

As a student, I often wondered *why* I needed to know something. It was difficult for me to invest myself in learning something new if I didn't see how it would help me towards my goals in life. Teaching general education courses at Centre helped me think about this from an instructor's perspective. *Why* do my students need to know this? Some instructors might feel compelled to provide an answer, but I ask my students to generate their own ideas. For example, my lab assignments end with the question: "How might you apply what you have learned from this activity to your life or a real-world problem?" When the student begins to think about how the material *can* and *will* impact their own lives, it lights the spark of intrinsic interest; they begin to want to learn out of their own desire to know the material instead of simply earning a specific grade. When students take ownership of their learning and begin working towards mastering the material out of their own curiosity, what they need to know makes so much more sense.