

# *Boosting the value of your course evaluations*

## *TLID 2026*

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Trainer/consultant

# *Boosting the value of your course evaluations*



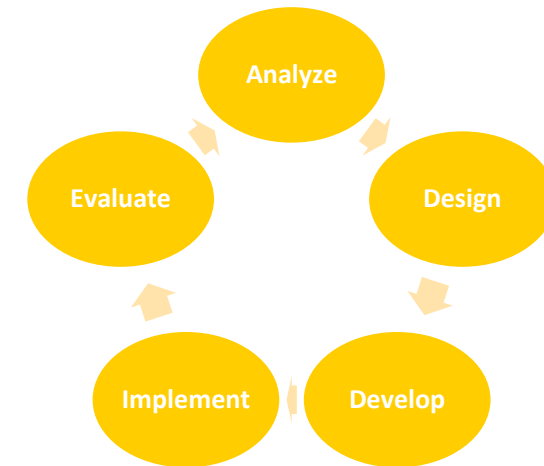
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University teachers are continually working on developing their courses.

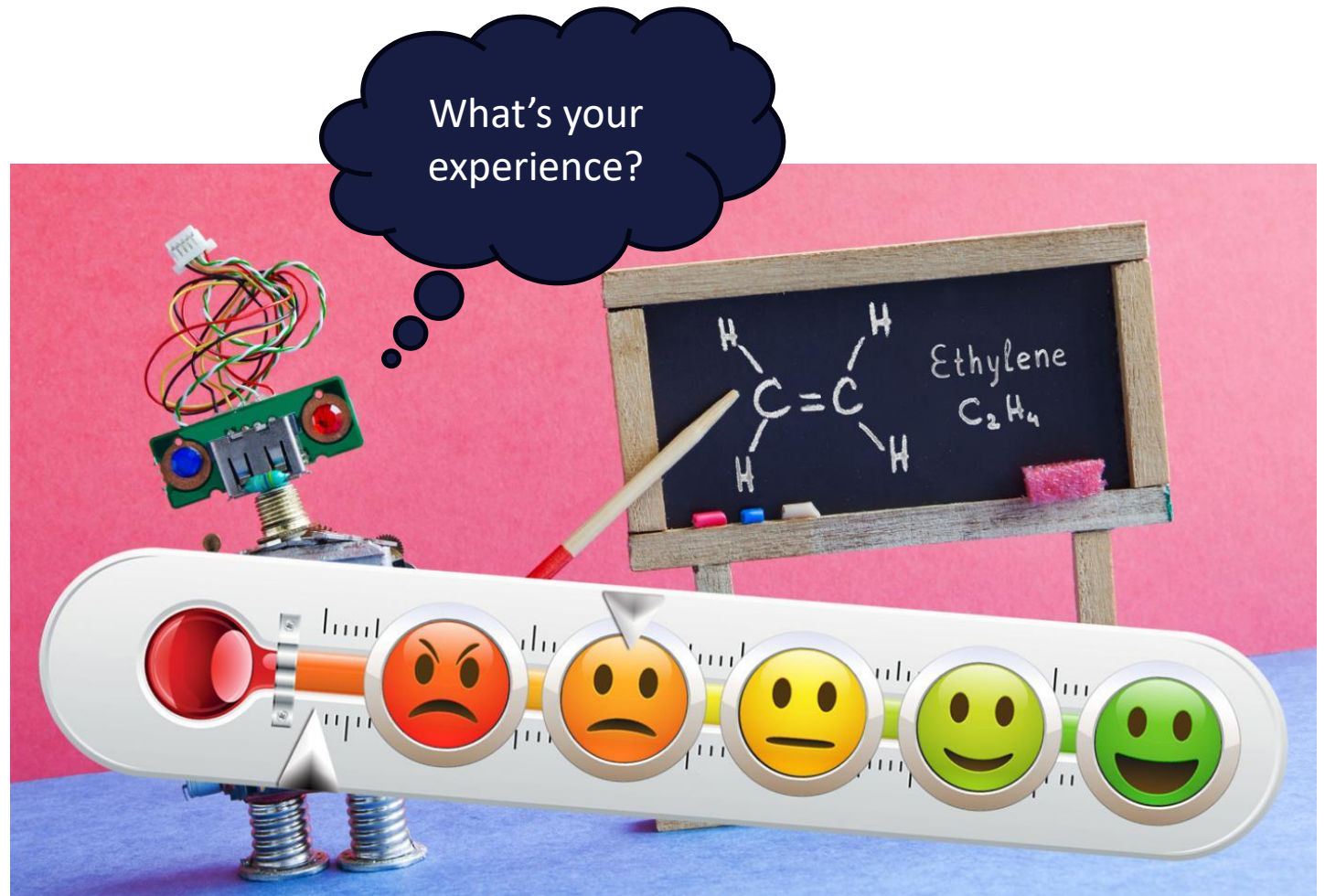
This makes them curious about:

