Are your students dropping out because you’re reinforcing their insecurities?

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Anxiety → Clouded Thinking → Bad Decisions
Structural & Academic Barriers
Inability to pay
Poor academic preparation
Etc.

Psychological Barriers
Insecurities about intelligence
Insecurities about belonging
Etc.

Structural & Academic Supports
Financial aid
Remediation
Academic support centers
Etc.

Psychological Supports
???
Am I smart enough?

• Setbacks -> nope
• Challenges -> nope
• Needing help -> nope
Am I smart enough?

Fixed Mindset

“Intelligence is unchangeable, like eye color”
Am I smart enough?

**Fixed Mindset**

“Intelligence is unchangeable, like eye color”

How can I become smarter?

**Growth Mindset**

“Intelligence can be grown, like a muscle”
How can I become smarter?

• Setbacks -> try more effort or new strategies
• Challenges -> try more effort or new strategies
• Needing help -> that’s why it’s there
Growth Mindset for College Students
Progress: Number of credits earned during the follow-up period

Completion: Percent of students who earned an associate's degree or transferred after two years

Condition

Number of credits

Percent of students

Control

Treatment

Fall after students completed the program
Spring of Academic Year 1
Summer of Academic Year 1
Fall of Academic Year 2
Spring of Academic Year 2
Summer of Academic Year 2
Fall of Academic Year 3

0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
Growth Mindset for College Students

- 30-minute online module
- Free for first 50 colleges (hopefully more!)
- Available at perts.net/college
Psychological Audit

- Review *defining experiences*, e.g.,
  - New student orientation activities
  - Placement score feedback
  - Acceptance, waitlist, and academic probation letters
- Provide reassuring interpretations of challenges
  - College supports students to *develop* abilities
  - Struggle and anxiety are *normal* and *pass with time*
• Colleges are different, no single strategy works everywhere
• But academic insecurities are common & erode motivation
• Experiment to see what works on your campus

For more, visit perts.net/college