Learner-Centered Instruction

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Description of Learner-Centered Instruction

Carl Rogers described it as…

"Within the limitations imposed by circumstance and authority, or are imposed by the instructor as necessary for his own psychological comfort, an atmosphere of permissiveness, of acceptance, or reliance upon student responsibility, is created."

Description of Learner-Centered Instruction

Learner-centered instruction puts students at the center of education

- Focus is on student goals, interests, abilities and learning styles while considering their backgrounds, needs and capabilities
- Students are actively engaged in and responsible for their learning

Educators are Facilitators of learning

- Facilitators employ a diverse array of innovative methods and strategies based on a set of beliefs founded in humanist and constructivist theory

"It promotes the highest levels of motivation and learning for all kinds of learners."
(Reigeluth & Carr-Chellman, 2009)

Description of Learner-Centered Instruction

May also be referred to as:

- Student-centered Learning

Includes other well-known types of learning:

- Inquiry-based learning

- Collaborative learning

- Problem-based learning

- Team based-learning

- Service Learning

- Field Trips
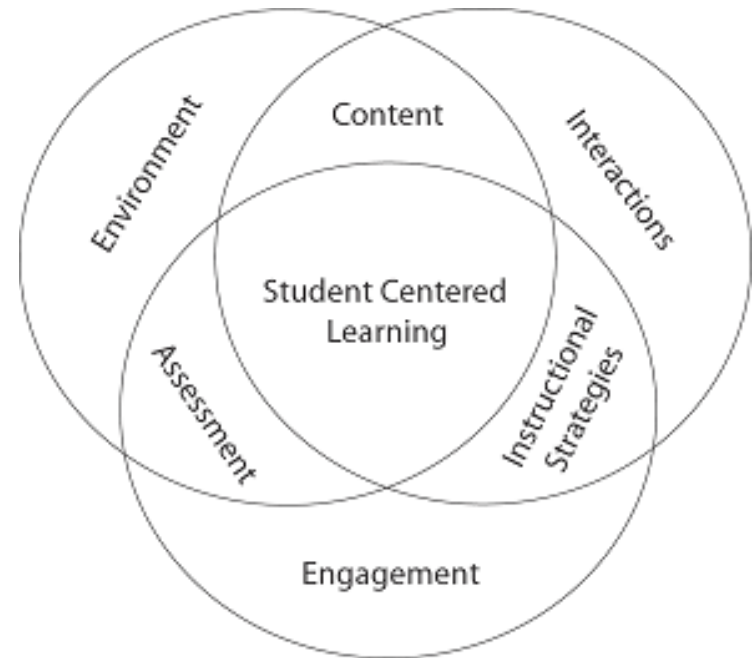
Visual Representation of Learner-centered Instruction

Image sourced from:
http://jrllanes.wordpress.com/tag/student-centered-instruction/

Key Features of Learner-Centered Education

"This approach to education emphasizes the person doing the learning" Weimer, 2002

Learner-centered Instruction is best understood when compared to the traditional Teacher-centered Instruction strategy:

Teacher-Centered	Learner-Centered
Focus is on instructor; students are passive	Focus is on students; students are actively engaged
Instructor transmits knowledge to students. Instructor talks; students listen and take notes	Students construct knowledge by gathering, synthesizing and integrating information while developing skills like inquiry, problem solving, communication, and critical thinking
Lecture is the main method of teaching	Instructor is a coach, model and mentor who lectures sparingly
Instructor makes decisions; sets learning objectives, assignments and assessment criteria	Students are involved in decision-making, participate in developing learning objectives, defining assignments and assessment criteria
Knowledge acquisition is gained apart from its use in real life	Learning to use knowledge effectively, collaborating with others to address real life situations and problems
Students work alone	Students work in pairs, groups, or alone
Instructor monitors and corrects students	Instructor provides feedback/encouragement/correction
Instructor answers students' questions	Students answer each other's questions, using instructor as an information resource. Focus on asking better questions
Instructor evaluates student learning. Assessment is used to monitor learning	Students engage in self-evaluation, peer-evaluation in addition to receiving teacher-evaluation. Assessment promotes learning. Students provide teacher with feedback on facilitation process