- How do my students experience the course? What do they enjoy, struggle with, learn from, etc.?
- Were the changes I made to my course worthwhile?
- How effective was a specific element of my course, such as an assignment, tutorial or tool?



# Some problems with course evaluations

- No information about what you are interested in
- Information that is not actionable
- Little response from students
- Bias in student satisfaction scores

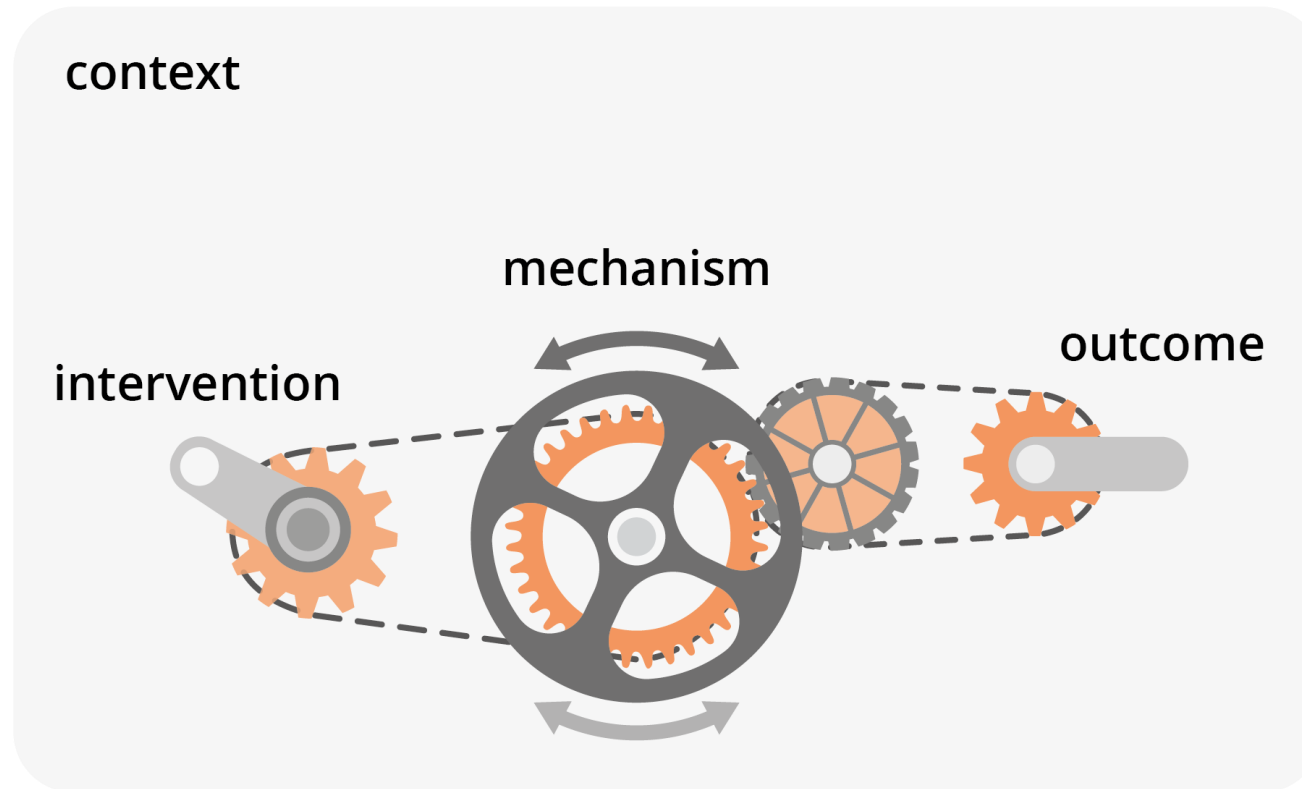


## Two important questions for boosting your course evaluations

1. What do you want/need to know about your teaching?
2. How can you use existing course evaluations or additional small scale evaluation activities to gather actionable information?

