

## Teaching International Students



### Adjunct Faculty Academic Calendar

#### October:

30 Last day to withdrawal with a "W" grade

#### Workshops

(Register at: [svsu.edu/workshops](http://svsu.edu/workshops))

#### October:

2, 9 & 23 New Faculty Seminar  
SE 201  
4:30 p.m.

9 Workshop – Helping Students Move their Tails  
SE 203  
12:30 p.m.

For more workshops available in September, please visit: [svsu.edu/workshops](http://svsu.edu/workshops)

SVSU has had an increase in the number of International students this fall. More than 300 students from countries far and wide are now freshmen and they are in our classes. Therefore it is essential that we work to include them in discussions, help them grasp both academic and content area jargon, and help them acclimate to the American system of education.

In order to begin this process, according to the Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Virginia, there are some basic principles that apply to teaching International students. These include:

- Be explicit about your expectations and try to give examples or model what you are talking about
- Focus on meaning first and grammar and style later
- Stress fluency in communication along with correctness
- Try not to foster the student's fear of errors
- Reinforce the student's strengths while explaining what he/she still needs to work on
- Recognize that students may be differently acculturated to classroom situations
- Don't assume that a student who looks "foreign" is an international student or that one who exhibits writing difficulties is necessarily a non-native speaker (replete)

Beyond these principles there are a few other techniques you can employ to allow your International students to become active participants in class. First, make certain that your students understand the assignments. When discussing assignments with your International students they may nod their heads which indicates to us, culturally, that they understand what we are talking about. This nodding, however, might be a sign of respect and not necessarily a sign of comprehension. Therefore, if you find that your students are not understanding your directions, talk to them outside of class to discuss future assignments. It is recommended that instead of asking them whether they understand the directions, have them explain what is expected of them for the next class.

Because non-native speaking students might hesitate from joining in discussions, it is a good idea to first incorporate a "think, pair and share" activity as a means of getting the discussion started. This allows the International students to have a voice in the group setting which may then be translated in the sharing portion of this activity.

Finally, write down any important concepts or ideas. This helps the International students better develop their understanding of what is important in the class and it also helps in with their comprehension.

To learn more techniques for teaching International students plan to attend the Teaching Table scheduled for Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at Noon in the Emeriti Room.

#### Reference:

Center for Teaching Excellence. (n.d.). *Strategies for Teaching International Students*. Accessed from: <http://trc.virginia.edu/resources/teaching-a-diverse-student-body-practical-strategies-for-enhancing-our-students-learning/international-students/strategies-for-teaching-international-students>

### It's the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Guess the Number of Candy Corn in the Head Contest!



Have Fun!

Win Prizes!

**Come to Science East 201 to enter!**

## Motivation and Student Learning

Any psychology major can tell you that there are two kinds/classifications of motivation. The first, intrinsic motivation, comes from a student's desire to learn either because of an interest in the subject, a desire to find self-fulfillment and enjoyment, or to achieve mastery for the sake of learning. The second, extrinsic motivation, is the desire to perform and succeed to accomplish a specific end which, in most cases, is a grade. So students who are trying to learn and understand material because it is interesting are intrinsically motivated where students who are only performing to earn a grade are extrinsically motivated. Both forms of motivation have their place in the world of academia, however we hope that most learning is intrinsically motivated.

According to research by Middleton (1995), the means to motivate students has to do with providing the student with some personal control. In Middleton's model, student intrinsic academic motivation follows this pattern:

- First, when given the opportunity to engage in some learning activity, students will determine whether the activity is interesting. If they find it interesting they will become involved in that activity.
- If the students do not feel the activity is particularly interesting, they will evaluate the activity on two other factors: 1) whether the learning activity is something that will be stimulating/challenging and 2) whether the learning activity allows the students to have some personal control/free choice in the learning process.
- If the students decide the activity is stimulating and allows for some control, they will decide that the learning activity is interesting and they will engage in it. However, if either the stimulation or the control is insufficient, then the students will disengage from the activity provided there is no extrinsic motivator to influence them to continue.
- If the activity is repeatedly deemed stimulating and controllable, then the students may deem the activity interesting and they will be motivated to participate in the future.
- If over time, however, the assigned learning activities become uninteresting and do not provide some kind of stimulation or control, then the students will become unmotivated.

The challenge for faculty, therefore, is to create learning activities that are both stimulating and provide a modicum of personal control for the students. One way to do this is to design learning activities that are based on subject matter that is relevant to your students' lives. Such assignments can involve connecting projects to your students' individual interests or their daily lives. Also, by incorporating technology into the learning activities, students might find a way to further express themselves, through the creation of blogs, webpages, videos, documentaries, or Prezi presentations. Finally, try to allow your students to choose topics for their papers and projects that are personally interesting, and varied. All of these examples will allow your students to have more control over how they can demonstrate their knowledge.

If you are interested in learning more about methods to motivate your students, please register for the workshop ([www.svsu.edu/workshops](http://www.svsu.edu/workshops)) scheduled on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 in Science East 201. A light lunch will be served and adjunct faculty are compensated \$25 for their time.

### Reference:

Middleton, J.A. (1995). "A Study of Intrinsic Motivation in the Mathematics Classroom: A Personal Constructs Approach," *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* (Vol. 26, No. 3, pp 255-257).