

“Live Tips for Success”

A speaker for the University Center for Academic Excellence hosted a motivational workshop at UNC-Charlotte on April. 6 at 6 p.m. in the College of Education.

Assistant Director of Learning Strategies and Instruction, Frank Benefield spent an hour in COED 065 educating UNCC students about the impacts of motivation during the college experience.

Before Benefield worked in higher education, he served twenty years in the United States Marine Corps. He was previously an academic advisor at other universities, but now enjoys working in theUCAE at Charlotte and aims to support students across campus.

An intimate crowd of approximately twenty students attended the workshop, allowing Benefield to interact more with the audience.

“What motivates you to do well in college?” asked Benefield.

Members of the audience shared personal stories related to achieving future success.

His presentation challenged how society thinks about the concept of motivation. Particularly, how we define failure.

He claimed that we often attribute procrastination to failure, yet we always learn something valuable in the process.

In fact, procrastination is a form of stress relief.

“We think of going from point A to point B, but maybe we want to go beyond point B,” said Benefield.

Students sat side by side throughout the interactive session pondering his wise words.

Benefield intended to share something that was not fickle, like taking action toward our goals.

He discussed the importance of maintaining a strong mindset and growth motivation as the amount of effort we put in will lead to greater achievement.

“We are a lot more capable than we realize,” exclaimed Benefield.

He touched on the difference between internal and external motivators and how intrinsic motivation can be quite meaningful while extrinsic motivation may be more accessible.

External motivators are the things that we can see and feel, whereas internal motivators are less tangible but equally important such as enjoyment and pride.

Several from the audience provided timely feedback, specifically a student who was concerned about her study habits because they had not been stressed due to virtual learning environments.

“Every one of us has an elephant and a rider. The rider is the rational and logical side of us that makes sure we are going in the right direction, and the elephant is our emotional side which provides the energy we need for our journey,” said Benefield.

This resonated with the crowd.

He offered ways to smooth our academic journeys like managing our time wisely and having a strong support system. This sparked interest from the audience as it consisted of college students with a desire to succeed and recognized that exams were right around the corner.

“We can do a lot of things, but we can’t do everything,” said Benefield.

Ultimately, it’s all about finding the right approach for you.

To stay driven all semester long, you too can implement Benefield’s motivational tips.

These tips include developing reasonable goals, identifying potential obstacles, exceeding past one’s comfort zone, eliminating self-defeating thinking and aiming for consistency.

“I have a quote that I love in my office that says, if you are younger than 90-years-old then you should be trying new things,” Benefield said.

He encouraged the audience to practice this in their daily lives.

“If there is anything that you take away from our conversation today, I hope it is to take action, inspire and motivate,” said Benefield.

If you are interested in hearing more from Benefield or attending otherUCAE events, he also provides various types of workshops and coaching services. Additional information can be found on the UNCC website.