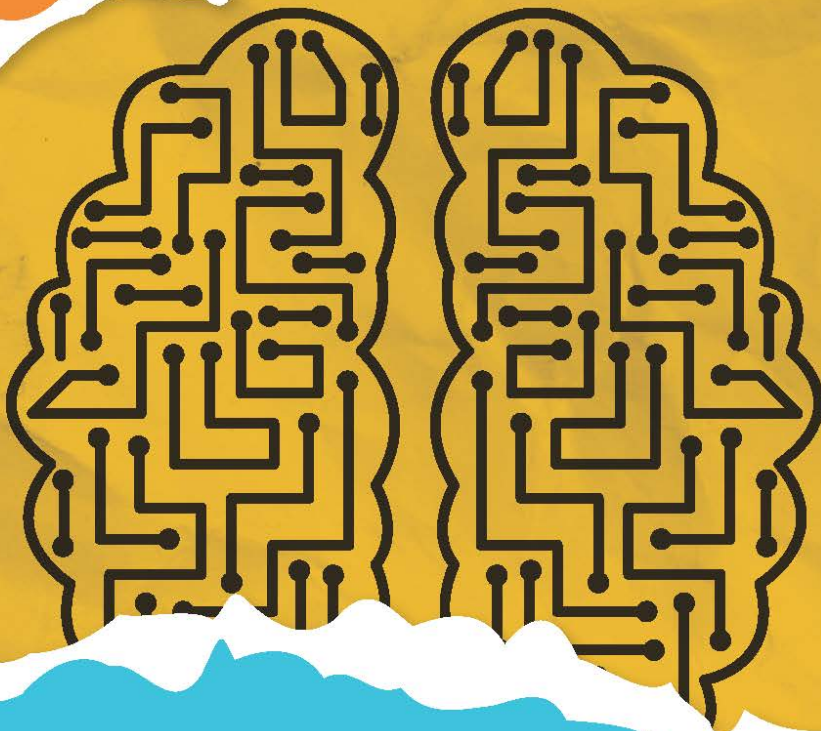


Reimagining South African Higher Education

Towards a Student-Centred
Learning and Teaching Future



Editors: Danie de Klerk, Greig Krull, Tshepiso Maleswena, Fiona MacAlister

CHAPTER 1

TOWARDS DEEP AND MEANINGFUL LEARNING: SHAPING CULTURE, DESIGNING CURRICULA, AND CONSIDERING STUDENT NEEDS

Janus van As

Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care
University of the Witwatersrand
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8952-6583>

Stephen Pentz

Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care
University of the Witwatersrand
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6089-3988>

Richard Cooke

Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care
University of the Witwatersrand
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0827-8720>

Abstract

The last decade has witnessed a paradigm shift from teaching to learning excellence (as synonymous with quality learning) in higher education. The Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care (DFMPC) at the University of the Witwatersrand has developed a learning excellence philosophy that drives our approach to learning, teaching, and assessment. This philosophy is underpinned by a deep and meaningful learning framework. The framework espouses competencies, such as thinking and problem-solving, while allowing students to relate creatively and personally to their learning experience. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the diversity of students' learning needs into sharp focus. The authors present the DFMPC Health Systems Science (HSS) track, newly established within the Bachelor of Health Sciences degree programme, as an example of how the deep and meaningful learning framework and curriculum design processes were applied to understand student needs and to bring about curriculum change with the student voice at the centre. To ensure that all students have equitable opportunities for learning excellence, learning and assessment are reframed as more accessible and transparent, aligned with ever-changing graduate needs for students, employers, and society. This chapter explores 3 dimensions necessary to reimagine learning, namely context, culture, and curriculum. The importance of understanding student needs in context is emphasised, to complement a more innovative, adaptive, and inclusive approach to student-centred curriculum design. The notion of constructive alignment is broadened to include consideration of other stakeholders and notional hours. The chapter unpacks a deep and meaningful

learning framework which is a student-centred, active-learning approach that focuses on developing 21st century skills, while aligning closely with the institution's graduate attributes. The DFMPC aims to produce self-directed and self-determined students with the competence and confidence to contribute to the workplace, their communities, and society.

Keywords: constructive alignment; curriculum evaluation; curriculum review; health systems science; learning design; student-centred curriculum design; student needs

1. Reimagining Learning: Why Culture, Curriculum, and Context?

Reimagining learning in higher education (HE) is a collective process between staff, students, and institutional leadership, requiring a commitment to foster a culture of student inclusivity, as well as an approach that prioritises learning and facilitates teaching. Students experience the system of higher education as different components, including teaching and learning, administration, and student support. The duty of universities to adopt an ethic of care (van As & Kluyts, 2023) demands that curricula, administrative, and support systems be reframed to place the student experience at the heart of the entire academic project.

This call to reimagine learning in HE follows current critiques of the role of higher education (Fomunyam & Teferra, 2017) and the call to decolonise curricula (Heleta, 2016; Fataar, 2018). Furthermore, novel approaches to learning and teaching are needed to shift educational practices towards student inclusivity and to engender an environment that is conducive to partnering with students. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many educational institutions had to shift their teaching and learning practices, propelling the introduction of more opportunities for online and blended learning. The rapid disruptions to teaching and learning have opened a space for reflection and more sustainable innovation in our teaching practices.

