

Module 11-4 - Learning and teaching theories

Theories of learning and teaching underpin philosophies of teaching

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A teaching philosophy is a statement about what we believe to be true for our teaching. It is based on our understanding of learning theory, disciplinary concepts and our approaches to teaching.

There is no single correct philosophy of teaching. There are pros and cons of different philosophies and approaches to teaching. Underpinned by these learning theories, university educators have conceptualised teaching on a continuum from teacher-centred to student-centred teaching - and developed models of teaching to guided practice. For example, Biggs (1996) developed a Presage, Process, Product model of teaching.

These theories can inform the types of learning-focused activities that educators choose to incorporate in their learning designs. These designs may (and probably should) differ according to whether learners are in their first year of study, or their last year, where you would expect students to be well on their way to being the 'independent learners' that professions now require. These choices will impact student learning outcomes.



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