

Creating and Developing Learner-Centered Classrooms

18th National Conference
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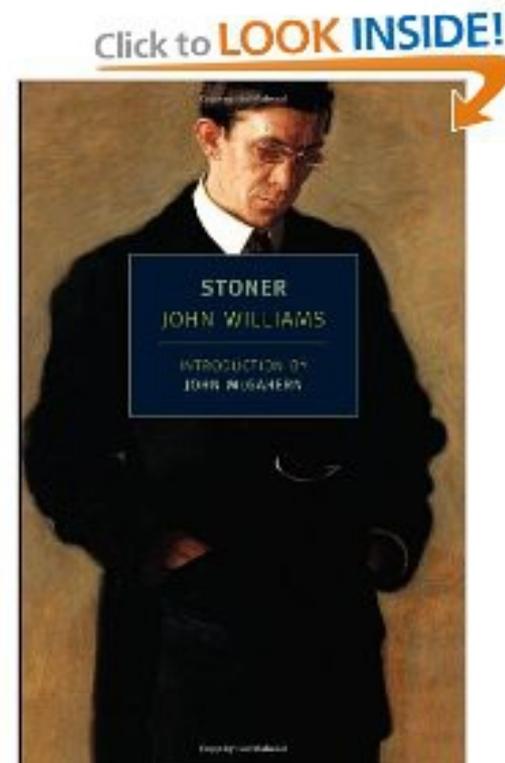


Learning Outcomes

- As a result of attending this session, participants will
 - Be able to describe the differences between an instruction centered and a learning centered institution.
 - Be able to describe the differences between a teacher centered classroom and learner centered classroom.
 - Formulate new learner centered ideas for classroom strategies

“But despite Walker it was a successful seminar, one of the best classes Stoner had ever taught. Almost from the first, the implications of the subject caught the students, and they all had that sense of discovery that comes when one feels that the subject at hand lies at the center of a much larger subject, and when one feels intensely that a pursuit of the subject is likely to lead – where, one does not know. The seminar organized itself, and the students so involved themselves that Stoner himself became simply one of them, searching as diligently as they.”

---*Stoner*, by John Williams, p. 134
2006, NYRB Classics

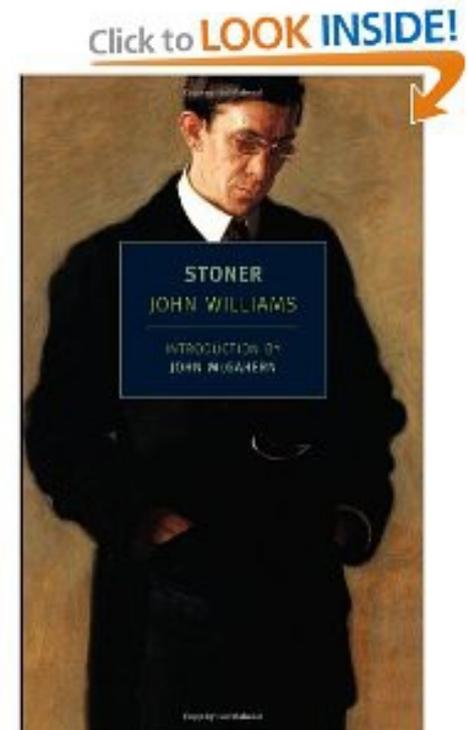


The class Dr. Stoner taught was a graduate level seminar, *Latin Tradition and Renaissance Poetry*.

Could this quote just as easily describe teaching in classes you teach or other learning environments?

If yes, in what ways?

If no, why not?



Good Practices in Undergraduate Education

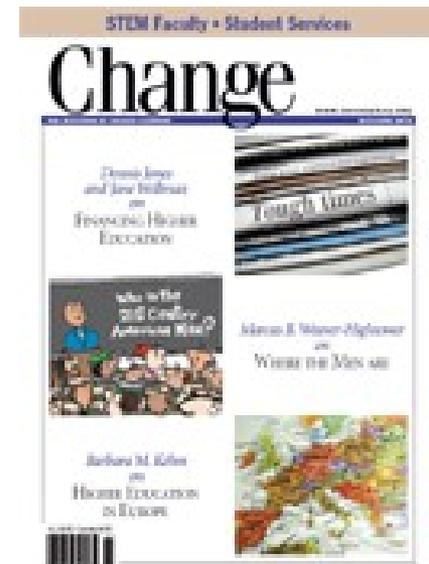
(Chickering & Gamson, 1987;
Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)

- ✓ Student-faculty contact
- ✓ Active learning
- ✓ Prompt feedback
- ✓ Time on task
- ✓ High expectations
- ✓ Respect for diverse learning styles
- ✓ Cooperation among students