Key Features of
Learner-Centered Education

Here is a [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N1I6sOhDiw) that describes the
Key Features of Learner-Centered Instruction
Student-Centered Learning (21st Century Education) .
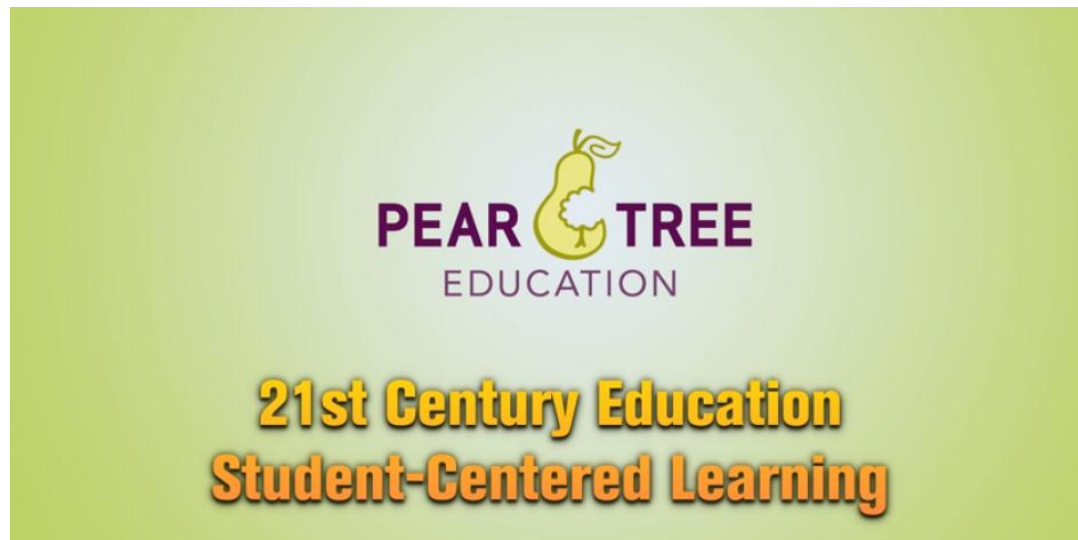
Intended Learning Goals
of Learner-Centered Instruction

- To offer a better way of educating

- To improve how students learn and teachers teach

- To actively engage students in learning

- To share responsibility with students for learning

- Holistic learning that considers the whole person

- Move toward student guided instruction

- To prepare learners with 21st century skills

- To incorporate technology in learning

- To grow life long learners

Addressing Learning Domains

- Learner-centered instruction is a Holistic form of education due to the vast selection of facilitation methods and strategies that address all three Domains in Blooms' Taxonomy

- Staging the strategies from simple to complex fosters higher-level learning in each domain and efficacy in critical thinking skills

Simple to Complex

Cognitive
Mental Activity

- Creating
- Evaluating
- Analyzing
- Applying
- Understanding
- Remembering

Psychomotor
Physical Activity

- Originating
- Adapting
- Mechanizing
- Guided Responding
- Setting
- Perceiving

Affective
Character/Conscience

- Characterizing
- Organizing
- Valuing
- Responding
- Receiving

Adapted from resource retrieved at http://cljorgensen.com/tag/psychomotor

Cognitive Domain

Cognitive domain focuses on intellectual skills and thinking, it is symbolized by the head or brain

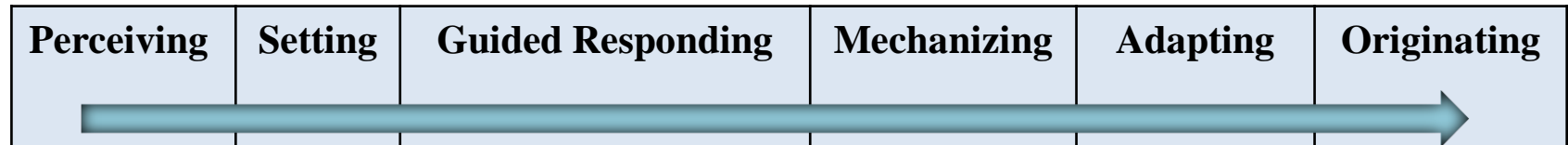| Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
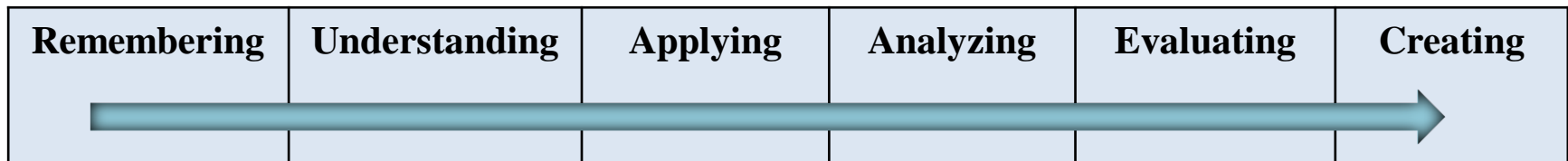
Learner-centered instruction addresses the cognitive domain, specifically the higher order functions, by actively engaging students in learning

