QUALITY LEARNING

DEVELOPING A QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCE

PROF RANTOA LETŠOSA

BACKGROUND

With the 21st century has come great opportunities and vast challenges for Higher Education worldwide. Information is easily accessible, making learning a continuous activity that goes beyond the limitations of a classroom or the facilitation of an educator.

This new reality does however have implications for education at all levels (Lodge, 2019)

 - How do we ensure higher quality education when it is easily accessible via different channels?

For the purpose of this presentation, the answer is via quality learning. Before addressing quality learning however, this presentation will explore the notion of quality assurance which in essence informs quality learning.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality of HE is important for the materialization of the overall transformation, a healthy society and the *production* of well-rounded graduates with attributes that are socially and professionally valuable *(Council on Higher Education, 2017)*

Imperative for quality in HE is widely accepted, however - key challenge - in reaching a common understanding of what it entails (Quality Assurance in Higher Education Report, 2000).

Educational quality usually refers to teaching and learning, although it also refers to research, engagement and institutional leadership...Thus, quality considers such matters as: the production of new knowledge and capacity for innovation; student learning outcomes; the educational or learning gain in both declarative knowledge and more diffuse 'soft skills'; student performance, retention, graduation and employability; support for student success; the production of suitably trained and demographically representative graduates at different educational levels; the breadth and depth of the curriculum and its responsiveness to contemporary needs; pedagogical methods, training and academic support and development; and links to societal practice and working life, including graduates' preparedness as citizens and lifelong learners (Hazelkorn, Coates & McCormick, 2018).

QUALITY ASSURANCE

SAQA Act (No.58) has laid the basis for a common understanding of the notion of quality in HE as entailing:

- Exceptional/excellence

- Perfect

- Fitness for purpose;

- Value for money; and

- Transformation that is based on national goals and priorities

  - (Quality Assurance in Higher Education Report, 2000)

FITNESS FOR PURPOSE

To offer a learning experience that provides graduates with value for money, but also a transformative experience

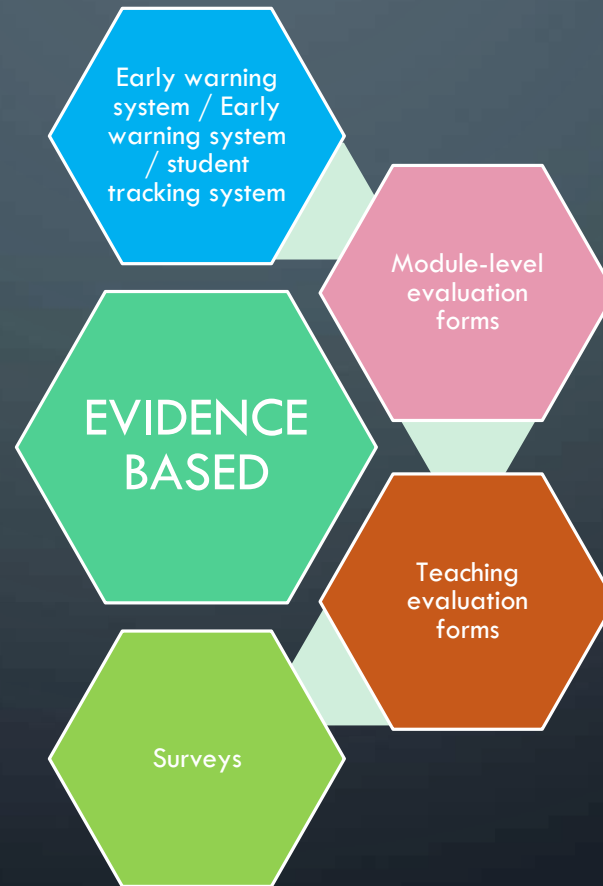EVIDENCE BASED

INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING DESIGN

Devotion signifies a life given, or devoted, to God. He ... is the devout man, who lives no longer to his own will ... but to the sole will of God...

WILLIAM LAW

EVIDENCE BASED

Quality in teaching and learning has increasingly become focused on the evidence that helps us to understand how students think, behave and learn, as well as what they are able to do upon completion of their higher education qualifications (Coates, 2014; Kuh, G. D. et al., 2015).

Early warning system / Early warning system / student tracking system

Module-level evaluation forms

EVIDENCE BASED

Teaching evaluation forms

Surveys

▼ C2 Believers' example

Observe those who live according to Paul's example (Phil. 3:17); we offer ourselves as a model for you (2 Thess. 3:9); you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thess. 1:7); the prophets were an example of suffering and patience (Jas. 5:10); these things happened as examples for us (1 Cor. 10:6).