# Understanding the learning process in your course

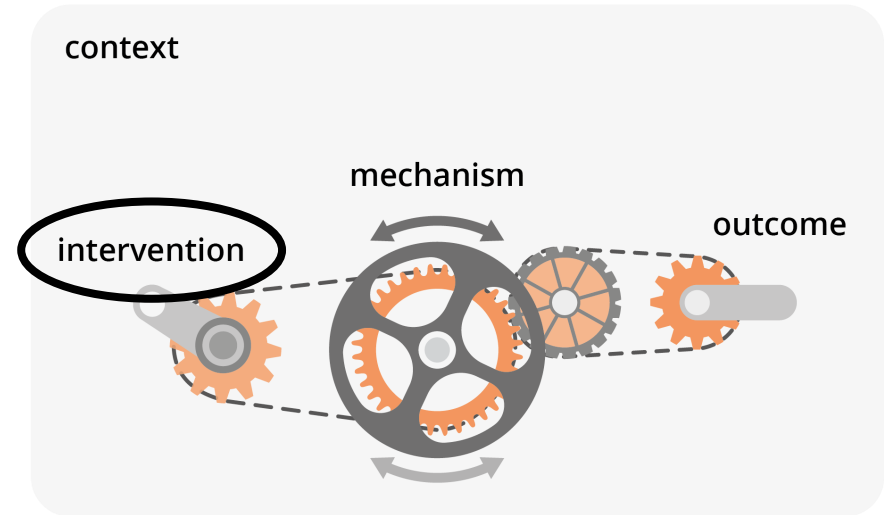
## CIMO cycle



# Interventions

- Everything teachers and students do to learn: the materials, assignments, tools, assessments, etc.
- Example questions:
  - Did my students use the new tool I introduced?
  - How many students were present at the tutorials?
- Focused on factual information about what the teachers and students did in the course