- Students construct knowledge by gathering, synthesizing and integrating information while developing skills like inquiry, problem solving, communication, and critical thinking

- Critical thinking and critical reflection are embedded in learner-centered instruction as is technology

- Students participate in self and peer assessment and are required to give feedback

- Discussion-based instruction as well as problem-based learning, inquiry based learning and requires comprehension

- Students are involved in decision-making, participate in developing learning objectives, defining assignments and assessment criteria

- When students are engaged in project work involving research, analysis, summarizing, synthesizing, writing, developing, creating they are using their brains

Psychomotor Domain

Psychomotor domain focuses on development of behaviour or skills, related to physical and is symbolized by the hands

| Perceiving	Setting	Guided Responding	Mechanizing	Adapting	Originating

Learner-centered instruction addresses the psychomotor domain, specifically the higher order functions, by actively engaging students in learning

- Movement and participation are part of the environment. They are "doing".

- Students construct with their knowledge by building, creating, developing and utilizing technology

- Facets of learner-centered instruction like demonstrations, experiential, service or simulation learning involve developing and performing skills

- A learner-centered classroom is a fun environment that can engage students in activities like field trips, watching video, role play, drawing, writing a poem or song, giving a speech

Affective Domain

Affective domain focuses attitudes, emotion, and feelings, developing skills like reflection and empathy. It is symbolized by the heart

Receiving	Responding	Valuing	Organizing	Characterizing
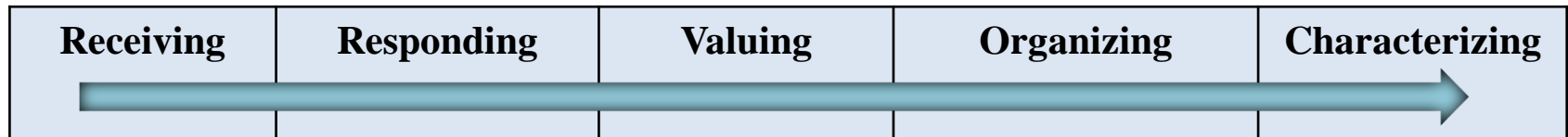
Learner-centered instruction addresses the affective domain by actively engaging students in learning

- The focus is on student goals, interests and passions

- Motivation is higher in learner-centered classrooms

- Storytelling or involvement in case studies, simulations, or experiential puts learners in touch with real-life and can assist them in developing empathy for others

- Service learning can include fundraising or planning special events for beneficiaries in need, non-profit organizations or community

- Reflection is embedded in learner-centered instruction

Underlying Theory of Learner-Centered Instruction

- Constructivist and Humanistic in nature

- Founded on the theory "person-centered" psychology developed by Carl Rogers

  - Rogers was recognized as the sixth most prominent psychologist of the 20th century and second among clinicians, next in line to Freud in a study by Haggbloom et al. (2002)

  - Learner-Centered Theory was formally published in three editions of Freedom to Learn (Rogers, 1969, 1983; Rogers and Freiberg, 1994)

  - It was originally presented in Client-Centered Therapy (Rogers, 1951)

Underlying Theory
of Learner-Centered Instruction

Five Hypotheses of Learner-centered Education

- A person cannot teach another person directly; one can only facilitate another's learning

- A person only learns things related to maintenance or enhancement of self; making relevancy essential for learning

- Experience that involves a change in self tends to be resisted, open-mindedness must be encouraged and information must be relevant

- Trust is essential for students to be open-minded about learning and explore beliefs that vary from their experience or threaten their concept of self

- To promote risk taking instructors need to create a safe learning environment by assuming role of mentor, frequently interacting with students, being open to learning from students and connecting students to subject matter

Adapted from Carl Rogers Five Hypotheses of Learner-centered Education
published in Client-centered Therapy in 1951

The Procedure or Main Process for Implementing Learner-Centered Instruction

1. **Create a safe environment that encourages risk taking**

2. **Instructor gives up control and assumes a new role as Facilitator who:**
   - Coaches
   - Mentors
   - Role Models
   - Supports Group Process
   - Fosters Student Guided Practice (Reigeluth)