This chapter introduces a conceptual framing developed by the authors, which is informed by theory (Bowden et al., 2021; Gover et al., 2019; Keeling, 2014; van As & Kluyts, 2023) and practice, through which to reimagine learning in higher education contexts (see Figure 1.1). The interplay between culture, curriculum, and context is considered critical to reimagine the nature and quality of learning. First, we unpack the concept of establishing a learning excellence philosophy for shaping culture and directing innovations around learning, administration, and support. Second, we further explore the application of the principles of deep and meaningful learning (DML) for developing curricula, and finally, we discuss the importance of student inclusivity. We posit a useful framework for centring culture and curricula on student needs, the 5-Ds framework, which considers students' technological needs and experiential contexts (device, data, digital access) and their motivation to learn (diligence and direction).

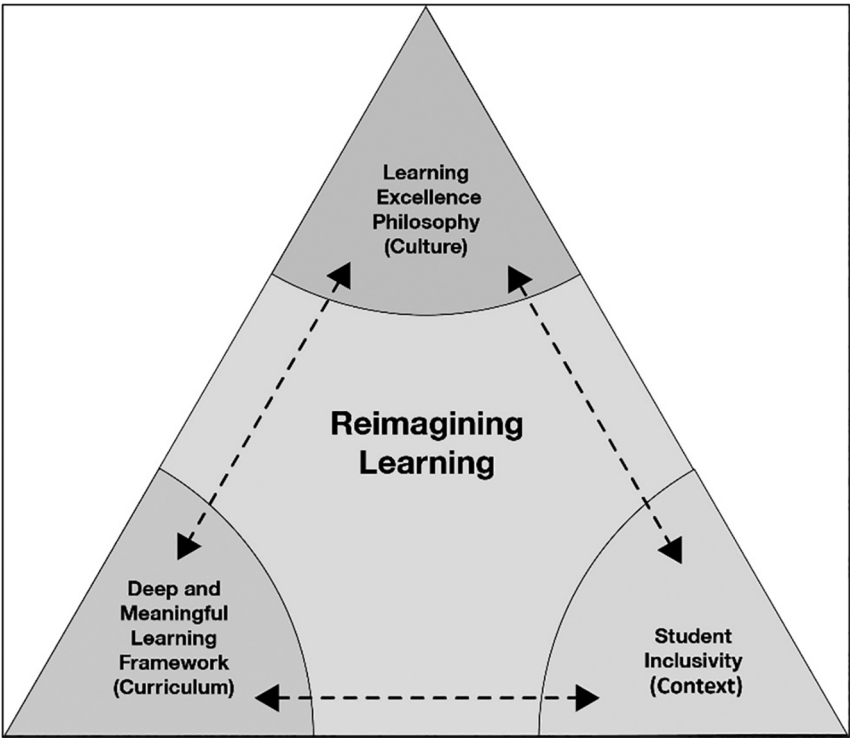


Figure 1.1: *Reimagining learning by considering culture, curriculum, and context*

The context of this work was the development of a new field of study in health systems science (HSS) within the Department of Family Medicine and Primary Care (DFMPC) at the University of the Witwatersrand. It afforded the DFMPC team an opportunity to apply a novel approach to curriculum design, and to shift cultural practices by foregrounding a student-centred curriculum premised on the principles of deep and meaningful learning (Hurtubise & Roman, 2014).

HSS, as an emerging field, is by nature multidisciplinary, drawing on 21st-century competencies (Germaine et al., 2016) and promoting a systems-thinking approach. HSS addresses health system challenges by considering the interdependence of the component parts of the health system while accounting for the system’s inherent complexity. Both the novelty of the field and the multidisciplinary nature of HSS allowed for a *reset* of some traditional and challenging fundamentals in learning and teaching (Dison & Padayachee, 2022; Ladson-Billings, 2021; Zhao, 2020). We asked ourselves: How can this new programme transition students from simply memorising to applying knowledge and competencies? Why do students seem to focus on *learning for a test* and not on competence? Even if these challenges are addressed, how do we ensure students are “work-ready”? These kinds of questions prompted the DFMPC team to apply a deep and meaningful learning approach to the design and development of HSS by first trying to understand student needs and work on shaping the learning and teaching culture.

Deep and meaningful learning (DML) is a student-centred, active-learning approach that focuses on developing significant learning experiences through blended learning by producing long-lasting, meaningful change in the way that learners think, feel and act (Hurtubise & Roman, 2014, p. 164). As the unification of two concepts, both deep learning and meaningful learning aim to develop deep disciplinary understanding, transformative knowledge, personal meaning, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, creativity, and metacognitive skills while enabling learning that is active, constructive, intentional, authentic, and cooperative (Mystakidis et al., 2019).

DML aims to counter traditional teaching practices that have been criticised for emphasising “information-transfer teaching and studying methods and activities that lead to rote, surface learning such as memorisation and the raw assimilation of unlinked facts or procedures” (Mystakidis et al., 2019, p. 66). Rather, a DML learning approach has the potential to reshape student learning and focus on developing 21st-century skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving abilities and ensure that students can relate creatively and personally to their learning experience. For a student-centred DML curriculum to flourish, we also require a reimagined learning and teaching culture that is directed by a philosophy of learning excellence. Learning excellence pushes against traditional pedagogies that place the educator at the centre by promoting an organisational culture of learner-centredness.

With respect to our three-pronged approach (Figure 1.1) we start with a discussion of learning excellence as a means of affecting culture in HE. This is followed by considering the application of the principles of DML within curricula. Finally, we discuss the importance of considering students’ needs by understanding the context in which they approach learning. It is useful to first unpack each of these three considerations: culture, curriculum, and context. However, as is noted in the discussion that follows, all three aspects are interrelated, and for reimagining learning, changes in all three areas are necessary.