▼ C3 Be an example

Be an example to believers (1 Tim. 4:12); show yourself to be an example of good deeds (Titus 2:7); elders should be examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3).

Day, A.C., 2009. *Collins Thesaurus of the Bible*, Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.
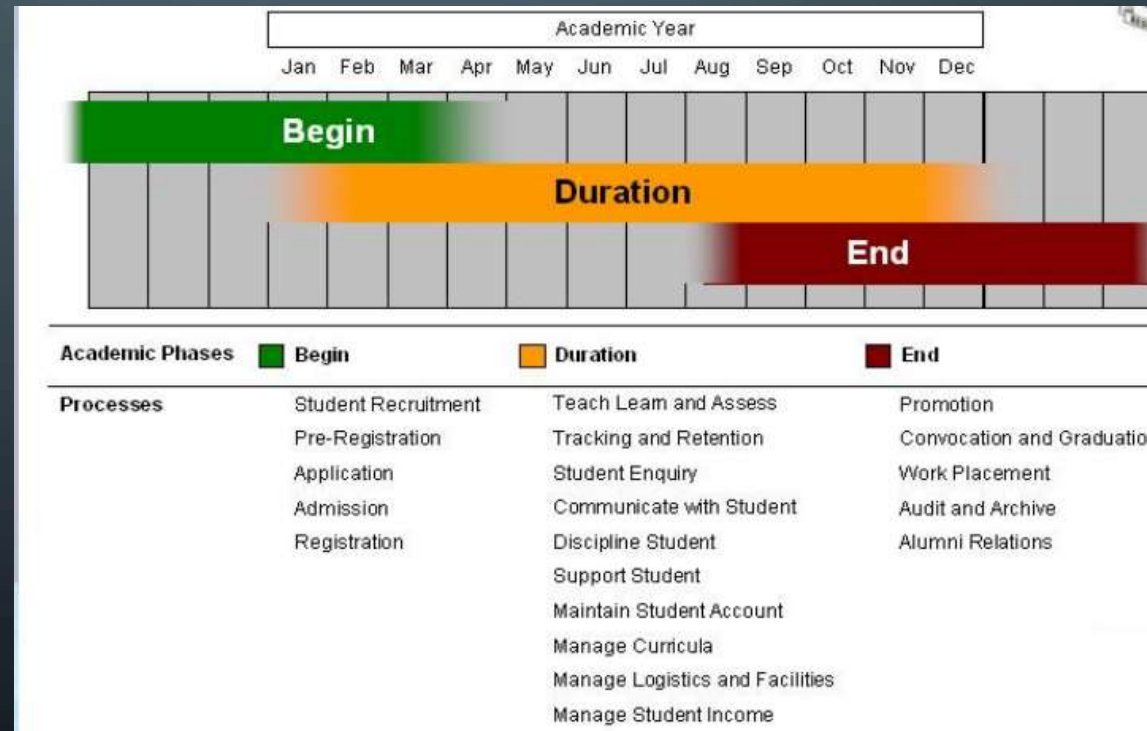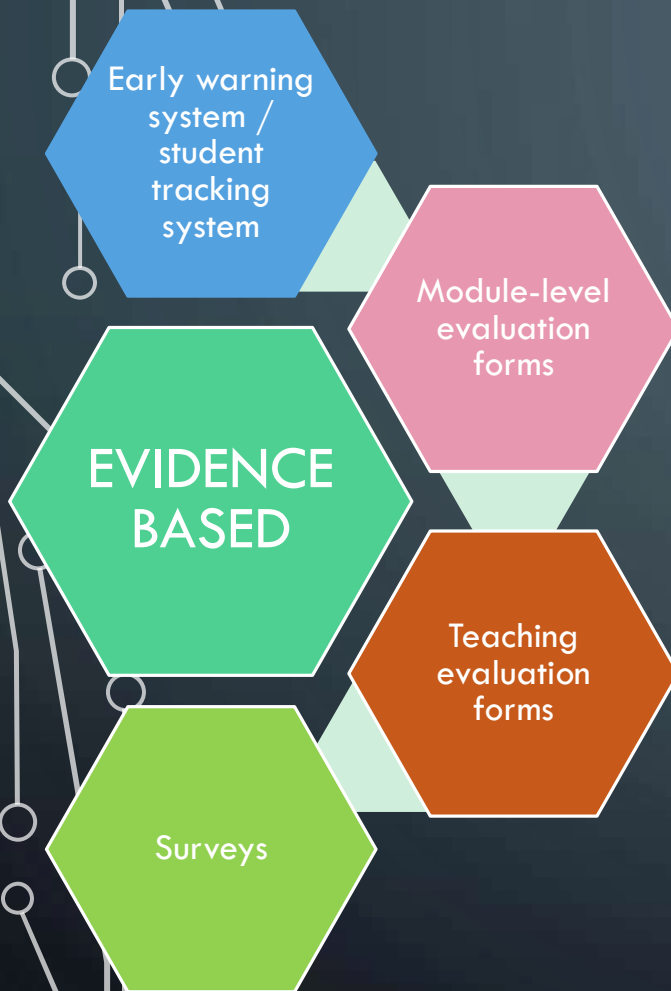
2 Corinthians 12:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;

