

# MEASURING LEARNING MINDSETS

## WHAT

are learning mindsets?

Measuring learning mindsets can help you understand more about your students' experience.

Measuring learning mindsets can also provide evidence on whether a teaching practice or intervention is affecting your students the way you're intending.

## WHY

should you measure learning mindsets?

Measuring learning mindsets can help you understand more about your students' experience.

Measuring learning mindsets can also provide evidence on whether a teaching practice or intervention is affecting your students the way you're intending.

## HOW

do you measure learning mindsets?

You can measure learning mindsets by asking students questions about a specific course, and college more generally. This often takes the form of a survey completed during or outside of class.

You can also conduct focus groups and interviews to hear more about students' experiences.

## WHEN

should you measure learning mindsets?

When you measure learning mindsets depends on what you're trying to learn and what changes you're making to your course or context.

Consider timing your measurement work strategically to avoid points in the semester/year when students and instructors have higher workloads or stress levels.

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## WHAT do we measure?



**Growth  
Mindset**

Belief that intelligence can be developed through hard work, the use of effective strategies, and help from others when needed



**Purpose &  
Relevance**

Belief that schoolwork is valuable because it's personally relevant



**Sense of  
Belonging**

Belief that one is connected to and respected by peers, cared for by teachers and mentors, and fits in with the culture

# HOW

## do we measure learning mindsets?

Students have many reasons for being motivated or not motivated in school. Below are examples of things you might want to measure.

### **G** Growth Mindset

**Growth Mindset Beliefs**  
Beliefs about how challenge and failure are opportunities to grow your intelligence

**Growth Mindset Behaviors**  
Behaviors that students can engage in to grow their intelligence, like trying new strategies

### **P** Purpose & Relevance

**Interest**  
Desire to pursue learning on a topic

**Attainment Value**  
Belief that schoolwork will help students achieve their goals

**Real Life Connections**  
How frequently students connect what they learn in class to their real lives

### **S** Sense of Belonging

**College Identity**  
Belief that college is an important part of one's identity

**Perceived Match**  
Belief that students' own values match those of their school

**Campus Involvement**  
Degree of students' engagement in extracurriculars

**Belonging Uncertainty**  
Uncertainty about whether or not one belongs

Developing an effective, practically useful survey involves combining core items with additional questions that are most relevant to your context.

Core Items: A quick pulse on students' learning mindsets

Additional Items: A more nuanced view of the learning mindsets being targeted

**G**  
**Expectancy**  
I believe that I can be successful in this class.

**Growth Mindset**  
You can learn new things, but you really can't change your basic intelligence.

**Growth Mindset Beliefs**  
I prefer challenging material that I'll learn from rather than easy material.

**Growth Mindset Behaviors**  
If I'm having trouble in a class, I try out different strategies to find one that works.

**P**  
**Cost**  
I'm unable to put in the time needed to do well in this class.

**Purpose and Relevance**  
What I'm learning in this class will be useful to me in the future.

**Real Life Connections**  
I often connect what I learn in this class to my everyday life.

**Interest**  
I find this class really interesting.

**S**  
**Sense of Belonging**  
I belong in this class.

**Belonging Uncertainty**  
Sometimes I feel like I belong in this class, and sometimes I feel like I don't belong in this class.

**Perceived Match**  
I feel that my values and goals are well matched with those of this college.

**Campus Involvement**  
I am very involved in groups and/or activities at this college/university.

Finally, choose outcomes that are most important to you to measure.

#### Achievement & Performance

Course grade  
GPA  
Improvements in test/quiz/homework grades

#### Engagement

Class participation  
Assignment completion  
Attendance  
Resource use

#### Persistence

Retention  
Enrolling in more courses in the subject area