2. Shaping Culture: Establishing a Learning Excellence Philosophy

Traditionally, a key focus of HE institutions has been teaching excellence (Kreber, 2002; Wood & O’Leary, 2019), in which pedagogies place the educator at the centre, promoting an organisational culture of teaching and knowledge transmission. In South Africa, universities place a significant emphasis on research output to remain internationally relevant and competitive. Yet, such an emphasis should enhance, not detract from, the students’ learning journey. In other words, universities are not solely research centres but primarily centres of learning and teaching. The emphasis in HE institutions should, therefore, include providing students with the best learning experience possible, where students are placed at the centre of the decision-making process by shaping the culture and curriculum around their needs. It is equally important to consider the administration and support provided to students, as these considerations are fundamental to the student experience (van

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As & Kluys, 2023). Philosophically, it becomes important to promote a shift from an emphasis on teaching excellence towards learning excellence, which - alongside research - defines academic excellence in HE.

Learning excellence recognises that we have a duty of ethics of care towards our students and other stakeholders (van As & Kluys 2023). It involves assessing and reassessing student, employer and societal needs to ensure that qualifications remain current and relevant. Drawing on 21st century skills, for example, is one way of adapting discipline-specific knowledge to remain relevant for radically changing work environments (Ghaith, 2010; Germaine et al., 2016). Additionally, learning excellence is also about providing appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities (University of Glasgow, 2021), which includes monitoring student performance, providing support through mentorship, peer-tutoring or additional assignments, and making counselling services available to students in need.

Implicit in the notion of learning excellence is a shift in institutional culture towards a balance of power between students and the institution, as the power in curriculum decision-making traditionally sits with institutions and academics. This renegotiation of power allows for a focus on the students' voice and encourages the institution to respond in ways that include students as active participants in curriculum design and development. This gives students more agency and leads to better buy-in and an increase in motivation. It also creates opportunities for students to be involved at different levels of organisation within HE institutions. Importantly, it draws into focus a need to address issues of quality in learning and teaching from the perspective of students themselves, which can better inform curriculum choices and help shift the culture towards learning excellence.

In realising a learning excellence philosophy, it is imperative to define students' learning needs. Several approaches could be used to determine these needs, such as using student journey mapping, developing a student-focused SWOT analysis of current courses, and/or instituting a Student Curriculum Review Team (SCRT). All these approaches contribute to a student-centred strategy for both curriculum design and culture that aligns with the intended learning excellence philosophy and that helps to guide the kinds of projects needed to ensure that students feel supported and have a good learning experience. By shifting towards a learning excellence philosophy and promoting student agency, HE institutions and the curricula they teach can account for the students' lived experiences and prior knowledge, as well as the motivations and reasons that students put forward for pursuing a particular course of study.

Through the process of developing the curriculum for HSS, the DFMPC team identified several guiding principles of learning excellence (see. Figure 1.2) that was informed by both theory (Jungblut et al., 2015; Kahu et al., 2020; Tan et al., 2016; Tomlinson, 2017) and practice. These include a commitment to continuous and collaborative curriculum design and innovation, adopting a holistic approach

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to identifying and tackling students’ needs, developing authentic and credible learning and assessment, creating a conducive learning environment, focusing on an institutional culture of shared development and growth, and developing robust and agile student support systems. Within each of these principles, several strategies are suggested (Figure 1.2).

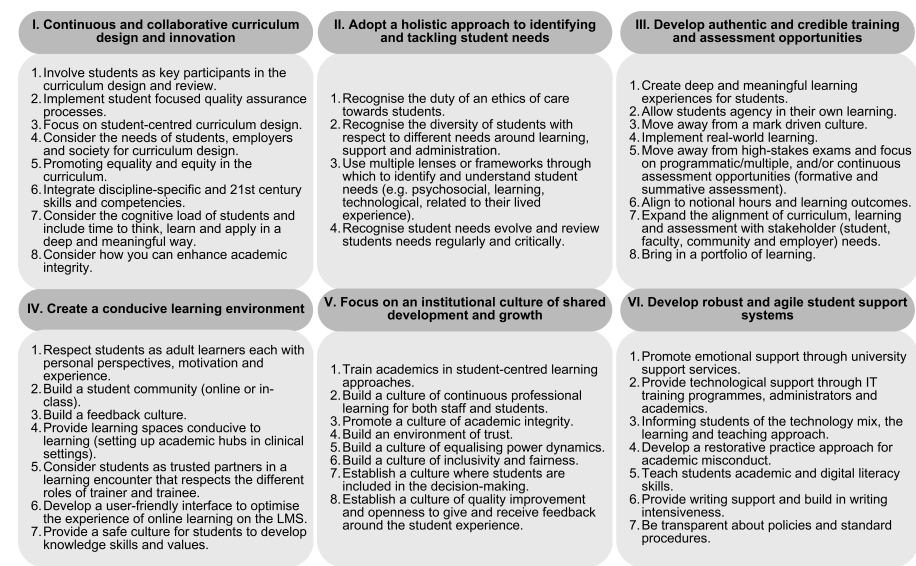


Figure 1.2: Principles of Learning Excellence

The Principles of Learning Excellence were contiguously instrumental in driving a process of cultural change. This is because the approach taken to curriculum development allowed us to identify and understand students’ needs and to reshape our culture and practices to focus on learning excellence within the context of deep and meaningful learning. We recognised that a learning excellence philosophy as a shared vehicle for cultural change would allow for greater buy-in from different role players and engender a shared commitment towards improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Throughout this chapter, we provide several questions to prompt thinking about different measures towards reimagining learning related to culture, curriculum, and context.