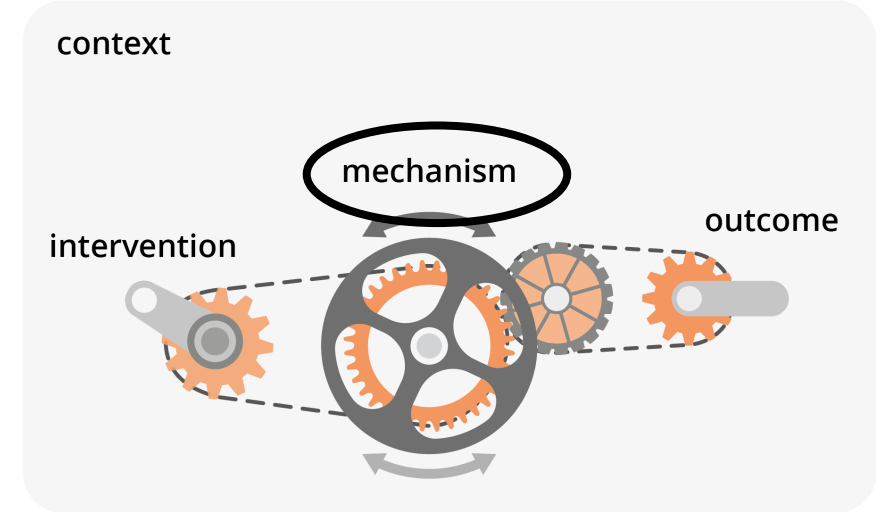
CIMO cycle



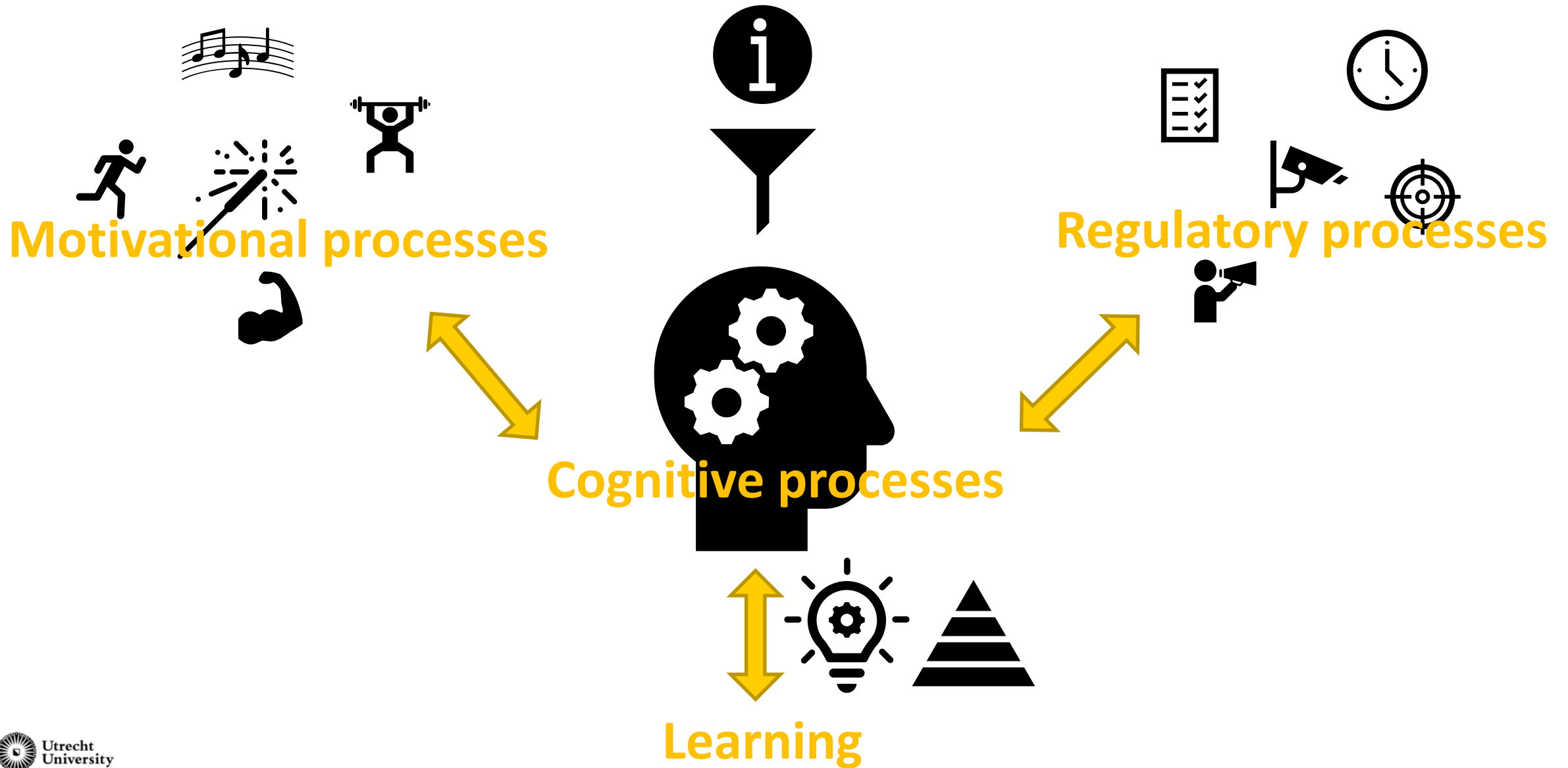
# Mechanisms

- The student experiences, responses and actions that are set in motion by interventions and that lead to (improved) student performance
- Example questions:
  - Did my new activity motivate students to participate?
  - What strategies do students use when studying for the exam?
- Focused on making visible what happens in the heads of students that contributes to reaching the learning outcomes

