

# TEACHING THAT PROMOTES LEARNING

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**Thesis:** In order for teaching to more effectively promote learning, instructional practice needs to change in five areas.

## 1. **The Role of the Teacher**

*Currently:* Most instructional practice still features teacher action.

*The Change:* Instructional action should focus on students learning

*Examples:* approaches that overcome the propensity to tell – not “going over” the syllabus, how-to study advice

*Implications:* Facilitative roles are more difficult and no less central in student learning experiences

## 2. **The Balance of Power**

*Currently:* Faculty make the key decisions about learning for students.

*The Change:* In ethically responsible ways, faculty share decision-making about learning with students.

*Examples:* assignment choices and policy setting

*Implication:* Teachers control less, but students are involved more.

## 3. **The Function of Content**

*Currently:* Faculty cover content with the goal of build strong knowledge foundations.

*The Change:* Content should be used to build a knowledge base and to develop learning skills and learner self-awareness.

*Examples:* approaches that do not separate learning strategies from content – end of class summaries, exam review sessions

*Implication:* Teachers cover less, but student learn more.

## 4. **The Responsibility for Learning**

*Currently:* Faculty “force” learning on reluctant participants.

*The Change:* With students, faculty create learning environments that motivate students to accept responsibility for learning.

*Examples:* activities to create constructive classroom climates and let there be logical consequences

*Implication:* As students grow more autonomous, they need teachers less

## 5. **The Processes and Purposes of Evaluation**

*Currently:* Evaluation activities are grade-oriented and completed exclusively by teachers.

*The Change:* Evaluation activities should also be used to promote learning and to develop self- and peer assessment skills.

*Examples:* ways to use self- and peer assessment - participation

*Implication:* Accurate self- and peer assessment results in fewer arguments over grades

Content from: *Learner- Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice* by Maryellen Weimer. Available from Jossey-Bass, 250 pages, \$33.00. [Order to be placed on April 1<sup>st</sup> for the GBC Library.]

## RESOURCES ON LEARNER-CENTERED TEACHING

Published Since *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice*

Compiled by Maryellen Weimer, Ph.D.

Email [grg@psu.edu](mailto:grg@psu.edu) Blogs at [www.teachingprofessor.com](http://www.teachingprofessor.com)

**Links to resources that are available in the GBC Library collection have been inserted. Items the Library does not have may be obtained through interlibrary loan.**

### The Role of the Teacher

Hockings, S. C., DeAngelis, K. J., and Frey, R. F. "Peer-Led Team Learning in General Chemistry: Implementation and Evaluation." *Journal of Chemical Education*, 2008, 85 (7), 990-996. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--students participating in weekly peer- led study groups out performed students not in study groups on three out of four measures of academic performance.

McCreary, C. L., Golde, M. F., and Koeske, R. "Peer Instruction in General Chemistry Laboratory: Assessment of Student Learning." *Journal of Chemical Education*, 2006, 83 (5), 804-810. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--participation in undergraduate peers led lab sessions enhanced learning for students as compared with students in conventional labs taught by teachers

Thiel, T., Peterman, S., and Brown, B. " [Addressing the Crisis in College Mathematics: Designing Courses for Student Success.](#)" *Change*, 2008, July-August, 44-49.  
--redesigned a developmental algebra course with fewer lectures and more lab time; changed the role of teacher who provide more guidance and individual instruction. Student success in the course went from 55% to 75% with no decrease in course rigor.

### The Balance of Power

DiClementi, J. D. and Handelsman, M. M. " [Empowering Students: Class-Generated Rules.](#)" *Teaching of Psychology*, 2005, 32 (1), 18-21  
--gives students a set of categories (late arrival, sleeping in class, use of cell phones) and lets them decide the rule and how rule violations will be managed

Litz, R. A. "Red Light, Green Light and Other Ideas for Class Participation-Intensive Courses: Method and Implications for Business Ethics Education. *Teaching Business Ethics*, 2003, 7 (4), 365-378. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--lets students have some control over how they will participate in class. loan]

Ludy, B. T. "Setting [Course Goals: Privileges and Responsibilities in a World of Ideas.](#)" *Teaching of Psychology*, 2005, 32 (3), 146-149  
--sees a possible role for students in setting course goals or in sharing goals with the instructor

Singham, M. . " [Moving Away from the Authoritarian Classroom.](#)" *Change*, May/June 2005, pp. 51-57.  
--finds the authoritarian language and structure of syllabi symptomatic of the breakdown of trust between teachers and students; describes his experience with a redesigned syllabus in a large physics course

Singham, M. " [Death to the Syllabus.](#)" *Liberal Education*, 2007, 93 (4), 52-56. --  
further analysis of the role of syllabi in preventing and promoting learning

## **The Function of Content**

Bacon, D. R., and Stewart, K. A. "How Fast Do Students Forget What They Learned in Consumer Behavior? A Longitudinal Study." *Journal of Marketing Education*, 2006, 28, 181-192. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--using a robust empirical design documents that most of the knowledge gained in a course for majors is lost within two years.

Gregory, M., "[Turning Water into Wine](#): Giving Remote Texts Full Flavor for the Audience of *Friends*. *College Teaching*, 2005, 53(3), 95-98.

