Teachers: Architects of the Learning Environment

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Why Architects?

We create the formal learning environment - Everything!

- Time and place
- Face-to-face / virtual
- Learning objectives
- Graduate attributes
- Knowledge content / skills
- Learning experiences
- Attitudes and culture
- Props and learning materials
- Types of formative / summative assessment
- Student determined activities and outcomes

Consider the effect of everything... on student learning... everything!
Why “Learning Environment”? 

- We have control over a small part of the whole potential student learning environment.
- Students themselves do not realise how large the potential learning environment is.
- A large part of student learning therefore takes place outside of the formal learning environment.
- What is in the larger learning environment?
- What does this mean for learning and teaching in your discipline?
Formal Learning Environment: Time

How much control do you have over the time and place in which your unit / degree is offered?

• Are traditional face-to-face hours (10am – 3pm) during semester really the best times to engage your students? What about
  – night-school
  – early morning-school
  – weekend-school
  – high intensity 6 week courses
  – low intensity year long courses
What about place? A traditional on-campus learning space or

• coffee shop / informal learning spaces

• off campus
  – in the city centre
  – regional centre
  – public library
Formal Learning Environment: Outcomes

Who determines these and why?
- Learning objectives / graduate attributes
- Knowledge content
- Skills
  - practical
  - analytical
  - communication

How are they situated / scaffolded within the degree and why?

- What is the culture of your discipline?
- How are your students encultured?
Artefacts of the Formal Learning Environment

• Why do we place these things in the learning environment of our students?
• What is their purpose?
  • Unit websites
  • Textbooks
  • Lectures / seminars
  • Tutorials / workshops
  • Laboratory / field / practical work
  • Assignments
  • Tests
  • Examinations
• Within each of these major artefacts there are sub-components.
• Do they, artefacts and their sub-components actually do the job we think they are doing?
• How can we tell? What is the evidence?
• Why do we need to know?
# Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inside Formal Learning Environment Assessment</th>
<th>Outside Formal Learning Environment Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
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<td>Informal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Formative</strong></td>
<td><strong>Formative</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Practice tests</td>
<td>• Concept mapping</td>
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<td>• Lab reports</td>
<td>• Diagrams</td>
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<td>• Journal paper</td>
<td>• Predict, observe, explain</td>
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<td>• Oral presentation</td>
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<td>• Self-assessment to criteria</td>
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<td><strong>Summative</strong></td>
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<td>• Topic tests</td>
<td>• Employment</td>
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<td>• Final exam</td>
<td>• Ability to make life choices</td>
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<td>• Oral exam</td>
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## Communication for Learning

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inside Formal Learning Environment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Text / diagrams / formula</td>
<td>• Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lectures / media</td>
<td>• Google</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Face-to-face guidance in tutorials / workshops / labs</td>
<td>• Face-to-face guidance</td>
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<td>• Feedback on assessment</td>
<td>• Media / YouTube</td>
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