## CIMO cycle



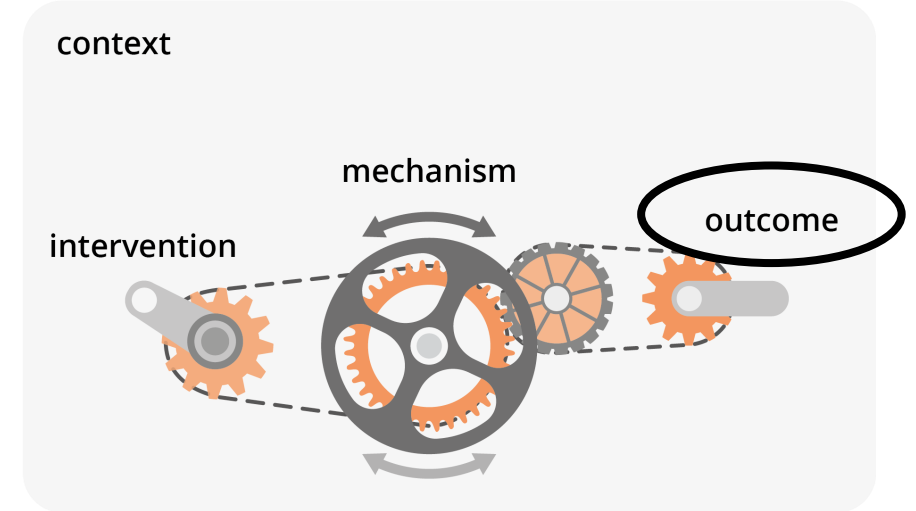
# What happens in the learners' head



# Outcomes

- Student performance: Changes in students' knowledge, skills or attitudes
- Example questions:
  - Do my students' results improve after implementing my new teaching activity?
  - Are there differences in performance between different student groups?
- Only measurable with performance tests, such as (non-)graded exams, assignments or quiz questions → Not suitable for student evaluations
  - Students' perceived performance or self-confidence as a substitute measure

## CIMO cycle



## **Let's get to work!**

Use part 1 of the handout to explicate what you want to know about your teaching.



## Two important questions for boosting your course evaluations

1. What do you want/need to know about your teaching?

2. How can you use existing course evaluations or additional small scale evaluation activities to gather actionable information?

Individual  
students

Groups of  
students

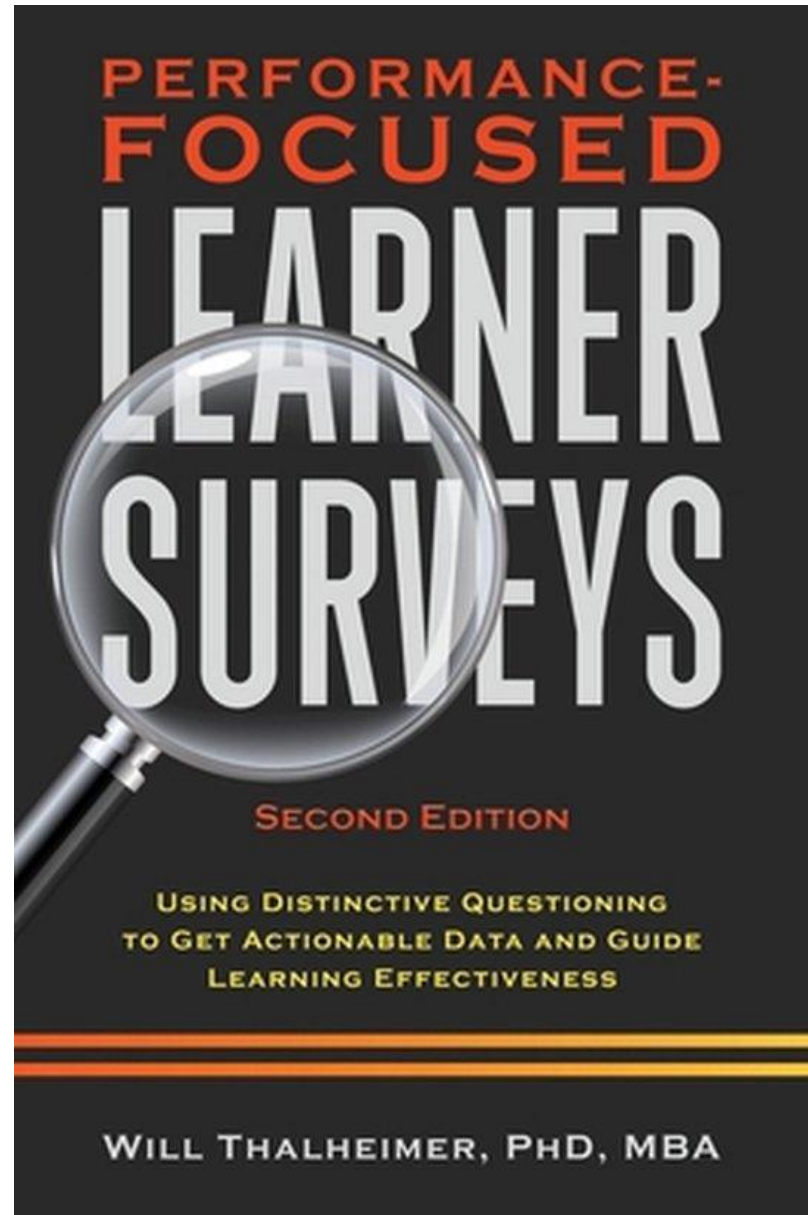
## Asking each student one or more questions (anonymously)

