create a positive learning environment.

COURSE

- Explain course organization, design and structure rationale to students.
- If possible, allow students some input in content, policies, or assignments to increase student investment and responsibility for learning.
- Link knowledge to usefulness.
- Get students to do the readings.

TEACHING

- Explain your teaching methods, readings, assignments, policies, and assessment strategies to students.
- Help students understand they can transfer skills and knowledge from other courses, life experience, and previous careers into your course and nursing.
- Make material and learning activities meaningful and worthwhile.
- Use case examples from your experience.
- Teach by inquiry when possible.
- Use a variety of teaching methods to allow students to engage in the material.
- Share strategies and tips for learning success in your course. It shouldn't be a secret!
- Use cooperative learning formats.
- Make the material accessible.
- Hold the students to high expectations, but allow them feedback and opportunities to meet expectations.

ASSIGNMENTS AND TESTS

- Reinforce that all students can improve their cognitive abilities and are in control of their fates. Build their sense of self-efficacy.
- Provide varied opportunities for graded assessment so that no one assignment counts too much.
- Give students plenty of practice performing your learning outcomes before grading on the quality.
- Sequence assessments for student success.
- Provide reviews of the learning outcomes you are testing them on.
- Set realistic goals and allow students opportunities for demonstrating earning in a variety of assignments.
- Give prompt and meaningful feedback, accentuate the positive in grading and allow students to assess themselves on appropriate tasks.

Source: Nilson, L. B. (2010). *Teaching at Its best: A research-based resource for college instructors* (3rd. Ed.) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.