²¹lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM/STUDENT TRACKING SYSTEM

The development of a "student tracking and referral/early warning system" is a critical tool in order to identify bottlenecks, opportunities, and risks early (early warning). Such a system should be able to improve reporting and auditing, monitor the student-staff relationship, assist to balance the academic workload, and govern administrative life cycle. It should further track individual students' performance from entry to exit; automatically identify students at risk and apply appropriate intervention strategies; notify student mentor/advisor and individual students.
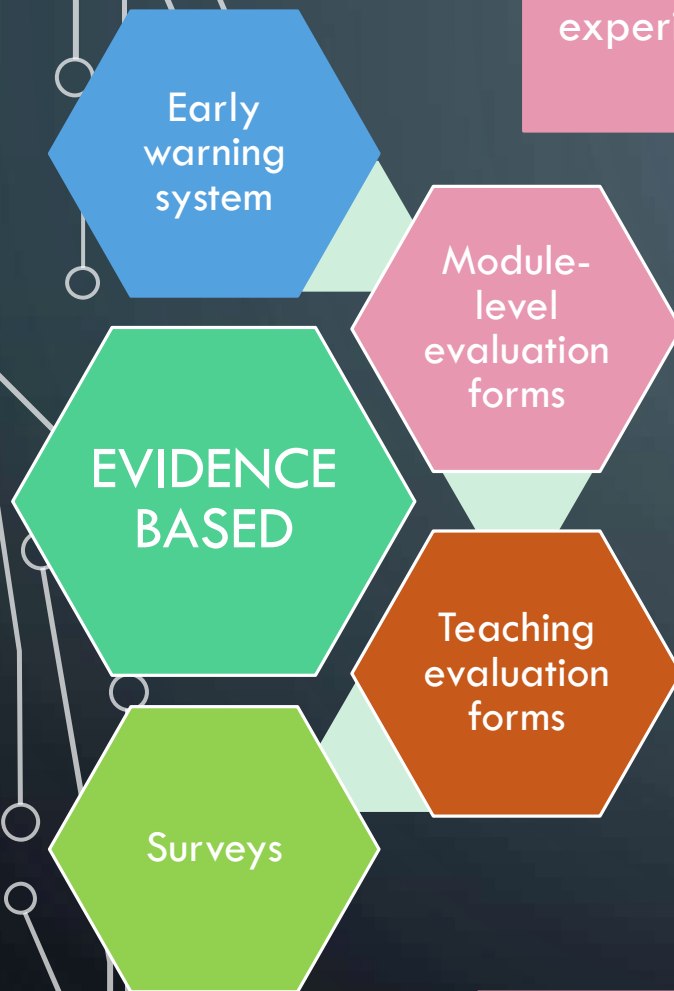
Early warning system / student tracking system

Module-level evaluation forms

EVIDENCE BASED

Teaching evaluation forms

Surveys

Academic Year												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Begin

Duration

End

Academic Phases	Begin	Duration	End
Processes	Student Recruitment	Teach Learn and Assess	Promotion
	Pre-Registration	Tracking and Retention	Convocation and Graduation
	Application	Student Enquiry	Work Placement
	Admission	Communicate with Student	Audit and Archive
	Registration	Discipline Student	Alumni Relations
		Support Student	
		Maintain Student Account	
		Manage Curricula	
		Manage Logistics and Facilities	
		Manage Student Income	

Darries, 2005

2 Corinthians 12:20–21 (NKJV)

^{20}For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;

^{21}lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

A MODULE EVALUATION SHOULD SERVE THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

Early warning system

Module-level evaluation forms

EVIDENCE BASED

Teaching evaluation forms

Surveys

1. Provide a systematic means for students to reflect on and provide their opinions and experiences regarding teaching and learning at an institution – i.e. give students a data driven voice in the teaching and learning domain.

