

Checklist – Teaching & Learning Theories

Instructional design literature and numerous course development rubrics point to the importance of systematically designing and aligning course elements (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#) as well as a [course rubric comparison table](#)). A central part of these considerations are the teaching and learning theories that one considers in the design and development of their course. It could be argued that every instructor has some notion of how students learn and how a course should be taught (implicitly or explicitly). The following checklist is therefore intended to help you think more explicitly about the teaching and learning theories that guide your course design and development. As you might imagine, there are numerous resources that are available to guide you in these areas in far greater detail. As a result, the following are merely some beginning considerations to think about as you design and develop your course. Please adapt this checklist to fit with your own needs.

LEARNING THEORIES:

- ☐ Instructor is able to articulate the relevant mechanisms by which they believe people generally internalize, process, and grow in concepts, skills, attitudes, etc. that can be used to help guide the design of the course (i.e., a philosophy of learning)
- ☐ Instructor is able to name one or more specific learning theories that they have been exposed to and that informs their course design and development. Examples include theories such as:
 - ☐ Constructivism
 - ☐ Cognitive science
 - ☐ Information processing theories
 - ☐ Adult learning theories
 - ☐ Social-cultural learning theories (e.g., Bandura, etc.)
- ☐ Instructor is able to articulate how these learning theories generally impact and are relevant to the design and delivery of their course (for more specific considerations, see the systematic alignment section below)

TEACHING THEORIES:

- ☐ Instructor is able to articulate relevant teaching theories that can be used to help guide the design of pedagogies, strategies, and activities that instructors and learners can use to help

facilitate the deeper learning processes that are articulated by the learning theories (i.e., a philosophy of teaching)

- ☐ Instructor is able to name one or more specific teaching theories that they have been exposed to and that informs their course design and development. Examples include theories such as:
 - ☐ Bloom's Taxonomy
 - ☐ Behavioristic approaches to teaching
 - ☐ Webb's Depth of Knowledge
- ☐ Instructor is able to articulate how these teaching theories generally impact and are relevant to the design and delivery of their course (for more specific considerations, see the systematic alignment section below)

ADDITIONAL SYSTEMATIC ALIGNMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

- ☐ Teaching and learning (T&L) theories are clearly and directly aligned with course activities, assessments, objectives, content and materials, tools and technologies, and contextual analyses (click here to see a brief overview of [systematic alignment guides](#)):
 - ☐ Theories provide insights into the kinds of pedagogies, strategies, and activities that will help learners to achieve deeper learning – click here to see guidelines for choosing [pedagogies, strategies, and activities](#)
 - ☐ Theories aid in the selection of assessments that can adequately measure the levels of deep learning that are appropriate to the course – click here to see guidelines for developing [assessments](#)
 - ☐ Theories help with formulating appropriate and measurable objectives for the course – click here to see guidelines for developing [objectives](#)
 - ☐ Theories provide insights into the kinds of content, tools, and technologies that will help learners to achieve deeper learning – click here to see guidelines for choosing [content, tools, and technologies](#)
 - ☐ Theories aid in further focusing and refining contextual analyses and instructional design methods, particularly in relation to the instructor's as well as the learners' abilities, diversities, and backgrounds – click here to see guidelines for considering [contextual analysis and instructional design methods](#)
- ☐ T&L theories are aligned across institutional and discipline-specific levels (e.g., commonly used T&L theories in one's institution and/or program/department, T&L theories commonly used in one's discipline, etc.)

- ☐ Teaching and learning theories are indicative of the institution's view of learners and its' values. In many institutions, for instance, student-centered and learner-empowering views are embraced. If one were to be at such an institution, then, the teaching and learning theories used in one's course should reflect these views (e.g., constructivism, etc.).
- ☐ T&L theories that are adopted at the course level are directly related to the theories utilized at the module/unit level as well as the lesson/topic levels of the course and vice versa

For more information and to see the references used to develop this template, click here to view the [Course Design & Development Guidelines](#).