

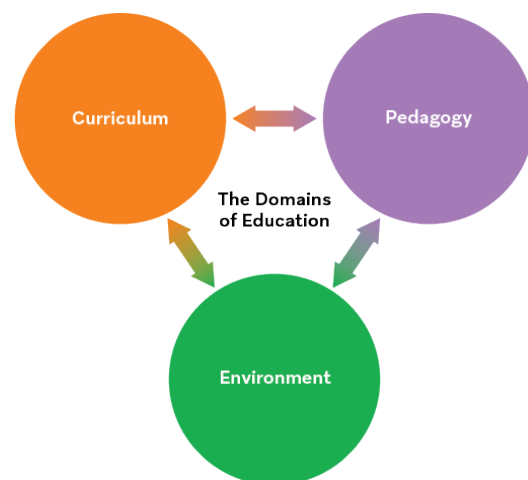
What is Pedagogy?

Pedagogy is an umbrella term that refers to the theory and practice of teaching and learning. It's the amalgamation of what educators do, what educators ask their students to do, and how educators assess their students' learning (University of Minnesota, 2023). Pedagogy contains many subtopics in education, including the philosophy of teaching, teaching methods and strategies, learning activities, assessment and evaluation, inclusion and equity, Universal Design for Learning, and Learner-Centred Teaching. For many educators, pedagogy also includes andragogy (teaching adults).

Why is it important to consider pedagogy when teaching in higher education?

Graphic Caption: Education is an interaction between three domains: curriculum, environment, and pedagogy, which harmonize with one another to facilitate the learning process. Effective pedagogy (i.e. how students learn) is as important as a well-designed curriculum (i.e. what students learn), and as a suitable environment (i.e. where students learn).

In recent times, online course delivery has become more commonplace, necessitating the implementation of pedagogical approaches designed for online learning. Red Deer Polytechnic offers some resources on teaching effectively online here.



Effective pedagogy works with the curriculum and environment to facilitate learning. By choosing the right pedagogical approach, educators can make their courses more effective, inclusive, and meaningful.

At its core, effective pedagogy considers how to deliver curriculum to students best. Often, educators select pedagogical approaches that complement curricular content and enhance learning. Without appropriate pedagogy supporting content delivery, even the best curriculum cannot be successfully taught to students. Effective pedagogy also considers the environment (i.e. where students learn). It

utilizes the physical and social context of the course and adapts as necessary to the needs of the learners and classroom.

Teaching Development Opportunities at Red Deer Polytechnic

Red Deer Polytechnic offers faculty a number of teaching development opportunities that explore effective pedagogy in higher learning. You might be interested in:

- **Introduction to Teaching and Learning**: Faculty can sign up to take Introduction to Teaching and Learning, a short course offered twice yearly, which includes instruction in pedagogical topics such as teaching methods and classroom engagement.

- **Excellence in Teaching and Learning**: Faculty can also sign up for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, a three-year program that delves deeper into pedagogical topics.

Please see the provided links for more details on current offerings.

Further Considerations

Some educators use the term **Andragogy** to refer to the best pedagogical practices in adult education (El-Amin, 2020). Knowles (1978), an essential voice in adult learning theory, identified key tenets of andragogy, which target the learning preferences of adults. This includes emphasizing purpose and rationale, offering self-directed learning opportunities, and focussing on the applicability of content to the real world. However, many consider these key ideas as best practices when teaching any age effectively, not just adults. For instance, these preferences and patterns overlap significantly with Learner-Centred Pedagogy.

For more information on how some educational professionals define andragogy, see this summary on [pedagogy, andragogy, and heutagogy](#) from the University of Illinois.

References:

- Pedagogy - diversifying your teaching methods, learning activities, and assignments. Pedagogy - Diversifying Your Teaching Methods, Learning Activities, and Assignments | Center for Educational Innovation. (n.d.).*
<https://cei.umn.edu/teaching-resources/inclusive-teaching-predominantly-white-institution/pedagogy-diversifying-your-teaching-methods-learning-activities-and-assignments>
- Pedagogy, andragogy, & heutagogy. Pedagogy, Andragogy, & Heutagogy | University of Illinois Springfield. (n.d.).*
<https://www.uis.edu/colrs/teaching-resources/foundations-good-teaching/pedagogy-andragogy-heutagogy>
- El-Amin, A. (1970, January 1). *Andragogy: A theory in practice in higher education*. Journal of Research in Higher Education.

<https://www.cceol.com/search/article-detail?id=922589>

Groen, J. & Kawalilak, C. (2014). *Pathways of adult learning: Professional and education narratives*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

Khuzwayo, M. E., & Booii, K. (2021). Connecting pedagogical interactions in the twenty-first century classrooms: The role of the learners' perspective in knowledge production in the curriculum transformation in South Africa. In M. J. Hernández-Serrano (Ed.), *Teacher Education in the 21st Century*. IntechOpen.

<https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.96401>

Knowles, M. S. (1978). Andragogy: Adult Learning Theory in Perspective. *Community College Review*, 5(3), 9–20.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/009155217800500302>

Merriam, S., Bierema, L. (2014). *Adult learning; Linking theory and practices*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Spencer, B. and Lange, E. (2014). *The purposes of adult education: An introduction (3rd edition)*. Thompson Educational Publishing.