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# Applying Learner-Centered Principles to Information Systems Education

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## Applying Learner-Centered Principles to Information Systems Education

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### Abstract:

A large, growing body of evidence demonstrates the effectiveness of learner-centered education. In addition to being effective in terms of learning outcomes learner-centered education is also more satisfying for the learner. The focus of a learner-centered class is on a learner-student partnership with shared responsibility for learning. The learner-centered approach fits well with the characteristics of “Millennial” generation students, who are team-oriented, value continuous learning and seek frequent feedback may find the learner-centered approach particularly satisfying. For some time, learner-centered approaches have been recommended for information systems courses; these principles may be especially important for today’s students. This tutorial will introduce the concepts of learner-centered education, illustrate how learner-centered concepts can be applied to information systems courses, and help participants understand how they can employ learner-centered education in their courses. We will also present a methodology for developing learning activities. Participants will have the opportunity to apply the methodology. The tutorial will use the principles of learner-centered education. Participants will receive a link to tutorial materials and additional resources.

**Keywords:** learner-centered education, active learning, pedagogy

## I. TUTORIAL DESCRIPTION

This tutorial will use active learning approaches to supplement an interactive presentation. Participants will have the opportunity to develop, share and discuss relevant learning activities. In addition, the tutorial provides participants with the opportunity to experience learner-centered teaching techniques through their participation in tutorial activities. Participants will also work in small groups to apply the proposed methodology to develop learner-centered activities. These will be shared with other participants. A brief wrap-up and open discussion will follow.

## II. AGENDA

1. Learner-centered education in practice
2. Building a learner-centered environment
3. Methodology for developing learner-centered activities
4. Participants’ learner-centered activities
5. Wrap-up

## III. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By actively participating in the tutorial, participants will be able to:

- Compare and contrast learner-centered and instructor-led approaches to education
- Discuss the fit between learner-centered education and the “millennial student”

- Discuss how to develop a learner-centered environment for their course
- Discuss how learner-centered activities can be adapted to online environments
- Apply a methodology to develop learner-centered activities

#### **IV. TARGET AUDIENCE**

Information systems educators who are interested in using research-proven teaching methods to improve their students' learning will find the tutorial of interest. The content of the tutorial is applicable to both undergraduate and graduate teaching.

#### **V. TUTORIAL LEADERS**

*Dr. France Belanger, Virginia Tech*

France Bélanger is Professor and Byrd Senior Fellow in the department of Accounting and Information Systems at Virginia Tech. Dr. Belanger has been teaching information systems for more than 15 years in the United States, as well as in Canada, Portugal, and New Zealand. She has published two books and several articles on IS education-related topics, including a highly cited book on distance learning. Over the last five years, Dr. Belanger has been a proponent of learner-centered approaches to IS education, and has developed a number of tools and materials to facilitate such learning. She currently teaches introductory classes to information systems to undergraduates, Masters students, as well as Executive MBA students, in addition to teaching information systems research seminars to Ph.D. students.

*Dr. Craig Van Slyke, Saint Louis University*

Craig Van Slyke is Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Associate Professor of IT Management at Saint Louis University. Dr. Van Slyke has over fifteen years of university teaching experience, primarily in the area of information systems. He has published extensively on information systems education and has co-authored three IS textbooks. Dr. Van Slyke is on the editorial review board of the *Journal of IS Education*, and has held leadership positions in Southern AIS and AIS SIG:ED. In addition, he has applied the principles of learner-centered education to a variety of courses, including the introduction to IS course for undergraduates and the core IT course for MBA students.