

Title: "Teaching for Motivation: Evidence-Based Practices that Elevate Student Engagement"

Speaker: Anna Brady, Georgia Southern University

Abstract

Students' motivational beliefs shape the goals they pursue, the choices they make, the effort they invest, and ultimately how they learn. These beliefs emerge from multiple sources: students' prior experiences, their perceptions of competence, the value they see in tasks, and the climate of the classroom. These sources are not fixed; instead, they are continually shaped by college instructors' instructional choices, assessment practices, and the broader learning environment. In today's college classrooms, motivation is more important than ever. Instructors must navigate rising digital distraction that competes for students' attention and the growing influence of AI tools that can diminish cognitive engagement. Understanding what drives and undermines motivation is essential for fostering meaningful learning. In this session, participants will explore contemporary motivational theories and use them to analyze student engagement and disengagement. They will also learn practical, instructional strategies and assessment approaches that strengthen student motivation and promote learning.

Bio

Anna C. Brady is an Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology in the Department of Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading at Georgia Southern University. Her research examines students' academic outcomes through the lens of motivation and self regulated learning, with a particular emphasis on identifying instructional approaches and interventions that strengthen these processes. Across her work, she aims to enhance students' engagement, learning, and achievement by understanding how interventions and instructional supports shape motivation and self-regulated learning. Brady teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in educational psychology, learning theories, and classroom assessment. In 2026, she received a Georgia Southern University teaching award, recognizing her commitment to high impact, student centered instruction. She also contributes to the field through national service, including roles on executive boards for the American Educational Research Association's Teaching of Educational Psychology SIG and Studying and Self Regulated Learning SIG. In addition, she serves on editorial boards for journals such as The Journal of Experimental Education and Active Learning in Higher Education.