

ACADEMIC MOTIVATION

What Motivates You?

► *Take some time to figure out what truly interests you, what you're good at, and what you value.*

- Join organizations, get involved in activities and take courses that draw on your interests, abilities and values.
- Gather information about your academic interests, talk to professors, and seek out research opportunities, internships, and volunteer or work opportunities.
- Gather information about potential career choices, visit career services, and/or talk to recent graduates in the field. Try to relate your current academic work to your future career goals.

► *Determine how motivated you are and what motivates you.*

- **Explore your reasons for being at Lehigh and for pursuing your major.** Why did you come to (or choose to stay at) Lehigh? What about Lehigh do you love? Why/how did you select your major? What about your major most excites you? etc.
- **Explore what motivates you?** Are you motivated by external factors (e.g., pleasing your parents or receiving a reward) or by internal factors (e.g., wanting to know more about genetic engineering)? Studying for a small reward is OK, but it is best to try to find some *internal value* in everything you have to do academically as this will help increase your motivation.
- **Keep a motivation journal** – in your journal, briefly describe how you feel about your academic activities each day. You may pick a certain class or a specific assignment (e.g., an English paper) about which to write, or you may write about your feeling about college in general. *Reviewing your journal can help you to identify the thoughts, feelings, and actions that support your motivation and lead to success as well as the thoughts, feelings and actions that lower motivation and may prevent you from succeeding.*

Goal Setting

► *Setting personal and professional goals helps emphasize what is important and gives direction.*

- Set challenging goals, but be realistic about what you can achieve. Goals should be specific and measurable and should have a start and end time/date.
- Write out your goals and post them in a place where you will see them every day.
- Be confident in your ability to achieve your goals
- Once goals are achieved, mark them as such and reward yourself if appropriate.

Stay Positive & Be Confident

- Be patient and know that you might not be able to get everything *perfect* on your initial attempt
- Know the situations in which you are most confident or most likely to succeed. Try to put yourself in situations where success is likely and then challenge yourself.
- Don't focus on the negative; instead, recognize how negative thinking can impact motivation and performance and be determined to work harder to stay positive and be motivated.
- Reflect on times that you performed well and consider how the strategies you used then might work for you now
- Don't focus on failures or allow failures to make you afraid to try again
- Listen to encouragement from other people, especially those whose opinions are valued, and ignore discouragement from others
- If necessary, pause every now and then to remind yourself why you have chosen to take on certain work and what you expect to get out of it. Give yourself a pep talk.

Manage Your Time & Do Your Work

- Spend time studying every day so the work does not pile up
- Set aside some time each day to create a "To Do" list for the day
- Every time you sit down to study, set a minimal goal and accomplish it
- Break big tasks into smaller tasks which can be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time
- Mark off when you have accomplished each task to show yourself your progress
- Always study when you are alert and plan study sessions during your optimal studying hours
- Make sure your study area and materials are accessible and organized
- Reward yourself after the study session by doing something fun

If you experience difficulty with motivation, you might...

- Take a break, do something fun or relaxing
- Talk to family, friends, classmates, or professors
- Keep a motivation journal
- Visit the Center for Academic Success
- Make an appointment at the Counseling Center