3. **Empower learners by recognizing their individuality and sharing responsibility and decision-making**

4. **Facilitate learning, be open-minded, ask difficult questions, reflect often, commit to ongoing learning and improvement**

Remember: Learner-Centered Education falls on a spectrum.
Start small by implementing one strategy at a time in your lesson plans

The Procedure or Main Process
for Implementing Learner-Centered Instruction

Facilitators employ a diverse array of methods and strategies to actively engage students in their learning such as:

- Student experience, background, abilities, needs and goals considered

- Contribute to defining learning goals

- Determining what to learn

- Defining assignments and working in a self-directed manner

- Participate in decisions about assessment, due dates, etc.

- Set pace for learning

- Conduct Peer and Self Evaluations

- Assessment measures other than exams are prioritized

- Students and teachers learn from each other

- Students give feedback to Facilitator

- Interactive Ice-breakers/frequent group work of various formations

- Discussion and questioning

- Inquiry based learning

- Analyzing and reporting back on information search

- Experiential, Service Learning, or Apprenticeships

- Collaborative or Team Learning

- Reflection

- Student-led Demonstrations and Simulations or case studies

- Researching best practice and presenting to peers

- Problem-based Learning

- Critical reflection and challenge assumptions of traditional thinking

- Developing a wiki or webpage

- Student-centered debate

- Planning and implementing an event or fundraising for a worthy cause

- Role Play, Drawing, Writing a poem or song, giving a speech

- Storytelling or Journaling

- Constructing something

- Using technology like email, google groups, apps, watching videos…

- Creating a resource: PowerPoint, brochure, manual, video, meal, robot

- Pursuing a special interest

The Procedure or Main Process
for Implementing Learner-Centered Instruction

"Focuses on authentic learning experiences as a necessary basis for meaningful skill acquisition and human development" (Reigeluth, p. 121)

Take a few minutes to watch this [video](#)
Overview of Learner-Centered
Teaching Methods

Want more ideas about learner-centered activities?
Here is an [online resource](#) with more than 60 Teaching Strategies
you can employ in your classroom!

Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlcJqnwvKZo
https://www.facinghistory.org/for-educators/educator-resources/teaching-strategies

Criteria for Successful Implementation of Learner-centered Instruction

- Open-mindedness

- Friendly supportive environment that promotes individuality; risk taking; ambition; and fosters exploration, creativity, collaboration, communication, sharing, responsibility, and respect

- Teaching Instructors and Students how to transform into Learner-centered Education and assume new roles in Learning

- Ground rules developed by students for the classroom

- Resources like the Internet, Personal Devises and Multi-media

- Understanding of team skills and forming groups

Situational Constraints

- The primary constraint is adoption of learner-centered philosophy by educators and educational institutions. Professional development and further research will facilitate this over time. Some common myths:

    - Learner-centered instruction is not possible with learners who have special needs. False: All learners can be engaged using this method as the pace, content and process recognize the unique abilities (and limitations) of learners.

    - Some teachers fear classroom management will become an issue. This myth has been proven false because the more students are engaged in their learning the less behavioural issues seem to arise.

    - Misunderstanding that education is either learner-centered or not. Think of it as a spectrum.

    - Being learner-centered takes too much time. It's a new way of teaching, one that focuses on different priorities and non-traditional timelines. Students can learn in class but also away from class.

- The learning-environment can pose challenges to incorporating learner-centered methods. Flexible classrooms, moveable furniture, open space are important.

- Traditional teaching methods have not prepared students for this constructivist and humanistic method. They require training to adapt to learner-centered strategies.

- Lack of resources like computers or personal devises, internet, and supplies.

Relevance to Adult-Learning Contexts

Learner-centered Instruction is…

- Backed by supportive research

- The preference from the perspective of most learners

- Resulting in better outcomes

- Improving student retention rates

- Better preparing graduates

- Gaining popularity among professionals

- A good fit with current day technology and trends in individualism

- Being adopted by more higher-learning institutions
(Matlin, 2002; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002)

- Recognized as a leading strategy in the future of adult education

Relevance to Adult-Learning Contexts

Learners experience greater satisfaction with school; higher levels of intrinsic motivation and overall, gain greater achievement"
(Johnson, 1991; Maxwell, 1998; Slavin, 1990)

Students prefer learner-centered instruction because they…..