Comparing Educational Paradigms

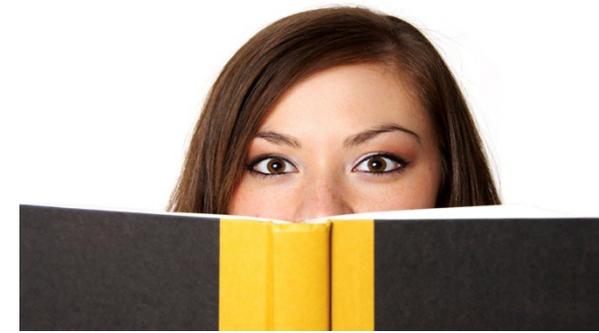
*from the 1995 Change Magazine article
by Robert Barr and John Tagg*



Instruction = Learning



Mission & Purpose



Instruction

Provide/deliver instruction

Transfer knowledge from
faculty to students

Offer courses and programs

Learning

Produce learning

Elicit student discovery and
construction of
knowledge

Create powerful learning
environments

Criteria for [Institutional] Success

Instruction

Quality of entering students

Quality and quantity of
resources

Quality of faculty, instruction

Learning

Quality of exiting students

Quantity and quality of
outcomes

Quality of the students,
learning



Educational Structures



Instruction

One teacher, one classroom

End of course assessment

Degree = accumulated credit hours

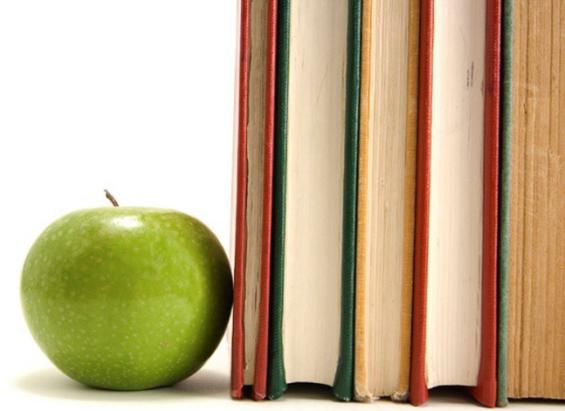
Learning

Whatever learning experience works

Pre/during/post assessments

Degree = demonstrated knowledge and skills

Learning Theory



Instruction

Knowledge exists “out there”

Learning is teacher centered
and controlled

The classroom and learning
are competitive and
individualistic

Learning

Knowledge exists in each person’s
mind and is shaped by individual
experience

Learning is student centered

Learning environments and learning
are cooperative, collaborative,
and supportive

Nature of Roles



Instruction

Faculty are primarily lecturers

Faculty and students act independently and in isolation

Any expert can teach

Learning

Faculty are primarily designers

Faculty and students work in teams with each other and other staff

Empowering learning is challenging and complex

Foundations

learning centered classrooms



- Chickering & Gamsen's
 - *7 Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*, 1987
- Barr and Tagg's
 - *Change Magazine article*, 1995
- Maryellen Weimer
 - *Learning Centered Teaching*, 2002
- Phyllis Blumberg
 - *Developing Learner-Centered Teaching: A Practical Guide for Faculty*, 2009

Weimer's Key Changes

toward learner-centered teaching

- The function of content
- The role of the teacher
- The responsibility for learning
- The purposes and processes of assessment
- The balance of power



The Function of Content

includes building a knowledge base, how the instructor and student use the content

teacher centered approach

Instructor allows student to
memorize content

learner centered approach

Instructor encourages student
to transform and reflect on
most of the content to make
their own meaning



The Role of the Instructor

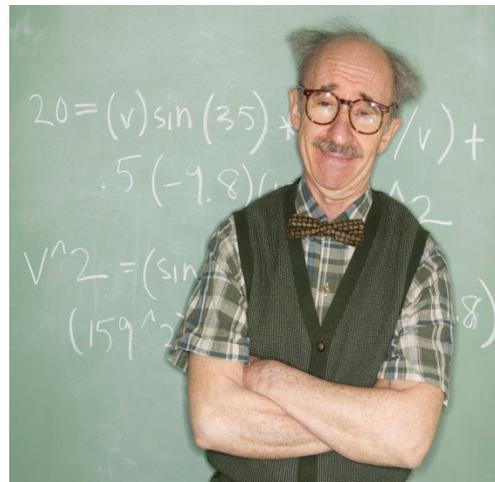
an essential role of the instructor is to assist student to learn

teacher centered approach

Instructor does not have specific learning goals and/or uses teaching and learning methods that conflict with learning goals

learner centered approach

Instructor intentionally uses various teaching and learning methods that are appropriate for student learning goals



The Responsibility for Learning

students should assume greater responsibility
for their own learning

teacher centered approach

Instructor assumes all responsibility for student learning (provides content to memorize, does not require student to create their own meaning of content, tells student exactly what will be on exams)

learner centered approach

Instructor provides increasing opportunities for students to assume responsibility for their own learning, leading to achievement of stated learning objectives.



The Purposes and Processes of Assessment

there are additional purposes and processes of assessment beyond assigning grades

teacher centered approach

Instructor uses only summative assessment in making decisions on grades. Provides no constructive feedback.



learner centered approach

Consistently throughout the learning process, the instructor integrates formative assessment and constructive feedback.

