

Motivate Lab presents

# Motivating Learners: Starting Strong

ONLINE COURSE



This hands-on course equips faculty to kick off their courses with motivationally-supportive tools and language designed to excite students for the semester ahead. Participants learn how to create a course that supports students to develop adaptive beliefs about learning and school, with a focus on supporting students from traditionally marginalized and minoritized backgrounds. In particular, participants will learn about three key learning mindsets—Growth Mindset, Purpose & Relevance, and Sense of Belonging—and workshop strategies for leveraging these mindsets in a way that promotes equity while being customized to their own courses, teaching methods, and styles of communication. The course is facilitated over 10 days and takes approximately 15 hours to complete, containing both synchronous and asynchronous components.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- **Know the principles** for supporting student motivation through 3 key learning mindsets—Growth Mindset, Purpose & Relevance, and Sense of Belonging.
- **Identify and adopt** both supportive and unsupportive learning mindset messages.
- **Tailor then implement** learning mindset supportive activities.
- **Identify inequities** for students from traditionally minoritized groups and adopt learning mindset interventions to counteract them.

*“I think the material and strategies shared focus on important areas that seem likely to meaningfully impact students and increase motivation. I appreciated the practical focus of the course; it provided concrete strategies and opportunities to practice integrating those strategies.”*

## Why this course?

Designed for instructors to meaningfully develop the mindsets of their students. This short, 15 hour course prepares instructors to motivate students in remote or face to face teaching.

## Intended Audience:

Instructors (full- and part- time), teaching assistants, faculty and teacher developers. This course is appropriate for new and experienced instructors.

**Motivate Lab Mission:** To improve people's lives through rigorous motivation research.

## Live Events:

The course is bookended by live events: a **45-minute kickoff event** where participants learn about the course and experience a model for guiding students to connect with each other at the beginning of a term, and a **Q&A session** where participants join a panel in discussing questions submitted as they completed the course.

## Section 0: Onboarding

Participants are introduced to each other and the course platform.

## Section 1: Key Concepts

Participants watch videos and read articles introducing key concepts, then hear the story of a fictional student, Reggie, who struggles to navigate his learning environment.

## Section 2: Messaging

Participants practice identifying and creating learning mindset supportive messages and consider how these messages would be interpreted by three fictional students, Reggie (introduced in Section 1), Gabriella, and Lee. *At the end of the section, participants create an Orientation Video to introduce one of their own courses with learning mindset supportive messaging.*

## Section 3: Course Elements

Participants learn how to structure learning experiences to support students' learning mindsets. *At the end of the section, participants complete a planning exercise for the first two weeks of one of their own courses.*

# COURSE STRUCTURE



*"The GPS framework is fantastic. It brings together a lot of really important motivation ideas into something really accessible and available; in other words, it's **easy to think about using**. The content really backed all of this up and **helped instructors consider things from the student perspective**. It was all credible but presented in this really fun, interesting, and dynamic way. I thought it was great; in other words, it wasn't stuffy. It was **intentional and meaningful without shaming anyone for not being aware of the importance of these things before**. I just thought it was great."*

## Discussions:

Participants engage in virtual, asynchronous discussions with facilitators and their peers at the end of each course section. These discussions are sparked by questions designed to encourage participants to consider how the course material applies to their own context.

From over **500 participants**, so far...

## COURSE REACTIONS



*"These are important concepts and we don't learn them when we are learning "how" to teach. Utilizing these concepts in our teaching can make a difference, especially for those students who need help the most."*

*"The course content was highly relevant and useful for my teaching career."*

*"I think everyone should have this training. I had already done some work with learning mindsets, but was happy to see emphasis in areas I wasn't already familiar with."*

*"There were excellent pedagogical tips as well as the research to back them."*

*"I found this course to be valuable because it made me feel much more confident with my ability to foster in my students this GPS mindset, which will benefit them not just in my classes but also in future classes & outside of school."*

**On a scale of 1-10, how likely are you to recommend this course to others?**

**9.23**  
Average

**97%**  
Say "7, 8, 9, or 10"

Interested in learning more?



**Motivate Lab**

DUSTIN THOMAN  
CA Research Director  
[dthoman@sdsu.edu](mailto:dthoman@sdsu.edu)

TRAVIS MADDRY  
Lead Designer  
[travis@motivatelab.org](mailto:travis@motivatelab.org)