Questions to consider for your context:

- What is the learning philosophy in your institution, faculty, or department?
- Does this philosophy support a student-centred learning environment?
- In terms of your institution’s learning and teaching culture where are the priority areas for growth and development that might promote student inclusivity?

3. Designing Curricula: Applying Deep and Meaningful Learning

Although not a new concept (Vallori, 2014, pp. 199-209; Sutherland et al., 2010), DML is specifically defined by the DFMPC to support our approach to learning excellence. The DFMPC defines DML as a student-centred, active-learning approach focused on developing 21st-century skills while providing students with experiences and real-world learning that can produce long-lasting meaningful change in the way students think, feel (attitudes and values) and/or do (skills) (Hurtubise & Roman, 2014). The concepts of deep learning and meaningful learning are brought together in this definition by recognising that simply learning content knowledge is insufficient without developing critical reasoning and systems thinking skills (Sutherland et al., 2010) and creating a context where students can relate to what they are learning about or being self-directed in their learning.

Deep learning encourages depth in learning that seeks understanding rather than following a surface learning approach to pass a test (Jackson, 2012). Deep learning can be achieved by ensuring that students are deeply engaged in the learning process, in which a real-world context is provided and where students can apply their thinking and ideas. Students should be given opportunities to ask questions, construct meaning, and gain multiple perspectives and insights from others. Students should be encouraged to think deeply, consider complexity, develop alternatives and solutions, and share their insights. They should also be encouraged to be self-directed and work independently but also to work in ways that are collaborative, proactive, and thoughtful.

Meaningful learning focuses on 21st-century skills or competencies that enable a student to problem-solve, to think critically and creatively, while also being able to transfer and apply the learning from one context to another, in order to recognise that knowledge is not necessarily situated in silos. This combined approach goes beyond ensuring the simple understanding of facts but rather focuses on developing students' ability to creatively apply concepts, ideas, and their knowledge to unfamiliar problems in new contexts. These types of competencies should be crafted so that students become engaged and productive citizens who make meaningful contributions to the workplace and society (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018; Levy & Murnane, 2013).

In considering the principles of deep learning and meaningful learning collectively, the DML approach promotes meaning and understanding to make connections between essential concepts and ideas, as a constructivist approach. Furthermore, such an approach creates the space to allow students the agency to interrogate knowledge through advanced analysis, critical thinking, and interpretation. It encourages students to develop multiple literacies within the range of 21st-century skills. In addition, the process of learning is enriched by diverse personal experiences and views within the community of learning.

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Given that there are multiple pedagogies that can be used to achieve deep and meaningful learning (Giuseffi, 2021; Gul, Khan, Yasmeen et al., 2021; Kori, 2021; Raschka, 2021; Wang & Wang, 2018), the DFMPc team selected six dimensions that could easily be adapted for a blended-learning curriculum (Figure 1.3). These include providing constructive feedback, real-world learning, collaborative learning, using authentic assessments, encouraging self-directed learning, and promoting reflection. Each dimension was selected as complementary and intended to enhance both the student’s learning experience and intrinsic motivation to learn.

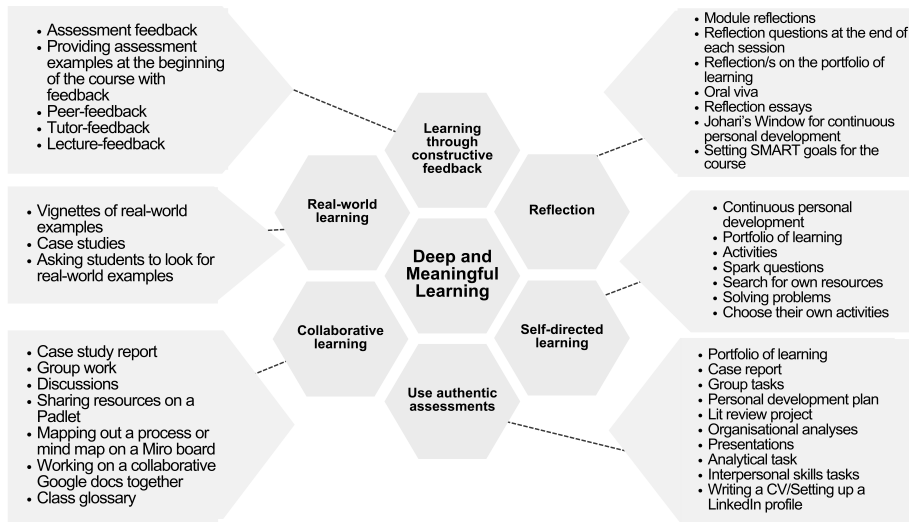


Figure 1.3: *The 6 dimensions (and task examples) of deep and meaningful learning used to structure our curricula*

As shown in Figure 1.3, several associated tasks were designed by applying the principles of the six selected dimensions of the DML framework. Importantly, each of the dimensions is complementary; together, they shift learning towards the student. When considering the adjustments that might have to be made to current curricula or when considering the time and effort that a student-centred DML approach requires, it might seem difficult to do justice to each of the dimensions described in the DML framework. Similarly, it might feel overwhelming to students to be required to learn through multiple tasks using the different dimensions. For this reason, it is helpful to identify key areas within specific courses where aspects of the DML framework could be included and to consider how these might articulate, over time, through a programme or degree. It is likely unreasonable to start off changing the curriculum to include all elements of the DML framework; however, the benefit of the six dimensions is that one can introduce and integrate each iteratively. For example, certain skills and competencies (such as reflection) take time to develop. As such, it would be important to consider scaffolding and spiralling the different aspects of the DML framework as appropriate to the context under consideration.