The Balance of Power

shifts so that the instructor shares some decisions about the course with the students

teacher centered approach

Instructor mandates all policies and deadlines, or instructor does not adhere to policies

learner centered approach

Instructor is flexible on most course policies, assessment methods, learning methods, and deadlines.

Instructor always adheres to what instructor has agreed to with the students.



Application Exercise

Small group discussion



Weimer's Key Changes

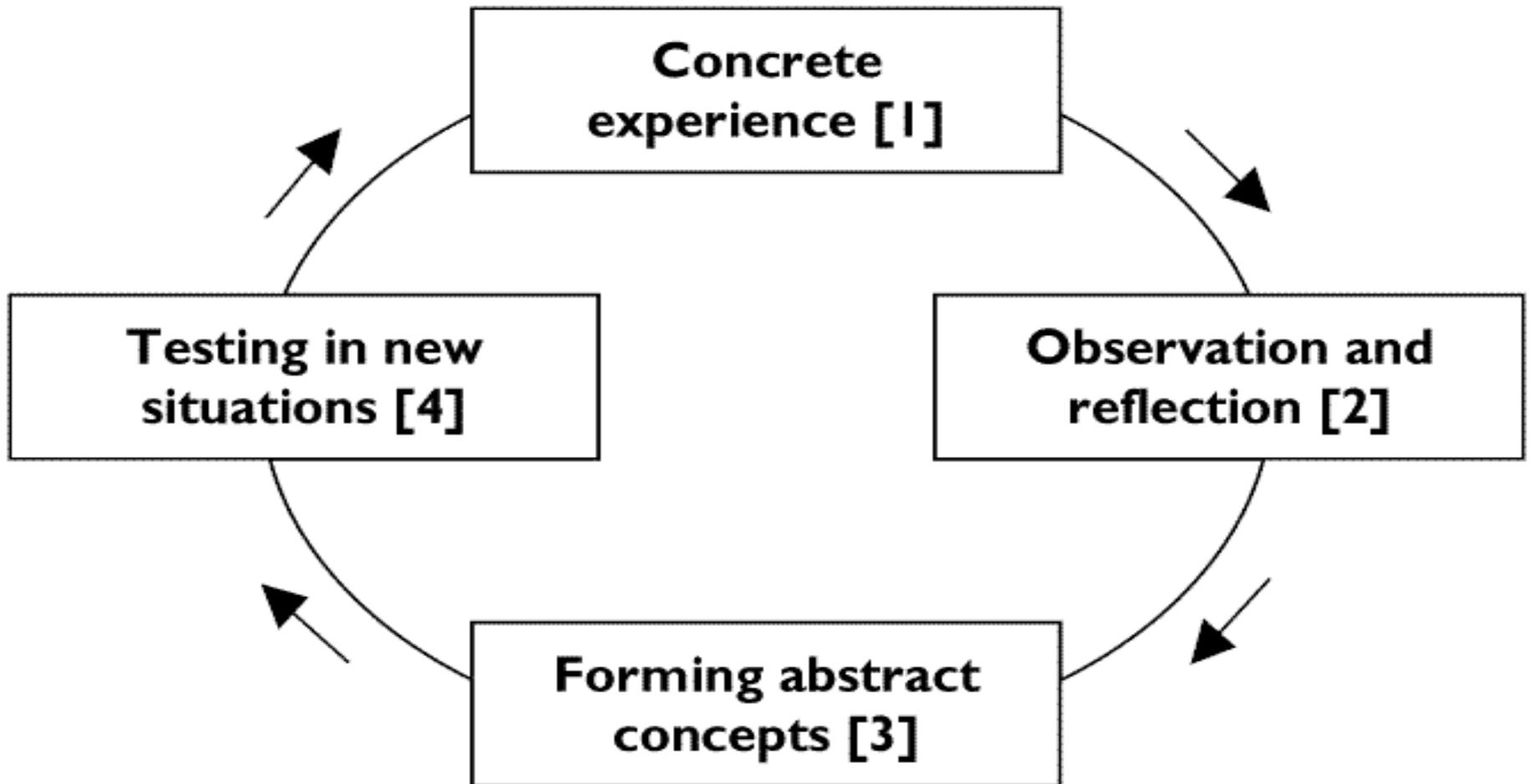
application possibilities various learning settings

- The function of content
- The role of the teacher
- The responsibility for learning
- Evaluation purpose and process
- The balance of power

What are three ways you can apply this principle in teaching ?

- 1
- 2
- 3

David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory



**CONCRETE
EXPERIENCES**

Interviews
Field experience
Observations/demonstrations
Role play; simulations; case studies
Stories, Films



**REFLECTIVE
OBSERVATION**

Journals
Small group discussion
Class discussion
Silence
Asking for reactions



**ACTIVE
EXPERIMENTATION**

Papers
What-if situations
Devising plans of actions
Problem solving activities



**ABSTRACT
CONCEPTUALIZATION**

Print materials
(books, articles, etc.)
Lectures
Programmed instruction



By learning you
will teach;

by teaching you
will learn.

- Latin Proverb



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