2. Provide a means for the institution to monitor students' learning experiences at the module, departmental and faculty levels over time

3. Provide data to be used as part of quality enhancement work

4. Provide an early warning system to identify modules that would benefit from teaching and learning support.

5. Provide comparable evidence that academic staff can include as one component of their portfolios submitted for promotion purposes.

Data emerging from module evaluations should be seen as a catalyst for conversations about how teaching and learning can be developed (University of the Free State, 2013)

TEACHING EVALUATION FORMS

Early warning system

Module-level evaluation forms

EVIDENCE BASED

Teaching evaluation forms

Surveys
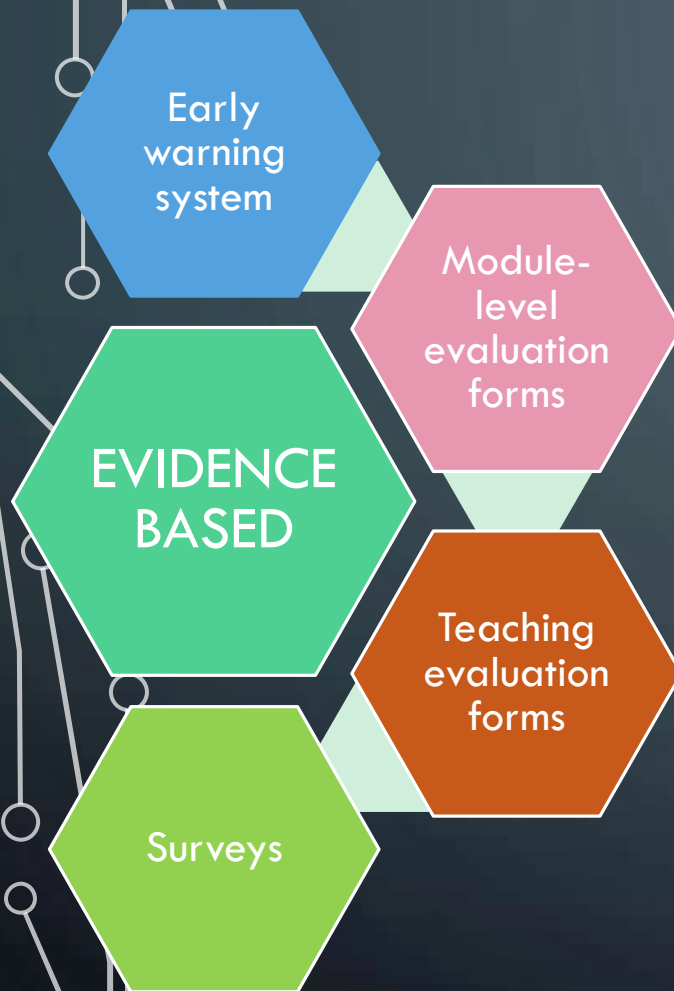
Evaluation of teaching can have many purposes, including **collecting feedback for teaching improvement**, developing a portfolio for job applications, or gathering data as part of personnel decisions, such as reappointment or promotion and tenure. (Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, 2016)