Questions to consider for your context:

- What competencies do your students need to acquire within your field of study?
- Do your courses have opportunities for reflection?
- Is there space in the curriculum for students to think and do?
- How could you incorporate a portfolio of learning into a course or programme where students can provide evidence of their learning over time?
- In what ways could you apply the DML framework to enhance the learning experience of your students?

Appendix A provides an example of how the DML framework can be scaffolded over a 3-year undergraduate programme. In the appendix, we detail different actions that are spiralled into HSS from the first to the third year of study. Different actions and activities are noted in relation to the various dimensions of the DML framework. Additionally, students require orienting towards a DML approach to learning throughout each year of study as well as key support measures to support students in their learning.

4. Considering Context: Focusing on Students' Needs

To achieve learning excellence, understanding student challenges is critical. The student experience is influenced by multiple factors, both internal and external, and is made up of their learning experience, the support they need, and their experience with administration processes for the course and programme. Understanding and responding to the needs of students must, therefore, be approached holistically. This involves assessing students' needs (the 5-Ds framework is introduced as a way to do so) and foregrounding the student voice in the curriculum (through student curriculum review teams and student SWOT analysis for quality improvement). The context (understanding student needs and challenges) should be used to inform the culture and curriculum, in deciding how we should enhance learning, support, and administration.

4.1. Introducing the 5-Ds framework

The impact of COVID-19 on academic teaching (Sandhu & de Wolf, 2020), the lingering effects of emergency remote teaching and learning (Iglesias-Pradas et al., 2021; Oliveira et al., 2021), and the move towards online and blended learning (Lemay et al., 2021), have forced shifts to learning and teaching. A reimagined HE learning environment makes the most of technological advances to support combinations of learning interactions, through in-person, face-to-face, hybrid, online, blended, and hyflex opportunities. Importantly, a philosophy of learning excellence should consider these pedagogical elements through the lens of student needs.

The 5D framework developed by the authors to assist in understanding the student experience during COVID-19 is premised on the fact that while learning environments have become increasingly reliant on learning technologies, not all students have equitable access. The 5D framework reminds us that students are different in their technological needs and individual experiential contexts (device, data, digital access) and their motivation to learn (diligence and direction).

When considering students' technological needs (device, data, and digital access), it is necessary to account for challenges faced by different students. The digital divide can be described as "a division of knowledge, expectations, and needs that, in turn, influences the access to information about what technology works, what technology is needed, and how such technology should be integrated in the classroom" (Juniu, 2005, p. 2). We need to consider different "ways of using technology" (Mitcham, 1990), as students have different technological needs and competencies. At the same time, students do not have access to the same devices and might not have limited access to data in the South African context. Considering issues of digital equity and access should be built into all programmes that place students at the centre, aligned to a philosophy of learning excellence.

A successful partnership between student (who is motivated to learn) and teacher (giving the appropriate direction and support) can only be achieved through recognition and mitigation of the risks of technological and other contextual challenges faced by students. This partnership is, therefore, important in the 5Ds framework (diligence and direction). Momentum is important to DML, as implied by the importance of scaffolding and spiralling the achievement of learning outcomes. Feedback from a teacher on a student's progress and gaps is also a process of understanding student needs and challenges. Context is critical, especially given that the diversity of university students mirrors that of an inequitable and unequal society. Therefore, unpacking student needs is critical; it does not help to develop a curriculum that focuses on deep and meaningful learning if students do not have access to learning or are not motivated to learn. In curriculum design and review these contextual realities need to be kept in mind when using a DML approach, for example:

- Promoting collaborative learning is hampered if some group members are "othered" because of challenges with access to and use of technology.
- Self-directed learning relies heavily on student motivation, which is often built iteratively over time. Challenges with technology can impact this progress.
- Providing students with data may not help if the bandwidth is not sufficient to allow for uninterrupted online access.

Questions to consider for your context:

- What are your students' experiential contexts?
- What are your students' technological needs?
- What are your students' psychosocial needs?
- What motivates your students to learn?
- How are the dimensions of learning, support, and administration addressed in your learning strategy?
- How is this addressed in your curricula?

4.2. Establishing the student voice in the curriculum

The importance of student voice is grounded in the educational theory of constructivism, which views knowledge and reality building as a process (Sandu & Unguru, 2017, pp. 51-61) structured around students' personal knowledge and experiences. Students add or modify previous knowledge while also constructing an understanding of the discipline with their peers as they move beyond memorisation of facts. Through this process, the aim is for students to build their concept of reality and develop a shared perspective on the world. In this way, learning becomes a very personal and shared experience driven by agency and motivation.

As these competencies speak to directing the very character of the students towards professional and engaged competence, the students should not be passive participants. Rather, their voice must be active, participatory, and valued. There are multiple quality assurance steps to ensure that student voice is included appropriately. We will consider the use of a student curriculum review team and a student SWOT analysis.

