# 

# 

# Spartan First: The Journey Begins

# **Evaluation Instrument Selected:**

We selected the ARCS Model of Motivational Design (Keller, 1987) to evaluate *Spartan First: The Journey Begins*. The ARCS model measures Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. We believe that first-year students will be motivated to play the Spartan First game because it will help guide them through the struggles that can occur when going to college for the first time. The different phases of the game are replicas of common issues that students face.

**Brief Rationale**

The simulation/game is structured around first-year freshman experiences, such as arriving on campus, managing time and finances, connecting with peer mentors, and planning for graduation. These experiences are mirrored in the ARCS elements to ensure that students remain engaged, find personal meaning in the content, build confidence in their abilities, and feel a sense of accomplishment upon completion.

**ARCS Model Findings:**

**A** - Attention: *Spartan First* captures player’s attention immediately with a congratulatory welcome message, vibrant visuals featuring UTampa landmarks, and interactive scenes such as the Orientation Check-In and the Time Crunch Mini-Game. Players are actively engaged through choice-driven storytelling and mini-challenges that simulate real college decisions.

**R** - Relevance: The game content is highly relevant to the target audience, reflecting common first-year challenges including financial management, academic balance, and building social connections. By personalizing the learner’s journey, the game ensures that students see direct application to their own college experience at UTampa.

**C**- Confidence: Students earn badges and positive reinforcement as they successfully complete tasks throughout the game. These achievements are designed to build learners' self-efficacy, helping students feel more comfortable and confident as they transition into their first semester.

**S** - Satisfaction: The ultimate goal is to reach graduation, where they will see a congratulatory message. This game will give students a sense of what it will be like as they arrive on campus and the tasks that they have to check off. We want to prepare players for college life so when they are faced with these decisions, they won’t panic.

**Overall Evaluation**

Based on the ARCS model, *Spartan First:The Journey Begins* successfully motivates first-year students by maintaining attention, establishing personal relevance, building learner confidence through task mastery, and satisfaction through achievement recognition. The design and structure of the game align closely with motivational design best practices, supporting students’ academic, financial, and social preparedness for college life.

**Assessment**

All answers are based on a 1-5 Likert scale. 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Q1A1. The *Spartan First* game kept me interested.\*

Score: 5

Q2A2. The Spartan First game kept me engaged throughout.\*

Score: 5

Q3A3. The use of visuals stimulated my curiosity.\*

Score: 4

Q4A4. The content captured my attention.

Score: 5

Q5A5. The way that the material was presented was enjoyable.

Score: 5

Q6A6. I found the visuals to be appealing.

Score: 4

Q7A7. I was motivated to continue.

Score: 4

Q8A8. The variety of the content kept my attention.

Score: 4

Q9A9. There was something unexpected in the material to maintain my interest.

Score: 3

Q10R1. The scenarios in *Spartan First* are personally meaningful to my first year.\*

Score: 4

Q11R2. I can see the value in the game to enhance my college experience.\*

Score: 5

Q12R3. The activities were aligned with what I might experience during my first year.\*

Score: 5

Q13R4. The examples used are applicable to real life.

Score: 5

Q14R5. The material matched my learning style.

Score: 3

Q15R6. The content is related to something I needed to learn.

Score: 5

Q16R7. I understand the importance of the material.

Score: 5

Q17R8: The material was useful.

Score: 5

Q18R9. The content enhanced my knowledge.

Score: 4

Q19C1. *Spartan First* made me feel more confident about handling my college journey.\*

Score: 4

Q20C2. The materials provided clear guidance.\*

Score: 4

Q21C3. The structure of the content helped me believe that I could succeed in the game.\*

Score: 4

Q22C4. I knew what I needed to do to be successful in the game.

Score: 4

Q23C5. I felt in control while playing the game:

Score: 5

Q24C6. I felt confident throughout the game.

Score: 5

Q25C7. The game was clearly explained.

Score: 4

Q26C8. The level of difficulty was sufficient.

Score: 3

Q27C9. I felt prepared for the assessment at the end of the game.

Score: 4

Q28S1. I felt proud of my accomplishments while playing *Spartan First*.\*

Score: 5

Q29S2. I am satisfied with the quality of the instructional materials.\*

Score: 5

Q30S3. The content met my expectations.\*

Score: 5

Q31S4. I am satisfied with what I learned.

Score: 4

Q32S5. I enjoyed the activities throughout the game.

Score: 5

Q33S6. I feel accomplished.

Score: 4

Q34S7. I would play the game again in the future.

Score: 4

Q35S8. I would recommend this game to others.

Score: 4

Q36S8. I feel like I can successfully accomplish tasks in the real world based off of this game.

Score: 4

**Total Score: 157**

[**Spartan First Survey**](https://utampa.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2aeStsfiezgdvGC)

**Reference**

Keller, J. M. (1987). Development and Use of the ARCS Model of

Instructional Design. *Journal of Instructional Development*, *10*(3), 2–10. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02905780>

Loorbach, N., Peters, O., Karreman, J., & Steehouder, M. (2014, February  
 17). *Validation of the Instructional Materials Motivation Survey   
 (IMMS) in a self-directed instructional setting aimed at working with   
 technology*. BERA.   
 https://bera-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/bjet.12138