

MOTIVATIONAL CHALLENGES IN LARGE LECTURE CLASSROOM: PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES

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The purpose of this study is to begin to identify motivational challenges in large lecture mathematics classes at a public Research I institution. Due to large number of entering freshmen required to take College Algebra the institution has chosen to utilize a large-lecture format for instructional delivery. This format, chosen more for economic reasons than fostering meaningful mathematics learning, has created a situation that challenges the instructors. This challenge is often times compounded by the lack of formal instruction for instructors on effective teaching practices. This study examined six instructors of large lecture classes and begins to identify the motivational challenges facing the instructors. Motivation has been identified as one of the key issues in education. Terrel Bell, former Secretary of Education, pointed out that: "There are three things to remember about education. The first is motivation. The second one is motivation. The third one is motivation" (p. 372, Maehr & Meyer, 1997).

The ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) model of motivational design (Keller, 1987a, 1987b) provides a systematic, ten-step approach to incorporating motivational tactics into instruction. Based on a needs assessment grounded in an analysis of the target audience and existing instructional materials the process supports the creation of motivational objectives/tactics and measures. Using the ARCS model six instructors were surveyed with selected instructors being interviewed. Responses from semi-structured interviews provided more insight to compare instructors' perception of motivational challenges. Results of the study show the differences between instructors' perceptions of the motivational challenges and solutions in their practices for addressing the challenges. These differences in are mapped back to educational preparations for teaching. A pictorial format will be used to present the study.

References

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