SURVEYS

Early warning system

Module-level evaluation forms

EVIDENCE BASED

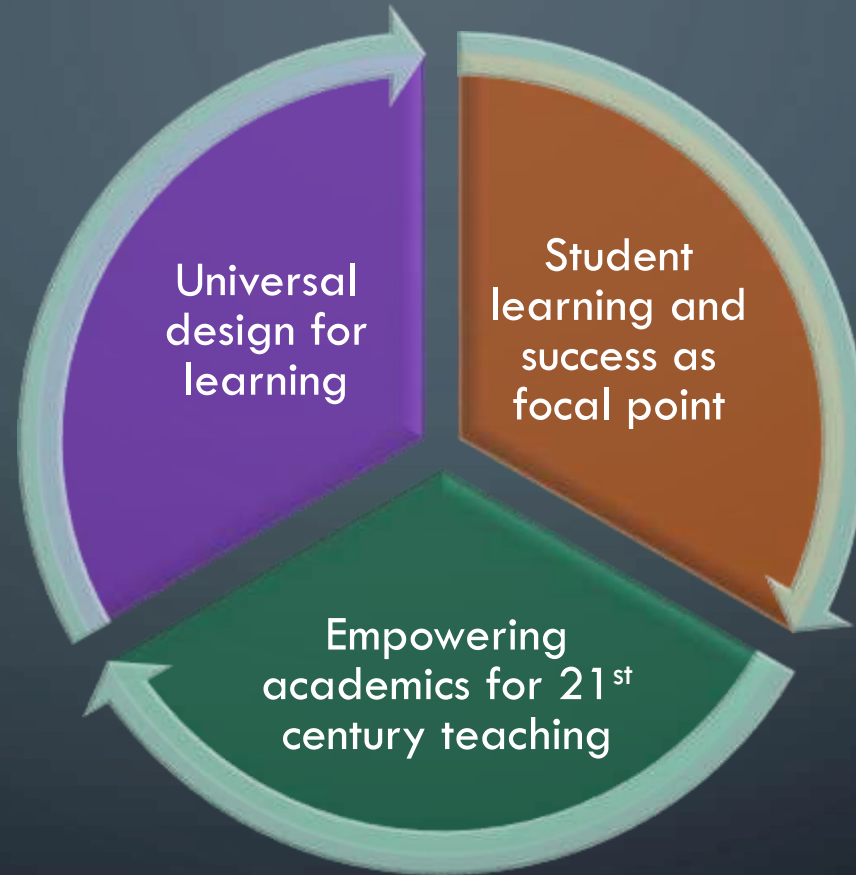**Teaching evaluation forms**

Surveys
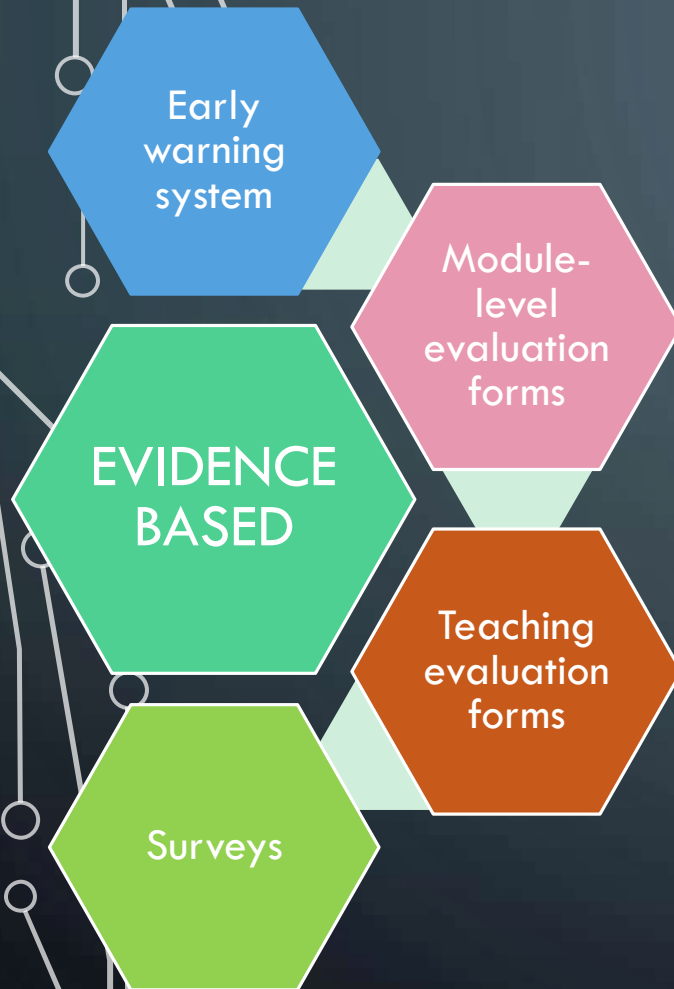
Understand and enhance the student academic experience and student engagement at course, faculty and institution-wide levels
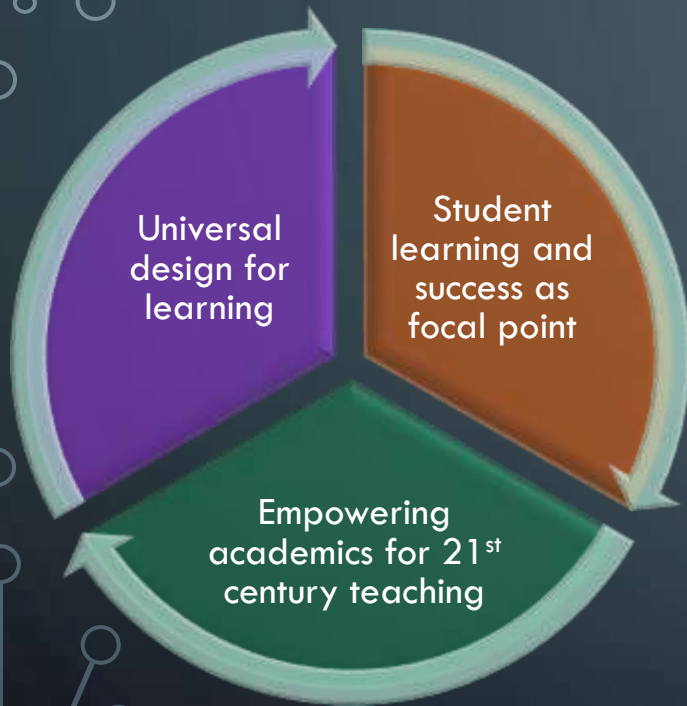
Benchmark performance year on year within your institution and in comparison to your peers

