The **ARCS** Model of Motivating Learning

A research-based model by Dr. John Keller

Components

Attention – Arousing curiosity, stimulating interest in learning, and maintaining this throughout the class.

Relevance – Having students view the tasks as important, useful, and meaningful to them.

Confidence – Providing opportunities to build students' feeling of self-efficacy based on learning success.

Satisfaction – Students feel a sense of satisfaction or reward with regard to their learning.

Description and Examples

Attention

The importance of attention to the learning process is obvious. None of us learn without focusing our attention on the learning task.

Methods:

- Promote active participation
- Provide variety
- Build on student interest

Sample Means:

- Begin class with something that will excite or entice students. This could include asking an intriguing opening question or beginning the lesson with multimedia elements.
- Variety can help increase attention. Likewise, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) promotes multiple means of 1) Representation, 2) Action & Expression, and 3) Engagement.
- Draw student experiences into discussions.
- Incorporate games and movement into your lessons at varying intervals to promote active participation.
- Create a (virtual) club around the subject matter. Enlist a few key students. Let the students select a preferred social media tool to provide a virtual presence for the club. If there are other clubs at other colleges or at OCC, connect with them virtually.

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Relevance

Relevance is, perhaps, the most important component of the ARCS model. If a student does not view a task or activity as important or useful to her/him, then it can be very challenging to engage the student in ways that lead to higher-level thinking and deeper learning.

Methods:

- ❖ Model appropriate behaviors
- ❖ Share expectations
- ❖ Provide choice

Sample Means:

- As faculty (learning facilitators) we have the opportunity to model both social and learning behaviors. When there are specific practices that students must follow, provide opportunities for them to see / experience your example. Similarly, when we treat all students with respect and caring, students will be more likely to do the same.
- Ensure evaluation criteria are directly relevant to the opportunities students have had to learn. Identify where there is flexibility in learning outcomes and engage students to collaboratively develop these outcomes.
- Provide students with choices how they can engage, participate, and demonstrate their learning.

Confidence

The confidence component of the model focuses on providing opportunities to build students' expectations for success at the learning task, and feeling of self-efficacy based on learning success. This is especially important to remember when teaching students who have lacked models of confidence and support with academic success or who are challenged by disabilities. All students want to succeed, but some have gotten used to failing, have given up, or are afraid to try.

Methods:

- ❖ Build competence
- ❖ Provide appropriate level of challenge
- ❖ Provide feedback

Sample Means:

- Provide a friendly, physically and emotionally accessible environment in which students feel safe and secure.
- Create an atmosphere of trust. Ensure your expectations for students are clear and consistent. Find out what expectations students have of you, agree to one or more you deem appropriate, and consistently meet that expectation.
- Consider the level and type of challenge that will be most helpful to students. You don't want all of your students to find it either too easy or impossible. Providing different types of challenges that achieve the same goal, promote student engagement

- Feedback should provide encouragement (motivation) or advice (be corrective). Consider whether your feedback is enough, useful and timely.
- Another modeling strategy is to acknowledge positive behaviors in students when observed. This reinforces that student's positive self-concept and desires to continue the behavior, and draws other students' attention to the behavior; thus, making that student's behavior a model for every student. That acknowledgement often comes in the form of praise. For praise to be truly effective, it needs to be tied to authentic achievement or effort and should inform the student why the praise is merited.

Satisfaction

Satisfaction with one's own learning increases the student's intrinsic motivation to learn.

Methods:

- Use of appropriate rewards
- Allocate time for reflection
- Provide enrichment opportunities

Sample Means:

- Rewards, if appropriate, can help increase intrinsic motivation of students. Rewards must be appropriate to the task in order to have a long term effect and a positive impact. Non-relevant rewards can even have a negative impact.
- Provide students with opportunities for ***enrichment*** to help increase their intrinsic motivation for learning. Creating reading lists with books, we-based or other resources centered around a topic of interest is one way to provide students with ***enrichment*** opportunities.
- Consider adding virtual badges to your virtual club. Virtual badges are widely used in gaming, and various virtual learning environments. Badges can be used "to set goals, motivate behaviors, represent achievements, and communicate success in many contexts." (Educause)

Further Reading and Resources

Educause, Case Study 6: Mozilla Open Badges, http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/case-study-6-mozilla-open-badges

CAST, UDL at a Glance, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDvKnY0g6e4#t=49 (4:36 video with captions)

ARCS Explained, http://www.arcsmodel.com/#!motivational-design/cyrv

ARCS Reference "Starter Lists" http://www.arcsmodel.com/#!references/ckbw

Keller, J. M. (2010). Motivational design for learning and performance: The ARCS model approach. New York: Springer