Teacher-centered vs. Learner-centered paradigms

Comparison of Teacher-centered and Learner-centered paradigms (Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses by Huba and Freed 2000)	
Teacher-Centered Paradigm	**Learner-Centered Paradigm**
Knowledge is transmitted from professor to students	Students construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it with the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking, problem solving and so on
Students passively receive information	Students are actively involved
Emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address enduring and emerging issues and problems in real-life contexts
Professor's role is to be primary information giver and primary evaluator	Teacher's role is to coach and facilitate Teacher and students evaluate learning together
Teaching and assessing are separate	**Teaching and assessing are intertwined**
Assessment is used to monitor learning	**Assessment is used to promote and diagnose learning**
Emphasis is on right answers	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors
Desired learning is assessed indirectly through the use of objectively scored tests	**Desired learning is assessed directly through papers, projects, performances, portfolios, and the like**
Focus is on a single discipline	Approach is compatible with interdisciplinary investigation
Culture is competitive and individualistic	Culture is cooperative, collaborative, and supportive
Only students are viewed as learners	Teacher and students learn together

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TEACHING-CENTERED versus LEARNING-CENTERED instruction (Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education by Allen 2004)		
Concept	**Teacher-Centered**	**Learner-Centered**
Teaching goals	• Cover the discipline	• Students learn: o How to use the discipline o How to integrate disciplines to solve complex problems o An array of **core learning objectives**, such as communication and information literacy skills
Organization of the curriculum	• Courses in catalog	• Cohesive program with systematically created opportunities to synthesize, practice, and develop increasingly complex ideas, skills, and values
Course structure	• Faculty cover topics	• **Students master learning objectives**
How students learn	• Listening • Reading • Independent learning, often in competition for grades	• Students construct knowledge by integrating new learning into what they already know • Learning is viewed as a cognitive and social act
Pedagogy	• Based on delivery of information	• Based on engagement of students
Course delivery	• Lecture • Assignments and exams for summative purposes	• Active learning • Assignments for formative purposes • Collaborative learning • Community service learning • Cooperative learning • Online, asynchronous, self-directed learning • Problem-based learning
Course grading	• Faculty as gatekeepers • Normal distribution expected	• **Grades indicate mastery of learning objectives**
Faculty role	• Sage on the stage	• Designer of learning environments
Effective teaching	• Teach (present information) well and those who can will learn	• Engage students in their learning • Help all students master learning objectives • **Use classroom assessment to improve courses** • **Use program assessment to improve programs**