STUDENT CENTRED LEARNING

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Abstract:

In original usage, student-centric learning aims to develop learner autonomy and independence by putting responsibility for the learning path in the hands of students. Student-centric instruction focuses on skills and practices that enable lifelong learning and independent problem-solving. Student- centric learning puts students' interests first, acknowledging student voice as central to the learning experience. In a student-centric classroom, students choose what they will learn, how they will learn, and how they will assess their own learning. Student-centric learning requires students to be active, responsible participants in their own learning and with their own pace of learning. Usage of the term "student-centric learning" may also simply refer to educational mindsets or instructional methods that recognize individual differences in learner. In this sense, student- centric learning emphasizes each student's interests, abilities, and learning styles, placing the teacher as a facilitator of learning for individuals rather than for the class as a whole.

Index Terms: Student Centric, Autonomy & Mindsets

Introduction:

Student centred learning is an instructional approach where the main focus is the student. The student is the one who will be in charge of the content, activities, material and the pace of learning. When we say pace of learning, we mean that the student need not adjust his level of thinking or the way he wants to understand a particular topic to other students level, but the teachers need to get down to the students level to make them understand better. The focus of student-centered learning is different from more conventional methods such as subject-centered learning. In the former, the satisfaction of the student is given importance, rather than the delivery of the subject material. The teacher provides the student with the opportunities to learn independently from one another and this will help them improve their soft skill or self improvement skills. Student centric learning approach includes techniques such as role plays in situations which need creative thinking and using self paced or cooperative learning (team based). Student-centered learning environments provide interactive, complimentary activities that enable individuals to address their unique learning interests and needs.

Technological advances are changing the scenario. It has resulted in students spending more time in virtual worlds, like games. They actively participate in social-networking, which helps them acquire knowledge (though not always factual) and opinions. This shows that it is very important to show students the right use of technology and proper ways to gather knowledge and form opinions. It was Allison Zmuda (2009) who pointed out that the goal, not the path, that should be well defined,. The path must be fludic to suit the student.

Collectively, student-cantered, open learning environments provide contexts wherein the individual determines learning goals, learning means, or both the learning goals and means. The individual may also establish and pursue individual learning goals with few or no external boundaries as typical during spontaneous, self-initiated learning from the Web. However, student or self-directed learning has been criticized for lacking compelling evidence to document effectiveness. As new models emerge and technologies

International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education (IJCRME)
ISSN (Online): 2455 - 5428
(www.rdmodernresearch.com) Volume I, Issue I, 2016

develop, we need to both document evidence that supports and challenges student-centered approaches and refine our approaches to designing effective environments

What Does Research Say about Student-Centered Learning?

Do Student-Centered Learning Approaches Lead To Improvements In Student Performance?

Results from a growing number of studies indicate that the answer is yes. For more details on these studies the Centre for Teaching Excellence at Texas A&M University is compiling a bibliography of papers that demonstrates student-centered learning approaches lead to measurable improvements. Some of the papers are meta-analyses that synthesize results from numerous individual studies. These results confirm positive influences of student-centered learning approaches to teaching on academic performance, attitudes toward learning, and persistence in programs. There is mounting evidence that supplementing or replacing lectures with active learning strategies and engaging students in discovery and scientific process improves learning.

Can the Syllabus be Covered Using Student-Centered Learning Approaches?

Although faculty members may find student-centered learning approaches to be more enjoyable and lead to improved student learning, they still have questions about the amount of content that can be covered using the approaches. Content coverage is still high priority for faculty members, especially for faculty members teaching prerequisite courses on which faculty members teaching downstream courses are depending for student preparation. Answers to whether faculty members can cover the same or more content with student-centered learning approaches as can be covered with traditional lecture-based approaches depend on individual teachers. Although some teachers indicate that they cover as much or most content with student- centered learning approaches, some adopters of student-centered learning approaches indicate that they now cover less content than when they exclusively lectured, but that students are learning more.

There are Stages Where Teacher-Centered Approach Can be Changed to a Student Centred One:

Think-Pair-Share:

Ask students to think individually about a question for about a minute, turn to a neighbour and exchange ideas, and then randomly select a small number of students to share both ideas. Instead of pairs, you can use groups of 3 or 4

Roundtable:

Ask a group of students a question. First student writes and share her/his answer, passes to second student, and so on

Minute Papers:

Ask students to address two questions at the conclusion of a lecture segment or a class. The first question is about what they thought was clearest or most significant. The second question is about what they still have questions about.

Alternate Methods:

Bookend Lectures:

Faculty members can insert short interactive sessions after every 10-20 minute lecture session. If they begin with an advance organizer and finish with a classroom assessment technique, such as a minute paper, they create a bookend lecture.

Immediate Feedback via Classroom Technology:

Various technologies from stretchable tip sheets can be used to provide students immediate feedback through questions on their preparation for class or concepts that arise during class.

International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education (IJCRME)
ISSN (Online): 2455 - 5428
(www.rdmodernresearch.com) Volume I, Issue I, 2016

Student Presentations and Projects:

Faculty members can assign projects and reports to actively engage students in explorations of the course material.

Learning Cycle Instructional Models:

Faculty members can use different learning cycles to construct classes that move students through a sequence of questions about the material in a class (Why, What, How, and What if)

Facilitating Small Groups:

Many of the student-centered learning approaches have students participating in small groups in class, and in some cases, out of class. Often, students do not have the knowledge and skills to work effectively in groups. However, if prompted, they are familiar with problems that can arise when working in groups and they have some ideas about how to address these situations

How to Form Teams?

Most college students do not have the knowledge and have not developed their capabilities to function effectively on a student team. Therefore, faculty members must work to establish a learning environment that supports effective student teams. Many of the challenges that occur when using student teams can most effectively be addressed at the beginning of the course. Here is when student teams can identify potential concerns, including possible leader and participant issues, and develop norms of behaviour through which these concerns can be addressed. Here is when the teacher can set out policies for addressing problems which may occur downstream. Here is when the teacher can lay out evaluation policies that will address grading team assignments

How to Grade Team Assignments?

Giving every team member the same grade on a single assignment submitted as a team does not promote individual accountability one of the core elements of effective cooperative learning. For faculty members looking for alternatives, consider the following resources

- ✓ Keep group size small, (ii) assign roles, (iii) randomly ask one member of the group to explain the learning, (iv) have students do work before group meets, (v) have students use their group learning to do an individual task afterward, (vi) everyone signs: ―I participated, I agree, and I can explain the information‖, and (vii) observe and record individual contributions.
- ✓ Peer assessment, in which team members offer data to help discern and evaluate individual contributions, is one approach to differentiating grades.

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International Journal of Current Research and Modern Education (IJCRME)
ISSN (Online): 2455 - 5428
(www.rdmodernresearch.com) Volume I, Issue I, 2016

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