4.3. A team-based approach to curriculum design

Constructive alignment (Figure 1.4) is a critical component of curriculum success (Ali, 2018). To reimagine learning, this alignment should consider the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and assessment, as outlined by Biggs (1996). However, it could be extended to consider the stakeholder needs (students, employers, and society to set the vision for the curriculum) and how they can be used to identify and update the learning outcomes. Of the different stakeholders, the students are those whose time (notional hours) must accommodate the opportunity to provide input as curriculum design partners. Students need to be given sufficient time to engage with activities and assessments within their courses; otherwise, student learning is likely to be superficial. There is a relationship between workload and how it impacts student intention (Jackson, 2012).

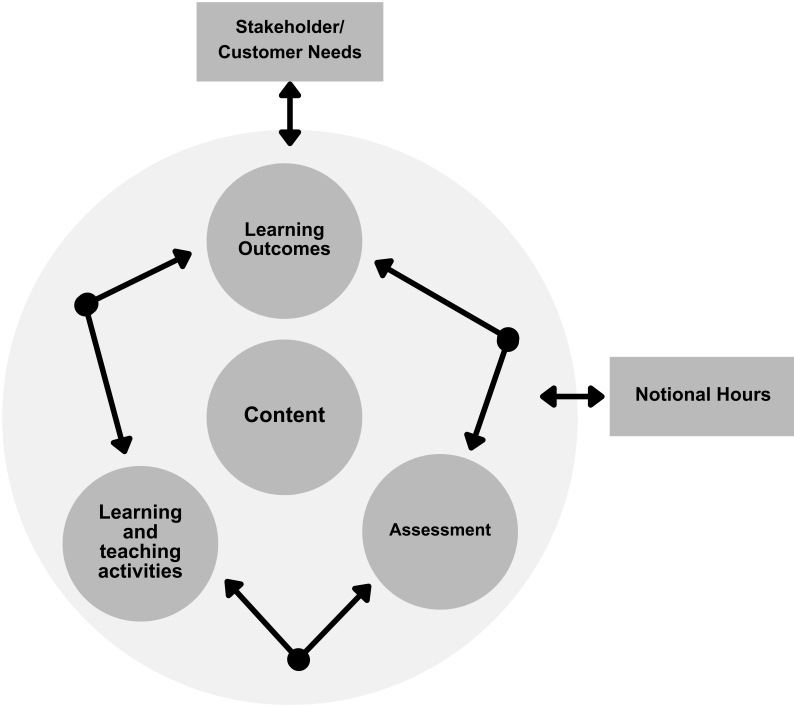


Figure 1.4: *An elaboration of Constructive Alignment (Biggs, 1996) to include alignment to stakeholder needs and to notional hours*

The ideal curriculum development team should therefore include a variety of stakeholders: students (pre, current, and alumni), employers, subject matter experts, curriculum experts, and learning experience designers. The curriculum team should also constantly ensure that the content, learning activities, and assessment are aligned to the learning outcomes and notional hours and that time to think and do (as mentioned above) is also included. To include the student voice in curriculum design, a student curriculum review team can be established.

4.4. Creating a student curriculum review team (SCRT)

Traditional practices in curriculum review include inviting students to participate in a focus group that is moderated by student representatives. A formal report is then presented to the course coordinator (Wilson et al., 2013). However, there are more dynamic ways of including students in the curriculum review and design process, such as a student curriculum review team (SCRT). This is a dynamic process of curriculum improvement with the aim of giving students agency to work directly and collaboratively with fellow students and course designers to bring about curriculum change (Hsieh et al., 2015). Table 1.1 lists the SCRT aims outlined by Hsieh et al. (2015, pp. 1008-1012), and how we adapted the process to collaborate with students for our curriculum design process.

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The aim of a SCRT as adapted from HSiH et al. (2015).	The SCRT for the HSS process
Engage students in active course improvement or curriculum design rather than end of course evaluations.	We selected current and previous students to form part of the committee. The committee is made up of student representatives, subject matter experts and a curriculum development/learning experience designer.
Gather this active feedback in a manner that is not influenced by the course coordinators or lecturers and allow for productive discussions.	We established a monthly face-to-face SCRT curriculum review workshop, to discuss the existing curriculum and proposed changes. The student representatives were tasked with obtaining feedback for specific components from both previous and current students, for presenting in the workshop. Students were also intermittently tasked to evaluate specific components for discussion. To facilitate a safe space, students were informed that they are part of the programme development team and that their inputs matter. They also became more eager to share once they saw we were debating their inputs and unpacking their ideas further for implementation.
Ensure that student feedback is presented and discussed with the curriculum team. There should be equal opportunity for students and faculty to express their viewpoints.	Students were able to express their viewpoints around changing learning and assessment practices. For example, a longitudinal case study provides them with the opportunity to apply their thinking in a real-world context which will prepare them for the work-integrated learning component in third year. They were happy with the removal of some traditional tests and examinations as a move to include authentic assessments.
Document the SCRT process for both transparency and future curriculum improvements	A scribe recorded the inputs and the action points for curriculum improvement. This formed part of the formal documentation for the HSS curriculum.