Why?	You want individual input from all students and/or it has to be anonymous
How?	Likert-scale questions with answer categories that differ in meaning instead of number. <i>Tip: add questions to Caracal</i>
	Open ended questions. <i>Tip: consider time</i>
	Combination
Format	Digital or on paper. <i>Tip: do it in class with designated time</i>
	Ideas: post-its, one-minute paper, wooclap.
Formulation	Translate your question into student-friendly language. <i>Tip: Test it.</i>

# Use categories that differ in meaning instead of numbered answer categories: understanding central concepts

Information-rich answer categories	Information-poor answer categories
<b>After this course, how well can you explain the central concepts to someone outside your discipline?</b>	<b>After this course, I'm able to explain the central concepts to someone outside my discipline.</b>
I still can't explain the concepts accurately.	1. Strongly disagree
I can explain parts of the concepts, but I'm often unsure or inconsistent.	2.
I can explain the main concepts clearly, but mostly in familiar examples.	3.
I can explain the concepts clearly and apply them to new examples.	4.
I can explain the concepts clearly and connect them to other ideas or contexts.	5. Strongly agree

**Reading  
suggestion**



## Examples of open-ended questions

Imagine you are explaining the central concepts from this course to someone outside your discipline (e.g., a friend or family member). What would you say? Please explain in your own words (3–6 sentences).

How did the AI assignment contribute to your understanding of the course concepts? Please describe what aspects of the assignment were helpful or unhelpful, and how it could be improved.

## Asking a group of students (not anonymously)

Why?	Allows for discussion, follow-up questions, and deeper insight into students' experiences.
How?	In conversation. <i>Tip: try to get students to talk.</i>
	Main question and follow up questions. <i>Tip: use prompts and support.</i>
	Whole group, part of the group, or one-on-one.
When?	Ad-hoc or planned. <i>Tip: how much of students' time can you use?</i>
Format	Not on paper but in conversation. <i>Tip: make notes or record</i>
Formulation	Translate your question into student-friendly language. <i>Tip: test it.</i>

# Examples of specific conversation formats or prompts



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## SCALE IT UP

Give students a number of topics or characteristics and ask them where on the scale they would put you or your course. This can be done with numbers (digitally, or physically if you tape numbers to the wall of the classroom, where students can move between the different numbers). It can also be done with a series (for example: egg - caterpillar - cocoon - butterfly). A follow-up question can be why they have decided on a certain point and what would be needed for you to move to a better point of the scale.



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## STEP FORWARD

Have the students stand in a circle and provide a statement (for example: "I thought the assignment was properly explained"). If students agree they can take one step forward. You can then ask follow-up questions based on the reactions.



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## MIND MAP

Mind maps can not only be used to brainstorm, but also to evaluate. Ask a number of questions and let students respond through a post-it. This can also be done digitally.

## **Let's get to work!**

Use part 2 of the handout to explicate how you can find out more about what you want to know.



# Congratulations!

You Boosted Your  
Evaluation! ↑



## More information



Consult us:

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Talk to your colleagues and students



Take a look at the [Utrecht Roadmap for SoTL](#) and online module [Educational Scholarship: Investigating your teaching practice](#)



[UU Teaching and Learning Collection item about feedback instruments](#)



## How able do you feel to put what you learned in this workshop into practice?

- A. My current role does not allow me to use what I learned.
- B. I am still unclear about what to do and/or why to do it.
- C. I need more guidance before I know how to use what I learned.
- D. I need more experience to use what I learned well.
- E. I can successfully use what I learned, without additional guidance or experience.
- F. I can perform at an expert level in using what I learned.

- Wil je meer weten over het Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning? Kijk dan op [onze website!](#)
- Mocht je nog een workshop willen volgen deze week, [er zijn nog een paar plekjes vrij!](#)
- Als je benieuwd bent naar ons andere workshopaanbod, dan vind je dat [hier](#).
- Voor vragen over het geven van onderwijs kun je contact opnemen met [teachingsupport@uu.nl](mailto:teachingsupport@uu.nl)



**We zien je graag weer op [het OnderwijsFestival](#) op 5 maart 2026!**