THE ACTIVE LEARNING PARADOX: STUDENT (AND FACULTY) MOTIVATION

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GOALS

- In this session participants will explore strategies that maximize motivation and minimize resistance to active learning, and how to build a culture of sustained engagement that results in measurable learning gains.

- Our goal is not to discuss what active learning is (all learning is active learning, after all), but to overcome the active learning paradox by focusing on student (and faculty) motivation.

THE PARADOX

- For students?

- For faculty?

THE ONE WHO DOES THE WORK DOES THE LEARNING
HOW DO WE GET THEM THERE/INTERESTED?

STRATEGIES

- The mighty ACRE
- Intrinsic motivation
  - Fascination, relevance, accomplishment, a calling. Students care.
  - Harboring what exists is much easier than fostering it where it doesn't. Explain.
- Extrinsic motivation
  - Expectations of others, earning potential, instrumental rationality
  - Pros and cons?

INTRINSIC STRATEGIES

- Just because they're interested in/excited about a topic doesn't mean they will learn or are learning –the learning experience must be created. How?
  - Generate interest among students –tap into why and how it matters to them.
    - Where? When? How?
  - Stimulate interest. *Make it* interesting!
  - Provide for personal control. Embed choice. Social constructivism.
    - In other words, **provide active learning experiences that are stimulating and offer a degree of personal control/choice.**
      - Examples?

EXTRINSIC STRATEGIES

- If it's not their thing:
- Be a role model --be enthusiastic
- Make a connection –with them, among them
- Build community
- Draw connections between the class/activities and the extrinsic motivators
- Mix it up –students are not interested for a number of reasons. Deal with it.
- Provide options –think: UDL
- Set realistic goals and celebrate their accomplishment

STRATEGIES FOR GENERATING INTEREST IN ACTIVE LEARNING

- Novelty –it's cool
- Utility –it's useful
- Applicability
- Anticipation
- Surprise
- Challenge
- Feedback
- Closure

(Matt DeLong and Dale Winter, *Learning to Teaching and Teaching to Learn Mathematics: Resources for Professional Development*, Mathematical Association of America, 2002: 168)