Pinpoint where interventions are most needed for student success in your priority areas, including assessment and feedback, employability and student retention

Advance HE (2018)

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)

Universal design for learning

Student learning and success as focal point

Empowering academics for 21st century teaching

Learners naturally have different characteristics, preferences, needs, and abilities and such features may affect their learning experience and thus academic performance (Al-Azawei, Serenelli & Lundqvist, 2016).

UDL then assumes that learning is a unique process that focuses on curricula design techniques to minimise the implications of learner differences (ibid.)

Direct teaching based on a 'one-size-fits-all' approach cannot successfully accommodate individual difference

Designers must *curriculize* 'accessible' content and deliver it in an 'accessible' learning environment can improve learning experience regardless of individual learning abilities (Courey, Tapper, Siker & LePage, 2012)

STUDENT LEARNING AND SUCCESS AS FOCAL POINT

Universal design for learning

Student learning and success as focal point

Empowering academics for 21st century teaching
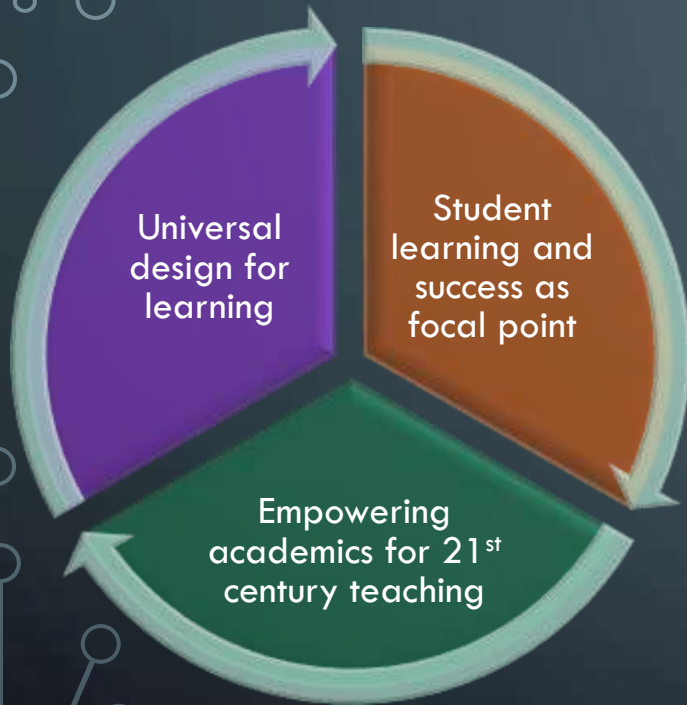
Many teachers know how they learnt/learn best, but do not necessarily consider how their students learn and if the way they teach is predicated on enabling learning to happen (Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall, 2009).

If learning is to be the outcome for the student then the teacher cannot do all the work;
- Students need to be proactive about their own learning. The teachers must ensure that course design, selection of teaching and learning opportunities and assessment help the learner to not only learn "for the now" but promote lifelong learning; and
- the content must help produce graduates that are employable and work ready.

