



# SEMINAR FOR BOLOGNA AND HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM EXPERTS

## Modernization of Curricula

How to Individualize Mass Teaching Programmes

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European Commission  
**TEMPUS**



Lifelong Learning Programme



Education and Culture DG

- > Introduction and motivation
- > Shift of Roles in Learner-Centered Education
- > Important Factors
- > Recognition
- > Quality Assurance
- > Lebanon Case
- > Open Questions

## > Some Major Learning Theories

- **Behaviorism (Skinner)**

Learning is manifested by a change in behavior

Environment shape behavior

Principles of contiguity and reinforcement

Curriculum based learning and direct instruction

- **Cognitivism (Bloom, Merrill, Sweller)**

Focus on the memory role

Prior knowledge has an important role in learning

Instructional design

- **Constructivism (Piaget)**

*Learning involves constructing one's own knowledge from one's own experiences*

*“Learning is seen as the process by which individuals are introduced to a culture by more skilled members” (Driver et al. 1994)*

Instructors as facilitators

- **Connectivism (Siemens)**

*Learning and knowledge in diversity of opinions*

Learning is the process of connecting specialized nodes or information sources

Capacity to know more is more critical than what is currently known

## > Learner Centered Process

- **All learning theories place the learner in the centre of the learning process**

With more or less freedom and power

Various roles for the instructor

Different understanding of the group effect

- **Practical considerations**

Increasing volume of higher education

Mass effect

Efficiency and productivity aspects

## > Challenge

- **Get the best out of each component**
- **Converge towards an optimal process given the context**

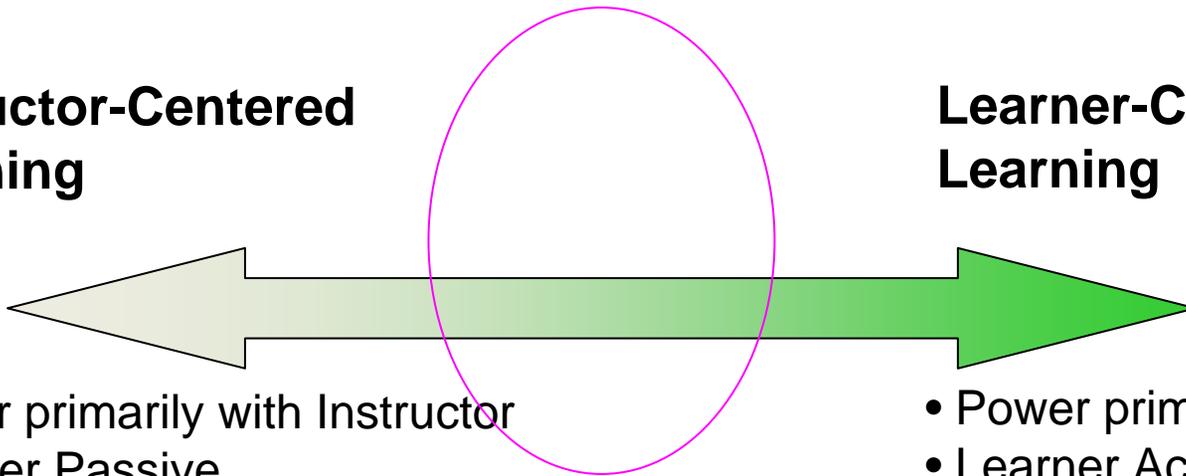
# Learner-Centered Learning: A Shift of Roles



## > A continuum between Instructor-Centered and Learner-Centered processes

### Instructor-Centered Learning

- Power primarily with Instructor
- Learner Passive
- Limited choices for the Students



### Learner-Centered Learning

- Power primarily with Learner
- Learner Active
- Open choices for the Students

# Individualized Mass Teaching: Factors



## > Student to Choose:

- **The Programme**

**Diversity**

- But should respond to a need
- Common modules for efficiency

**Well Documented and Advertised**

- Programmes' outcomes
- And also admission and entry policies

- **The Higher Education Institution**

**Its mission**

**Degrees delivered**

**Practical aspects: Geographical, teaching modes, ...**

- **The Learning Pathway**

**ECTS**

**Recognition of Prior Learning**

## > Must be in Best Conditions to Choose:

- **Available and Accessible Information**
- **Orientation**
- **Tutoring and Advising**

## > Course Delivery and Teaching Methods

### Lecturing

### Active learning

Presentation, individual projects, ...

### Cooperative learning

Buzz groups, Group projects, ...

Maintain the interest in the group

### Hybrid delivery

Depending on the degree, course and context,

e.g. a doctoral study is individual and cooperative learning

## > Assessment Methods

- **Involve the students at all levels**

Setting the assessment tasks and criteria

Self and peer assessment

## > New Technologies

- New coming delivery methods
- Individual learning facilitated at all levels
- Modern tools developed for cooperative learning

## > Lifelong Learning

- Different group ages, expectations and experiences in a course

New challenges for individualized learning

... but also new opportunities in terms of mutual and interactive development in a cooperative setting

To manage with care

- > Is essential to provide the learner with the freedom of defining his learning pathway
- > ECTS has a crucial role
  - Essentially student-centered
  - Most of included information based on average measurements
  - Reflect individual performance (globally in a course) in the grade
- > Mobility
  - Will augment the dimensions to consider in individualizing the learning in a course

- > **Quality assurance becomes crucial in individualized student-centered learning**
  - **Shift of power induces shift of responsibilities**
  - **Existence of a good quality assurance system and culture is a condition to the reinforcement of individualized learning**

- > Sustained activities towards individualized and differentiated learning in general education in the past years
  - Decree 10227 (1997) adapted the general education programmes towards active learning
  - Exchange of experience and good practices in several seminars and conferences, e.g. SMEC
  - Several schools announce clearly the adoption of individualized and differentiated learning
  
- > In higher education, hybrid models are often found at the universities
  - ECTS adopted by several universities that enroll more than the 60% of Higher Education students

# Individualized learning in mass education: paradox



## > Robertson (2003) enumerates 6 paradoxes

- Control vs. flow of course content and process
  - Facilitator vs. evaluator
  - Loving the subject vs. loving the students
  - Subject expert vs. learning expert
  - Caring for the students vs. caring for self
  - Individual mentor vs. group learning leader
- 
- Turning these paradoxes into complementarity and avoiding that the paradoxes transform into conflicts

- > **How to design diverse curricula and Programme responding to real needs while efficiently using the academic resources?**
- > **What structures are needed to provide sufficient information and orientation to the learners?**
- > **How to adapt delivery methods and assessment towards individual and cooperative teaching?**
- > **What support is needed to make the change in the culture towards individual teaching?**
- > **Should tools (e.g. ICT, QA, ECTS/DS, ...) be further developed and how?**



**Thank you**