

Questions to Consider



AMIND at Work

Maximizing the Relationship
Between Mindset and
Student Success

2019 NATIONAL REPORT



Center for
Community College
Student Engagement

Is Your College Maximizing the Relationship Between Academic Mindset and Student Success?

Questions to Consider

Colleges can influence academic mindset in ways that can increase student success. Doing so requires rethinking everyday interactions and using more of them to help students strengthen their academic mindsets and improve their learning.

Consider using the following questions to start conversations about how your students, faculty, and staff can be more intentional about mindset and its role in the student experience. It is best to reinforce all four components of a productive mindset through different experiences—and to do so for everyone on your campus.



Questions Related to Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

- » How do you talk to students about success and failure? How do you teach students to process failure and move toward success?
- » Where could you incorporate mindset work at your college? Orientation? Student success courses? Gateway courses? Classes that have high failure and withdrawal rates?
- » Having a productive academic mindset is correlated with use of academic advising. Where else can you introduce supports that might also lead to more productive mindsets? For example, how can you bring such supports into the classroom?
- » What kind of professional development can you provide for advisors so they can help students develop more productive mindsets?
- » Do the people staffing your skills labs talk to students about how to have a growth mindset, particularly with regard to test-taking and math?

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Questions Related to Self-Efficacy

- » Do faculty members encourage students to put in their best effort rather than do the minimum work needed?
- » Do faculty members set clear expectations for their coursework? Do they tell students that the work may be challenging but they are confident that the students can learn it?
- » What kind of professional development can you provide for faculty members so they can help students around their fears of failure with new and intimidating content?

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Questions Related to Relevance of Academic Experience

- » What percentage of your students are required to meet with an advisor to set academic goals and develop an academic plan? What process does your college use to help students track progress toward their academic goals?
- » What percentage of your students are taking math courses that are aligned to their programs of study?
- » What percentage of your incoming students are required to complete career exploration that includes interacting with people who work in their field of interest?
- » What percentage of your students are required to complete internships or other applied learning experiences?
- » How can the college ensure that faculty and staff other than advisors are talking with students about their futures and careers?

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Questions Related to Sense of Belonging

- » What percentage of your students are required to participate in orientation and first-year experience programs?
- » How do faculty and staff members build relationships with students so that students feel a sense of belonging? Are they required to meet with each of their students at least once a semester?
- » Does the college culture engender a sense of welcoming and respect? How does the college encourage students to build relationships among one another?
- » What percentage of your incoming students are part of a learning community or other cohort?
- » What percentage of your college's classes include a requirement for group projects?