EMPOWERING ACADEMICS FOR 21ST CENTURY TEACHING

Universal design for learning

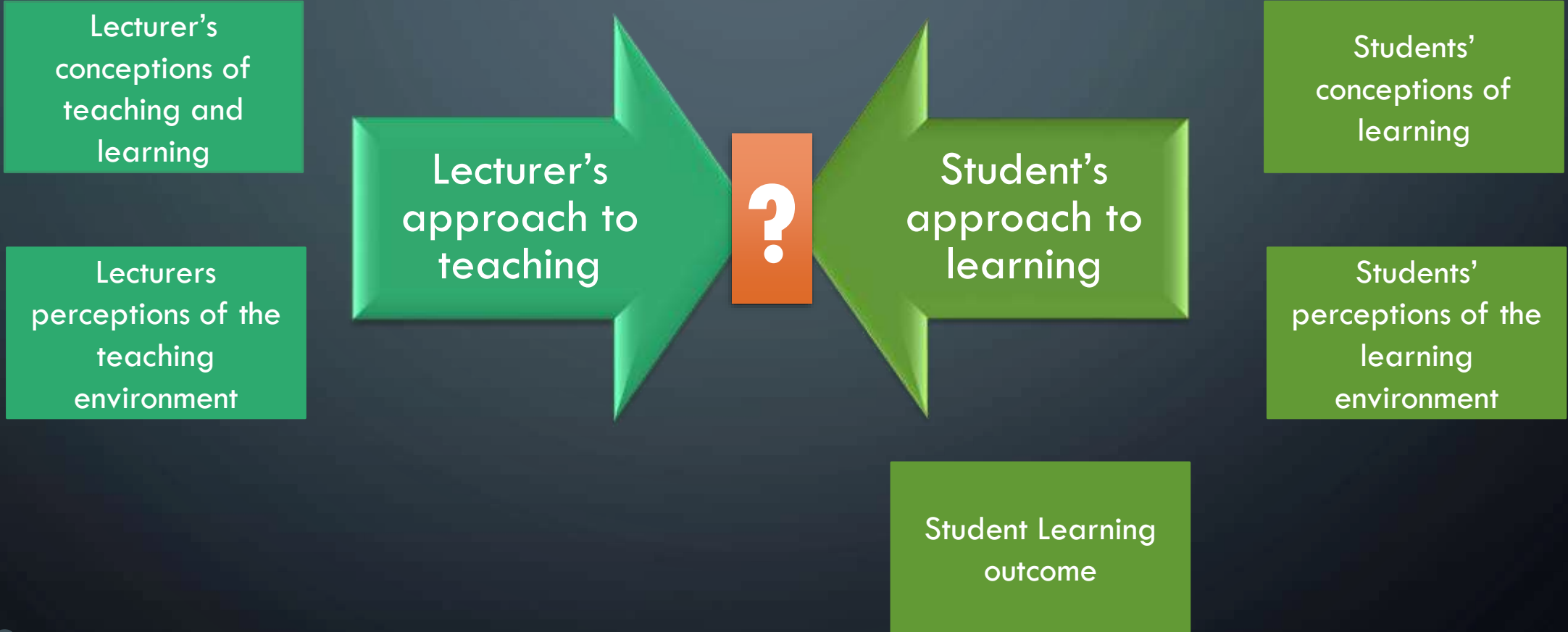Student learning and success as focal point

Empowering academics for 21st century teaching
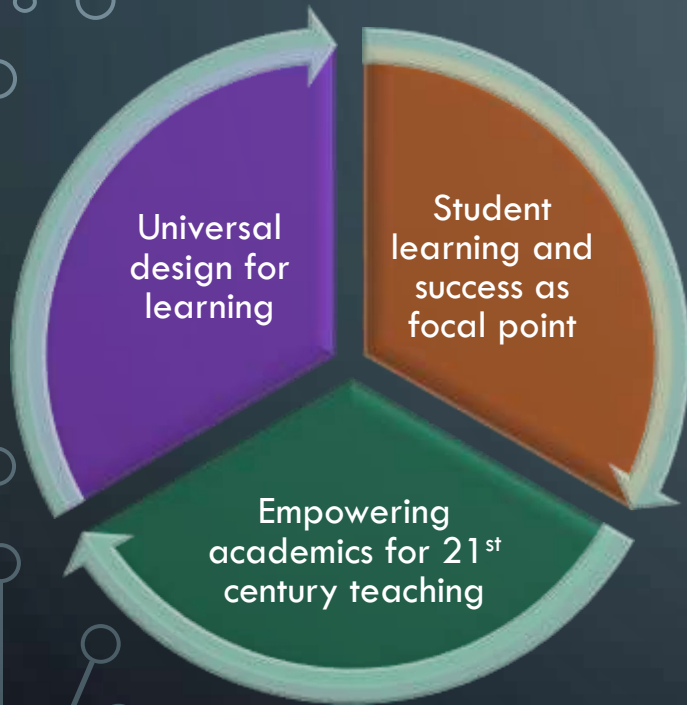
Institutional structures should be in place to strengthen teaching through appropriate professional development opportunities and reward systems for excellent teaching by (Strydom & Meintjes 2019):

- establishing and maintaining theology teacher development structures, organisations and resources; teachers should have opportunities to develop a sound understanding of a decolonised curriculum and what it means to be equipped to be an effective teacher in the Fourth Industrial Revolution; and
- ensuring that teachers are recognised and rewarded for the work that they do as teachers; good quality teaching should be incentivised and rewarded through both support and recognition.