Table 1.1: The SCRT process and how it was used for HSS (adapted from Hsih et al., 2015)

Questions to consider for your context:

- Who are your stakeholders?
- Is your curriculum aligned with student, employer, and societal needs?
- What process/mechanisms do you have in place to establish your student needs?
- How do you deal with conflicting needs of students and other stakeholders?
- Does the curriculum address the competency requirement of your industry/sector?
- What is the benefit for students to be part of a SCRT? (for example, we considered giving them a certificate)

4.5. Applying a student SWOT analysis for quality improvement

Responsive curricula are seldom static, as they involve an ongoing process of engagement between students, academics, employers, and society. To continuously involve the student voice within a curriculum and to work towards learning excellence, clear methods of evaluation for the curriculum with your various stakeholders should be considered. Achieving effective evaluation requires multiple sources of information. Yet, traditional course evaluation processes often fail to gather specific feedback that could be influential for curriculum design (Amrein-Beardsley & Haladyna, 2012) or recognise the necessary support components required to develop learning excellence.

We used a SWOT analysis, looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the courses in the programme. This was done by conducting student focus groups where an independent learning designer led the discussions with students. The main aim was to understand what challenges or issues students might have experienced with a particular course, including issues of content, design, assessments, and learning experience. At the same time, a SWOT analysis helps to identify opportunities for improving a course or areas where student support can be improved. The feedback from this speaks to student need (understanding context) to improve the learning experience (curriculum) but can also be used to inform the culture. Table 1.2 provides an overview of the SWOT analysis challenges and opportunities identified and some of the resulting changes.

Major SWOT challenges/opportunities identified	Changes made as a result of the SWOT analysis
Threat: Students need further clarity on the professional identity of the HSS student and graduate, leading to a lack of motivation and purpose to learn.	■ Marketing plan to raise the identity of the students through a competition on social media
Weakness and Opportunity: Students want to see what job opportunities are out there after HSS.	■ Networking events with companies from the Health Sector ■ Podcast series around job opportunities managed by students ■ Infographic around potential further study pathways and career pathways
Threat: Students struggle with digital literacy and learning technologies	■ Create a Bookings system on Microsoft 365 Bookings to book IT support sessions ■ Host additional training sessions ■ On the home page, have a tab for learning technologies used in the course (including a training session)

Table 1.2: Student-centred SWOT: Challenges/Opportunities and Changes Made

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Questions to consider for your context:

- Can you implement a formal curriculum review process that is more student-centred?
- How can you include the voices of your other stakeholders, if possible?
- How many sources of information do you use for your curriculum evaluation?
- Do you understand student motivation and how they are motivated in your programme?

5. A Summary Guide to Reimagine Learning

In order to reimagine learning to be deep and meaningful, we need to understand our students’ needs around learning, administration, and support. This is used to inform both the culture and the curriculum. We also need to work on establishing a culture with staff and students that is focused on learning excellence, which also informs curriculum choices. Therefore, these dimensions inform one another, and procedures need to be implemented to help facilitate this change. The aim of reimagining learning in HE is underpinned by several principles detailed in this chapter. In Figure 1.5 below, we unpack the approach that we use to reimagine learning by working on culture, curriculum, and context in a series of practical steps.

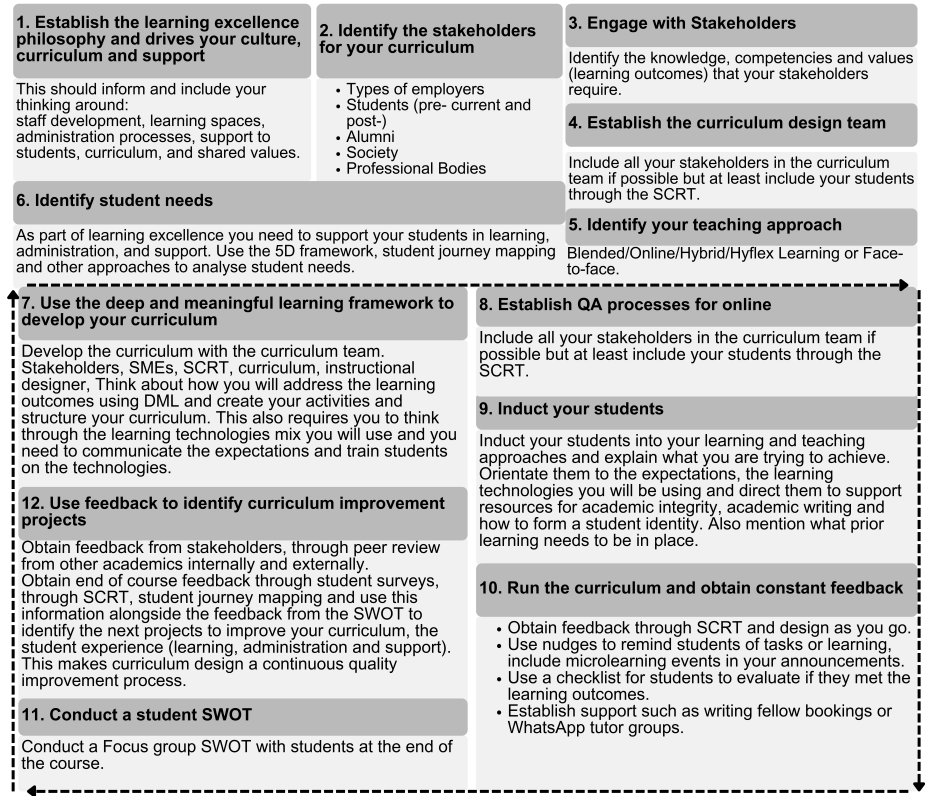


Figure 1.5: A summary of the step-by-step approach to the design and/or review of a course that is informed by the theories in this chapter as well as practice in developing the course