--a wonderfully written piece that explores how teachers and students do and don't connect to content the same way

Lewis, S. E., and Lewis, J. E. "Departing from Lectures: An Evaluation of a Peer-Led Guided Inquiry Alternative." *Journal of Chemical Education*, 2005, 82 (1), 135-139. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan] --

substituted one lecture per week with a guide-inquiry discussion and found covering less content did not result in less learning

McIntyre, S. H., and Munson, J. M. "Exploring Cramming: Student Behaviors, Beliefs, and Learning Retention in the Principles of Marketing Course." *Journal of Marketing Education*, 2008, 30 (3), 226-243. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--study explored the use of cramming as reported by marketing students and looked at how effective cramming was in terms of both short and long term retention.

## **The Responsibility for Learning**

Coffman, S. J. "[Ten Strategies for Getting Students to Take Responsibility for Their Learning](#)." *College Teaching*, 2003, 51 (1), 2-4

--great list of ten specific ways teachers can encourage students to step up to the plate

Howard, J. R. Just in Time Teaching in Sociology or How I Convinced my Students to Actually Read the Assignment. *Teaching Sociology*, 2004, 32, 385-90. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--after a telling assessment revealing just how few students were actually doing the reading, devised an interesting assignment which did as the title claims

Roberts, J. C., and Roberts, K. A. "Deep Reading, Cost/Benefit, and the Construction of Meaning: Enhancing Reading Comprehension and Deep Learning in Sociology Courses. *Teaching Sociology*, 2008, 36, 125-140. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--insightful analysis of student reading skills and how they can be developed. Objects to quizzes and proposes an assignment that helps develop college level reading skills.

Yamane, D. "Course Preparation Assignments: A Strategy for Creating Discussion-Based Courses. *Teaching Sociology*, 2006, 36 (July), 236-248. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--describes an assignment that gets students doing the reading before they come to class and participating in discussion during class

## **The Processes and Purposes of Evaluation**

Baker, D. F. "Peer Assessment in Small Groups: A Comparison of Methods." *Journal of Management Education*, 2008, 32 (2), 183-209. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--uses a comprehensive lit review to generate the most common assessment criteria for peers; also includes two excellent peer assessment forms, plus much other useful information

Deeter, L. "Incorporating Student Centered Learning Techniques into an Introductory Plant Identification Course." *NACTA Journal*, 2003, (June), 47-52. [[Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]

--some especially creative assessment techniques that respond constructively to exam anxiety

Edwards, N. M. “ [Student Self-Grading in Social Statistics](#).” *College Teaching*, 2007, 55 (2), 72-76.  
--a unique system lets students grade homework and exams at the same time it keeps them honest

Hiller, T. H., and Hietapelto, A. B. “Contract Grading: Encouraging Commitment to the Learning Process Through Voice in the Evaluation Process.” *Journal of Management Education*, 2001, 25 (6), 660-684. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--tracks the evolution of a contract grading scheme across a four-year period with 473 students in 22 classes and at three different universities

Nilson, L. B. “ [Improving Student Peer Feedback](#).” *College Teaching*, 2003, 51 (1), 34-38.  
--great collection of prompts that improve the quality of feedback students provide each other on papers, projects and presentations

## Implementation Issues

Blumberg, P. [Developing Learner-Centered Teaching: A Practical Guide for Faculty](#). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009.  
--close to a workbook, this resource proposes a practical system for implementing incremental changes that make courses more learner-centered.

Doyle, T. [Helping Students Learn in a Learner-Centered Environment](#). Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2008.  
<http://llc.georgebrown.ca/interlibraryloans/BookVideoRequest.aspx>  
--very good on responding to student resistance

Noel, T. W. “Lessons from the Learning Classroom.” *Journal of Management Education*, 2004, 28 (2), 188-206.  
[ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--recounts first attempts to implement learner-centered approaches and explores why they failed

Prince, M., and Felder, R. “ [The Many Faces of Inductive Teaching and Learning](#).” *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 2007, 36 (5), 14-20.  
--illustrates how inductive methods (like inquiry- and problem-based approaches, among others) have been implemented in the sciences and identifies many helpful resources

Spence, L. D. “ [The Case Against Teaching](#).” *Change*, 2001, 33 (6), 11-19.  
--a kick-in-the-butt piece if something is needed to motivate change in the direction of learner-centered teaching

Whetten, D. A. “Principles of Effective Course Design: What I Wish I had Known about Learner-Centered Teaching 30 Years Ago.” *Journal of Management Education*, 2007, 31 (3), 339-357. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan]  
--great advice on implementing learner-centered approaches starting with how the course is designed

## Good Places to Start in the Literature on Learning

Biggs, J. “ [What the Student Does: Teaching for Enhanced Learning](#).” *Higher Education Research & Development*, 1999, 18 (1), 57-75.  
--explores the focus of instructional action and makes the case that students should be working as hard as teachers in the classroom

Candy, P. C. [Self-Direction for Lifelong Learning](#). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991. [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan.]  
--a great source, thorough, well-referenced, well-organized and easy to read

Horton, M. and Freire, P. *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990. . [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan.]  
--well edited conversation between two important and innovative educational theorists

Prince, M. “[Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research.](#)” *Journal of Engineering Education*, July 2004, 223-231.  
--a comprehensive and compelling analysis of the impact of active learning experiences

Stage, F. K., Muller, P. A., Kinzie, J., and Simmons, A. *Creating Learner Centered Classrooms: What Does Learning Theory Have to Say?* ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 26, No. 4. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education and the Association for the Study of Higher Education, 1998. . [ [Click here](#) to place an interlibrary loan.]  
--super monograph that clearly and cogently writes about major educational theories; the best intro and overview of radical pedagogy and constructivism that I encountered