HOW DO I CONCEPTUALIZE LEARNING TO IMPACT ON MY TEACHING

Lecturer's conceptions of teaching and learning

Lecturers perceptions of the teaching environment

Lecturer's approach to teaching

?

Student's approach to learning

Students' conceptions of learning

Students' perceptions of the learning environment

Student Learning outcome

4 PILLARS OF CREATING QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Doyle, 2015

4 PILLARS OF CREATING QUALITY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Connect

Quality Learning Experience

Critique

Create

Communicate

Doyle, 2015

tap into your students and understand the problems they need solving, how they learn most effectively, and set up clear expectations around the learning experience right from the outset.

define the outcomes that your students will walk away with, scaffold the lessons and the content within them effectively so that you are taking them on an organised path to applying their new skills.

learn the basics of how to structure your presentations, visual aids and hone your delivery techniques so that you are engaging inspiring and motivating your clients achieve success in your field.

evaluating, reviewing and reflecting on how your course, workshop or presentation has performed, is paramount to continually improving your reputation, and the learning experiences you have on offer. Earn a reputation as a professional who cares about delivering high quality outcomes for your students, and continually improving your content and services.

Wherever man may stand, whatever he may do ... he is ... constantly standing before the face of his God. He is employed in the service of his God...

ABRAHAM KUYPER

THANK YOU

REFERENCE LIST

Advance HE. 2018. Higher Education Academy Student Surveys Available at
https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/institutions/surveys [Accessed 05 June 2019.

Al-Azawei, A., Serenelli, F., & Lundqvist, K. 2016. Universal Design for Learning (UDL): A Content Analysis of Peer Reviewed Journals from 2012 to 2015. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 16(3), 39. Available at https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v16i3.19295 [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, 2016. Evaluation of Teaching. Available at http://www.crlt.umich.edu/resources/evaluation-teaching [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Coates, H. (Ed.). (2014). *Higher education learning outcomes assessment: international perspectives*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang GmbH.

Council on Higher Education, 2017. An integrated approach to quality assurance in Higher Education by the CHE. Available at https://www.che.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/Integrated%20Approach%20to%20QA%20by%20the%20CHE%20post-HEQC%20version%2019092017%20%28002%29.pdf [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Courey, S. J., Tappe, P., Siker, J., & LePage, P. 2012. Improved Lesson Planning with Universal Design for Learning (UDL). *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*. doi:10.1177/0888406412446178

REFERENCE LIST

Courey, S. J., Tappe, P., Siker, J., & LePage, P. 2012. Improved Lesson Planning with Universal Design for Learning (UDL). *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.* doi:10.1177/0888406412446178

Darries, M. Student Tracking and Monitoring Systems. Available at https://www.che.ac.za/sites/default/files/publications/d000101_UWC_Darries_26Sept2005.pdf [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Doyle, M. 2015. Create Real Change: Create a Quality Learning Experience. Available at https://www.udemy.com/create-real-change/ [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Fry, H., Ketteridge, S. & Marshall, A.2009. A handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. New York:Routledge.

Hazelkorn, E., Coates, H., & McCormick, A. C. (2018). Research handbook on quality, performance and accountability in higher education. Available at http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1855634 [Accessed 05 June 2019].

REFERENCE LIST

Kuh, G. D., Ikenberry, S., Jankowski, N., Cain, T. R., Ewell, P., Hutchings, P., & Kinzie, J. (2015). *Using evidence of student learning to improve higher education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lodge, JM. 2019. Quality learning in higher education: What does science tell us? Available at: https://npjscilearncommunity.nature.com/users/19677-Jason-m-lodge/posts/43834-quality-learning-in-higher-education-what-does-the-science-tell-us

Strydom,J.F. & Meintjes, A. 2019. UFS Learning and Teaching Strategy 2019-2024. Unpublished Article. Bloemfontein:South Africa.

University of the Free State, 2013. An institutional Approach to Module Evaluation – Discussion document. Available at https://www.ufs.ac.za/docs/librariesprovider43/directorate-for-institutional-research-and-academic-planning-(dirap)-documents/other-documents-documents/module-evaluation-eng.pdf?sfvrsn=5598f021_4 [Accessed 05 June 2019].

Advance HE. 2018. **Higher Education Academy Student Surveys:** Data and insights to give you the edge. Available at https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/institutions/surveys [Accessed 05 June].