



Survey on Student Learning Differences

Introduction

Accreditation Recommendation 5 requires LAMC to “adopt mechanisms for assessing student learning styles and needs, the alignment of instructional delivery and pedagogical approaches with student learning styles and needs, and how instructional delivery and pedagogical approaches are related to achievement of student learning outcomes.” The first step in developing such mechanisms is to adopt a working definition of “student learning styles and needs” as we apply those concepts at LAMC.

The purpose of this survey is to ask you directly how, if at all, you apply “student learning styles and needs” to the improvement of student learning in your classroom, and to solicit your opinion on which approach to the “learning styles” concept LAMC should adopt as a working definition as we seek to resolve Recommendation 5.

Please take a few moments to read the two background paragraphs on the next page, and then respond thoughtfully to the questions that follow.

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Definition of Student Learning Differences

Some learning theorists argue that students differ in their preferred modes, or styles, of learning, independent of their ability and of the content learned. These theorists suggest that teachers in many subjects can improve learning and meet student needs most by matching their teaching to some extent with the preferred learning modes of their students. For example, teachers can help “auditory learners” best with the spoken word, music, and other auditory presentations, while they can help “visual learners” best with pictures, graphs, and other visual presentations. Similar matching, in this view, can help students whose learning varies along other dimensions, such as linear versus holistic learners, impulsive versus reflective learners, or reasoning versus insight learners.

Other theorists argue that there is insufficient research support for such learning styles independent of ability and content, and that teachers can improve learning and meet student needs most by taking into consideration their students’ differences in abilities, background knowledge, and interests. For example, teachers can help learners who have less ability or background knowledge by providing supplementary basic materials, while they can help learners who have more ability or background knowledge by providing more advanced enrichment materials. Similar adaptations in materials, pedagogy, or content, in this view, can help learners at multiple levels of ability, background knowledge, and interest.

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1. Which approach to learning differences have you found most useful over the past two years in improving student learning in your own classroom at LAMC?

- Matching your teaching to some extent with the preferred learning modes (e.g., auditory vs. visual, linear vs. holistic, etc.) of your students.
- Adapting your materials, pedagogy, or content to take into consideration your students' different abilities, background knowledge, and interests.
- I have found both approaches equally useful.
- Other (please describe)
- None of the above: I am able to help my students reach course objectives and learning outcomes without regard to any learning differences they might have.

2. Which approach to learning differences do you recommend that LAMC adopt as a working definition, as we seek to resolve Recommendation 5?

- Matching your teaching to some extent with the preferred learning modes (e.g., auditory vs. visual, linear vs. holistic, etc.) of your students.
- Adapting your materials, pedagogy, or content to take into consideration your students' different abilities, background knowledge, and interests.
- Other (please describe)

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3. If you do consider learning differences in your teaching, what primary methods have you used in the past two years to determine the relevant differences? Please mark all that apply.

- Classroom discussion, either in small groups or as a whole.
- Individual meetings with students.
- Questionnaire completed by students.
- Non-graded Classroom Assessment Techniques or other in-class learning checks.
- Graded in-class or take-home assessment during the first two weeks.
- Exams or essays before the midterm.
- Midterm exam.
- Exams or essays after the midterm but before the final.
- Other (please describe)
- None of the above: I do not consider learning differences in my teaching.

4. If you do consider learning differences in your teaching, what change(s) in content, organization, presentation, support, or other elements of teaching have you implemented most frequently in the past two years to help students succeed, based on your findings about student learning differences?

5. If you do consider learning differences in your teaching, please describe briefly the major learning differences that you have identified most often in the past two years based on these methods.

6. If you do consider learning differences in your teaching, based on your observations, what student characteristics should be considered in LAMC's research on student learning styles and needs?

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7. Please list the primary discipline(s) in which you have taught over the past two years, to which your responses above apply.

8. Which choice best describes your primary faculty assignment at LAMC?

- Regular (full-time) faculty
- Adjunct faculty

9. Please enter any other comments you have related to learning differences at LAMC.

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[Submit Responses](#)

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Thank you for your help in this important task!