

Student-centred learning: what's in it for the students and how can we make that happen?

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Introduction to student-centred learning

student-centred learning

1.1. Bologna process



Student participation (2001 Prague Communiqué):

„students should participate in and influence the organisation and content of education at universities and other higher education institutions”

„students are full members of the higher education community”

Student-centred learning (2009 Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué):

„We reassert the importance of the teaching mission of higher education institutions and the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes. Student-centred learning requires empowering individual learners, new approaches to teaching and learning, effective support and guidance structures and a curriculum focused more clearly on the learner in all three cycles.”

1.2. Definition

„Student-Centred Learning represents both a mindset and a culture within a given higher education institution and is a learning approach which is broadly related to, and supported by, constructivist theories of learning. It is characterised by innovative methods of teaching which aim to promote learning in communication with teachers and other learners and which take students seriously as active participants in their own learning, fostering transferable skills such as problem solving, critical thinking and reflective thinking.”

1.3. Benefits for students



- Making students an integral part of academic community
- Increased motivation to learn
- Independence and responsibility in learning
- Due consideration for student needs

1.4. Benefits for teachers

- A more interesting role of a teacher
- Solutions for tackling massification and diversity
- Positive impact on working conditions
- Continuous self-improvement
- Increased learner motivation and engagement
- Professional development for academia

1.5. European Standards and Guidelines (2015)

Standard:

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Guidelines:

Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process. This means careful consideration of the design and delivery of study programmes and the assessment of outcomes.

2

Key principles of student-centred learning

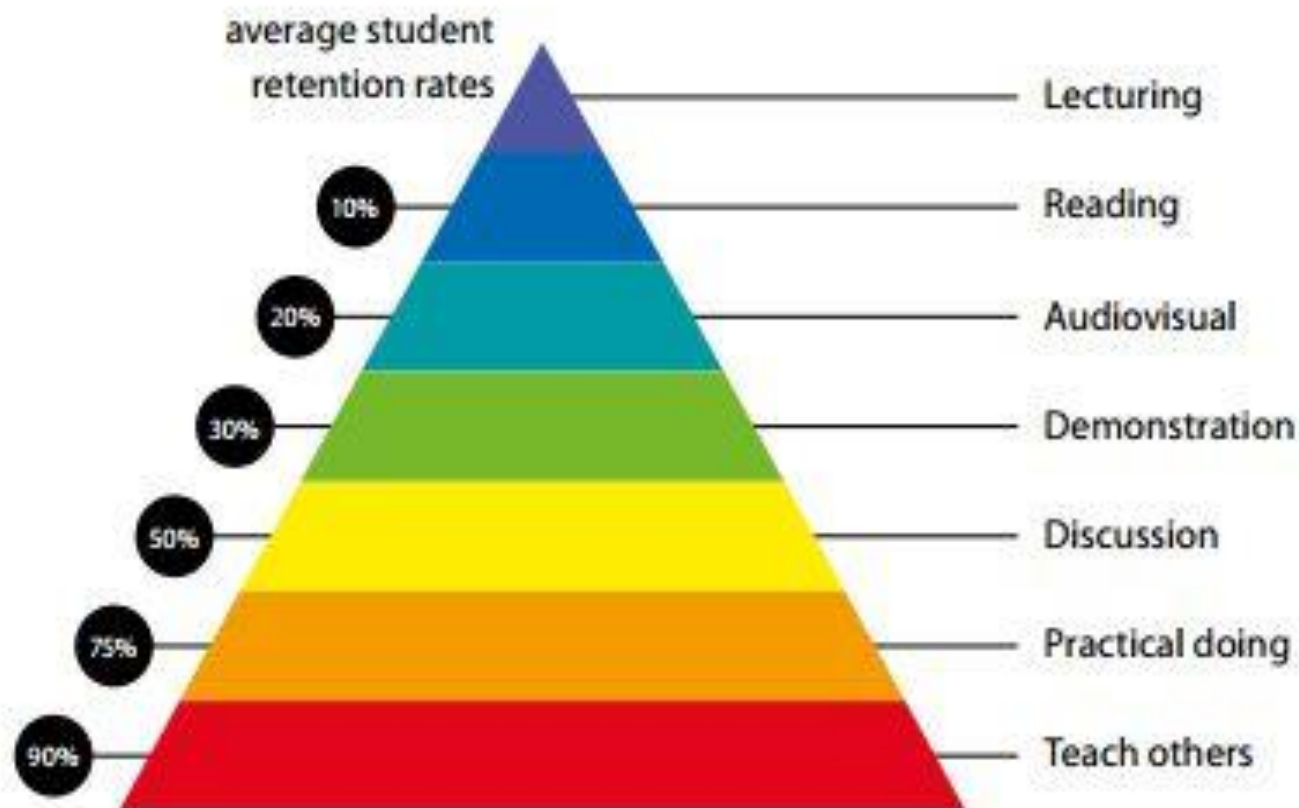
student-centred learning

2.1. Key concepts

- **Active learning** vs. passive learning
- **Deep approaches** and understanding vs. surface approaches
- **Autonomy, responsibility and accountability** on the part of the learner
- **Mutual respect and inter-dependence** between the teacher and learner; «the community of scholars»

fig. 1 *Learning Pyramid*

Source: National Training Laboratories, Bethel, Maine



2.2. SCL Principles (I)

- **SCL requires an ongoing reflexive process**
- **Creating an inclusive, flexible learning environment**
 - Students have different learning styles
 - Students have different needs and interests
 - Students have different experiences and backgrounds
- **Choice central to effective learning**

2.1. SCL Principles (II)

- SCL is about 'enabling' not 'telling'; the teacher as a facilitator
- Learning is a collaborative effort between staff and students
- Focus on Learning Outcomes

2.1. SCL Principles (III)

THERE IS NO ONE SIZE FITS ALL SOLUTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SCL!

- SCL principles cannot be implemented successfully if SCL is perceived as a uniform prescription for all higher education institutions in Europe
- all stakeholders need to recognize that SCL is based on flexibilization and individualization of the learning process
- all educational elements need to be an outcome of thorough cooperation of stakeholders and assessment of which learning and teaching methods are most effective for a given student body.

3

Common misconceptions about student-centred learning

student-centred learning

about

3. Common misconceptions (I)

- SCL does not mean anything in practice
- SCL requires higher amount of resources
- SCL is not appropriate to teach a large and diverse student body
- SCL undermines the teaching profession
- Students have more work to do in SCL
- Teachers have to do more preparatory work in SCL

3. Common misconceptions (II)

- Problem based learning is the same as SCL
- SCL is not suitable for all academic fields
- SCL students learn very little subject-matter
- Not all teachers can teach in student-centred way
- SCL requires being technologically minded

4. Examples and experiences



Thank you for your attention!

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