6. Conclusion

This chapter has presented an approach to reimagining HE by unpacking the relationships between culture (promoting a learning excellence philosophy), curriculum (using a DML approach), and context (student inclusivity). We propose that a key strategy for effecting institutional change around learning and curriculum development is to build opportunities for student inclusivity while recognising that student needs vary. We argue that a learning excellence philosophy as a basis for cultural change would allow for greater buy-in from different role players and engender a shared commitment towards improving the quality of learning and teaching. Taking the student voice seriously enables a thorough understanding of the diverse contexts and needs of students, preventing a top-down or teacher-focused approach. This can be achieved by considering the proposed 5Ds framework, using student curriculum review teams and conducting student SWOT analyses. At the same time, it should be noted that programme and course development require dedicated and significant resources, as well as a commitment to change over time. Nevertheless, by outlining the principles of learning excellence, combined with an understanding of the practice of deep and meaningful learning, HE institutions can craft transformative learning encounters.

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Appendix A: Applying the 6 dimensions of the DML framework across a 3-year programme.

Health Systems Science			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Orientation	<i>Orientation is a key component to the success of students on any course. To support students with DML we induct them into our learning excellence philosophy and DML framework. We ensure a support module orientates students to setting up their e-portfolio (the final assessment) and sessions on how to learn online, create a community of learning, promote academic integrity, student identity, and values affirmation.</i>		
Applying the Dimensions of the DML Framework			
Real-world learning	A series of short cases building on each other that students use to analyse and compile a group report with recommendations. Vignettes of real-world. Short videos from experts in the field. Real-world lived experiences of the students. Students explore work opportunities in health analytics in our module on health information systems. We asked past students to create videos of their work experience in different fields in health systems.		HSS3 is an application based in real-world, health systems, and future work environments. Students conduct an organisational analysis, beginning as a desktop analysis and ending with students at Health Care Organisations conducting a needs analysis. They devise solutions for any unmet needs, and present such to their site supervisor and identified mentors within the organisation.

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Providing Constructive Feedback	WhatsApp Groups for small groups of 20 students supported by one tutor (writing fellow). Students were required to submit two papers. Before submission, students would submit their drafts to tutors who provide them with constructive feedback and help them improve their work.	Tutorial sessions give feedback to activity worksheets that students complete in their own time online. Tutors (writing fellows) work with students to assist them to develop their academic writing skills, as students respond to essay briefs.	Through tutorial sessions, students are encouraged to ask questions surrounding their lectures and assignments. Teaching assistants and the course coordinator respond to online queries and any confusion around sessions. Student assignments are marked with comments regarding where marks were lost and how to improve are given. Students also request feedback on draft assignments, which we respond to timeously.
Reflection	As part of their portfolio of learning, students were required to write weekly reflections in a learning portfolio. Check-in sessions every two weeks where students were prompted with guiding questions to answer based on the prior two weeks of learning. Students write reflections after each module on what they learnt and how they learnt. These reflections are included in their portfolios of learning. Students compile a meta-analysis of their learning journey in their 2nd-year exam submission as a portfolio of evidence.		Students are encouraged to reflect through each session given to them. Students write reflections which they then include in their portfolio of learning.

CHAPTER 1: LEARNING REIMAGINED: A CASE STUDY OF CURRICULUM CO-DESIGN APPROACHES ...

Self-directed learning	We developed a competency framework for HSS; students were expected to reflect on their abilities, develop a personal development plan, and identify open educational resources to learn about these competencies and then reflect on them in their portfolio. Students were given a portfolio assessment as the exam equivalent. They selected artefacts (tasks, discussions, activities, assessments, information) from the course and made links between the domains, while reflecting on their learning.	Using a blended-learning approach, students are encouraged to work through material in preparation for tutorials or lectures. Sessions that address key skills for self-directed learning. For example, focusing on note-taking skills, how to summarise content, and how to manage one's time when working in an online environment. Student-led podcasting series around career opportunities.	The blended-learning approach is scaffolded by giving students a task known as Professional Development. This takes place a series of online lectures and activities once a week, which guides students through their own professional development this includes crafting their CV and interview skills. Students must identify three professional goals they wish to build on throughout the year and present them as part of their e-portfolio of learning. At the end of each session in each year students fill in a checklist to see whether they have reached the learning outcomes.
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Authentic Assessment	Integrated case-study used as a basis for group presentations.		Portfolio of learning Literature review project, building research skills - including writing and search. Organisational analysis Various ways of presenting (in-person, recorded, live Teams) Professional Development is included in the e-portfolio. Developing a CV/ LinkedIn profile.
	Portfolio of learning Argumentative essay		
Collaborative learning	Group work report.	Teamwork contracts are developed at the start of the course.	Groupwork is encouraged in this course, with block presentations, where students are assigned differing groups, teaching students how to work with different personalities. Research group work is also highlighted where a Group Contract is built in Block 1 and adhered to throughout the year.
	Using Padlets where students need to share resources or experiences. Google docs where they collaborate to identify characteristics or develop a team contract.	Students work in teams throughout the year on team presentations and group reports (3 of each). Students work on a group-based research protocol.	

Cross-cutting support	<i>Bookings system through office 365 for virtual; IT support, writing fellow support, or a meeting with the course coordinator.</i> <i>Additional training on the learning technologies we use.</i> <i>WhatsApp groups with 20 students to a mentor.</i> <i>Networking events to assist student with professional identity and career goals.</i> <i>Student led podcasting series to speak to people in different fields to understand career opportunities.</i> <i>Mentorship in the final year to coach them about career progression.</i>
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