- Are highly engaged which impacts "how much and what they learn"

- Have learning clearly defined by SMART Goals

- Are seen as individuals with unique rates of development (Alexander & Murphy, 2000) and set the pace of their own learning to take enough time to understand content

- Experience increased cognition and application, develop critical thinking skills and learn how to resource information and solve real world problems

- Understand importance of content, how to assimilate knowledge and create with it; encouraged to make their own meaning from it

- Are encouraged to interact and build relationships with teacher and peers

- Gain skills to become lifelong learners

Advantages of Learner-centered instruction (Blumburg, 2008)

Relevance to
Adult-Learning Contexts

"Methods such as these…learner-centered… have been proven to significantly advance the ability of students to reach high standards by American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force, 1993; http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED452830.pdf
Lambert & McCombs, 1998; McCombs & Whisler, 1997." (Reigeluth, p. 16)
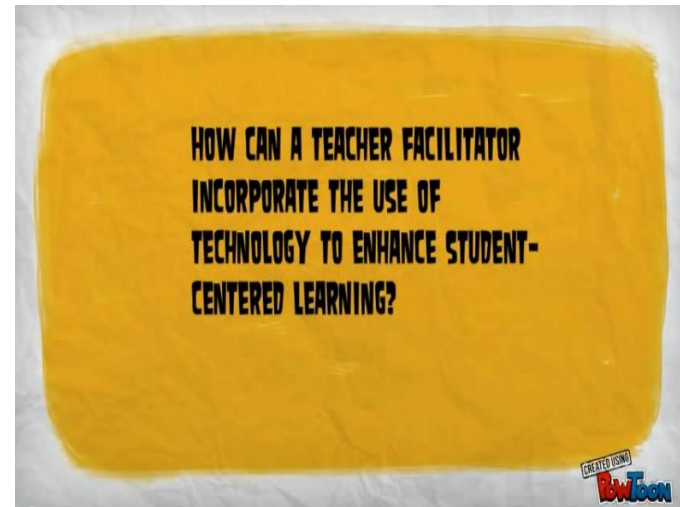
10 Expectations of Students
Here is a video

Relevance to
Adult-Learning Contexts

Technology and Other Skills for the 20th Century

How can a Teacher Facilitator Incorporate the Use of Technology to Enhance Student-Centered Learning?

[Check out this video](#) by Dawn Grove

Common Core: Flip Instruction and Creating a Student-Centered Classroom
[Check out this seminar](#) by Catlin Tucker

Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ygnyiik8aM
and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kxfwbf9T1ww

Relevance to
Adult-Learning Contexts

Technology and Other Skills for the 21th Century

In addition to content, students learn many valuable skills and abilities including:

Research and archival skills	Collaboration	Openness to other perspectives
Communication and Listening	Database Management	Deeper understanding
Decision Making	Facilitation	Social skills
Problem Solving	Learning skills	Writing
Technology Skills	Leadership	Web development

Humanities Today: The Transformational Power of Student-Centered Learning

Check out this Ted Talk by Alan Christy →

Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQDxRx2GkL0

Outcomes and Impact

Not convinced yet?

Listen to this inspiring story about the impact and outcomes derived from a learner-centered philosophy

[The Power of
Student-driven Learning](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fMC-z7K0r4)
by Shelley Wright
at TEDxWestVancouverED

Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fMC-z7K0r4

Links to Resources, Online Papers and Reference Sites

Videos

Common Core: Flip Instruction and Creating a Student-Centered Classroom by Catlin Tucker
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kxfwbf9T1ww

Learner Centered Teaching by Jack C. Richards published by Cambridge University Press
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dP2lXaQwfXQ

Curiosity - Facilitating a Learner Centered Classroom
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5ctBKe7b0A

Taking a Closer Look at Student-centered Learning
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7YayqYTKEA

Learner-Centered Teaching Methods: An Overview.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rlcJqnwvKZo

How Can a Teacher Facilitator Incorporate Use of Technology to Enhance Student-Centered Learning by D. Grove https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ygnyiik8aM

Ten Expectations by Leaving to Learn
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K96c-TGnSf4&list=PL0134792CEB4EF46D

Student Centered Classroom/Learning - A Guide by L.M. Oros
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tB7f8WTF5zc

Student Centered Learning: 21st Century Education produced by Pear Tree Education
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N1I6sOhDiw

The power of student-driven learning. Ted Talk Video by S. Wright 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3fMC-z7K0r4

Books

Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Changes to Practice, Second Edition by Maryellen Weimer

Instructional-design theories and models: Building a common knowledge base by Reigeluth, C.M., & Carr-Chellman, A.A. (Eds.) (2009). New York: Routledge.

Facilitating with ease! Core skills for facilitators, team leaders and members, managers, consultants, and trainers. (3rd ed.) by Ingrid Bens (2012). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Discussion as a way of teaching.(2nd ed.) by Brookfield, S., Preskill, S. (2006). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Links to Resources, Online Papers and Reference Sites

Online Resources

Learner-Centered Teaching by Phyllis Blumberg, Ph.D.
Director of the Teaching and Learning Center
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia
http://www.usciences.edu/teaching/Learner-Centered/

Student-centered vs. Almost Student-centered published by Canteach and Online resource for Canadian Educators
http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/fnations11.html

Collaborative Learning: Group work and study teams by W. Cordes http://tfsc.uark.edu/193.php

Definition of Learner-centered Teaching by Terry Doyle of Ferris State University. Sourced from the "Largest Resource for Learner Centered Teaching on the Web about Student-centered Learning".
https://learnercenteredteaching.wordpress.com/learner-centered-teaching-resources/definition-of-learner-centered-teaching/

Teacher as Facilitator by J. Ellesworth. (2001) Copyright: Northern Arizona University Retrieved from Online resources Classroom Management of Exceptional Children at
http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/jde7/ese425/eco/optional/facilitator.html

Comparison of Teacher-centered and Learner-centered paradigms by Huba and Greed. 2000.
http://www.assessment.uconn.edu/docs/TeacherCenteredVsLearnerCenteredParadigms.pdf

Teacher as Facilitator by Lane, J. . Resourced from: Center for Instructional Development, Clayton State University.
http://adminservices.clayton.edu/Portals/538/docs/teacher-facilitator.pdf

Oohm Blog by J. R. Llanes On Strategic Management of Higher Education. European Student Union.
http://jrllanes.wordpress.com/tag/student-centered-instruction/

Learner-Centered Teaching published by Michigan State University. Office of Faculty and Organizational Development
http://fod.msu.edu/oir/learner-centered-teaching

Classifying Approaches to Classroom Management
by J. Shindler
http://web.calstatela.edu/faculty/jshindl/cm/Chapter4teacherclassification.htm

Student-Centered Learning published by The Glossary of Education Reform. http://edglossary.org/

The University Experience.
http://silkweb.com/sst/The%20University%20Experience/screen2.html

Quantitative Reasoning Learning Goals by E. Wilder of Lehman College, New York
http://serc.carleton.edu/NICHE/qr_learning_goals.html

Links to Resources, Online Papers and Reference Sites

Online Papers

Alexander, P., & Murphy, P. (2000). The research base for APA's leaner-centered psychological principles. In N. Lambert, & B. McCombs (Eds.), How students learn (p. 25-60). Washington, D.D.: American Psychological Association. http://psycnet.apa.org/books/10258/001

Cornelius-White, J. (2007). Learner-Centered Teacher-Student Relationships Are Effective: A Meta-Analysis. Published on behalf of American Educational Research Association. Review of Educational Research, Vol. 77, No. 1, pp. 113–143 http://www.sagepub.com/scarlettstudy/articles/Cornelius-White.pdf

Jones and Bartlett. What Matters in a Student-Centered Approach? Retrieved from: http://samples.jbpub.com/9780763773977/73977_CH02_SEC.pdf

Lom, Barbara. (2012) Classroom Activities: Simple Strategies to Incorporate Student-Centered Activities within Undergraduate Science Lectures. Journal of Undergrad Neurosci Educ. 2012 Fall; 11(1): A64-A71. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3592730/

Matlin, M. W. (2002). Cognitive psychology and college-level pedagogy: Two siblings that rarely communicate. In D. F. Halpern, & M. D. Hakel (Eds.), Applying the science of learning to university teaching and beyond. (p. 87-103). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/tl.49/abstract

Moss, C.M. 2002. Finding Balance: The Vices of our Versus. Published in Peer Reviewed Journal: First Monday. Retrieved from: http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/924/846

Weimer, Maryellen, PhD. 2012. Five Characteristics of Learner-Centered Teaching. Faculty Focus: Higher Ed Teaching Strategies from Magna Publications. Retrieved from: http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teaching-strategies/five-characteristics-of-learner-centered-teaching/