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Climate Change Laws in Asia and the Pacific



Environmental Law Teachers Online Training Program

Teaching Environmental Law Online: Benefits and Challenges of Online Teaching

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Setting the Scene...

- Over last two decades, the combination of technological advances and shifting student priorities and demands has led to significant changes in the delivery of higher education
- Online learning is in the mainstream – but law has lagged behind other disciplines
 - Nonetheless, there is evidence of e-learning adoption and innovation in law
- **BUT** - COVID-19 forced an abrupt transition to e-learning
 - Simply replicating classroom content electronically is not an exemplar of effective online pedagogy – it is ‘emergency online pedagogy’*
- Online learning is here to stay – law teachers must think deliberately about what it means to teach effectively online

*Pedagogy = the method and practice of teaching

What is E-Learning?











- Use of internet technology to deliver content and construct learning communities
- Can be used to support face-to-face learning as well as teach individual subjects and entire courses digitally
- Can use synchronous or asynchronous methods
 - Various tools and systems facilitate online / e-learning – e.g. learning management systems, synchronous interaction tools, asynchronous messaging, grading and feedback tools, digital collaboration tools



Advantages of E-Learning in Law...

- Increase flexibility and convenience for learners (and teachers)
- Exposes students to digital technology and enables them to develop online communication and collaboration skills
- Offers economic benefits – more learners can be accommodated with fewer infrastructure costs (e.g. buildings)
- Improves access to legal education – can be used to provide accessible materials to students with disabilities, or remove obstacles around needing to be physically present on campus
- Can provide shy students with a degree of anonymity, and encourage participation
- Potential contribution to sustainability efforts – minimizes travel (to and from campus), printed materials and the use of physical facilities on campus – some estimates suggest online learning generates 85 per cent fewer emissions per student compared to conventional face-to-face learning
- Pedagogical benefits – suits a variety of learning styles

GENERATIONS

Characteristics	Maturists (pre-1945)	Baby Boomers (1945-1960)	Generation X (1961-1980)	Generation Y (1981-1995)	Generation Z (Born after 1995)
Aspiration	Home ownership	Job security	Work-life balance	Freedom and flexibility	Security and stability
Attitude toward technology	Largely disengaged	Early information technology (IT) adaptors	Digital immigrants	Digital natives	Technoholics
Attitude toward career	Jobs are for life	Organisational—careers are defined by employers	Early 'portfolio.' careers — loyal to profession, not necessarily to employer	Digital entrepreneurs — work "with" organizations not "for"	Career multitaskers
Signature product	Automobile 	Television 	Personal computer 	Smart phone 	Nano-computing, 3-D print, driveless cars 
Communication media	Formal letter 	Telephone 	E-mail and SMS 	SMS or Social media 	Hand-held communication devices 

U.S. Employed Workforce



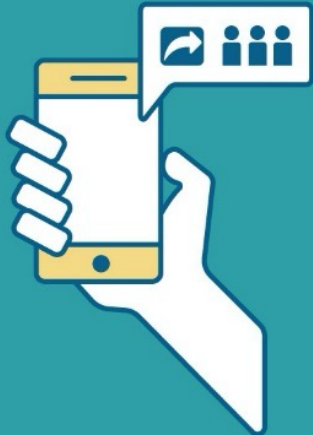
U.S. Unemployed Workforce





Present-day schools cater to Generation Z, children aged 6 to 18 years.

Gen-zers have not seen the world without technology



60%
OF GEN Z



say they like to collaborate and share their knowledge with others online



50%
OF GEN Z



'Can't Live Without YouTube'



93%
OF STUDENTS



students feel confident as they understand technology well

Technology is a must for schools catering to Generation Z

...but Law Schools have been slow to adopt

- In some cases, there are barriers from admitting authorities which may limit or prohibit online learning within the qualifying law degree
- Perception that e-learning is 'inferior'; fuelled by a 'romantic' notion of what happens when students and professors are in the same rooms
 - Uncritical replication of Socratic methodology or lengthy lectures
- **HOWEVER** – the advantages of in-person legal education are assumed, not proved
- COVID-19 saw many Law Schools across the globe transition to online learning out of necessity, but this was met with mixed reviews...

Why Online Teaching During the Pandemic was NOT (generally) well-received...

Routledge Studies in Global Student Mobility

ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES

Edited by

Roy Y. Chan, Krishna Bista, and Ryan M. Allen

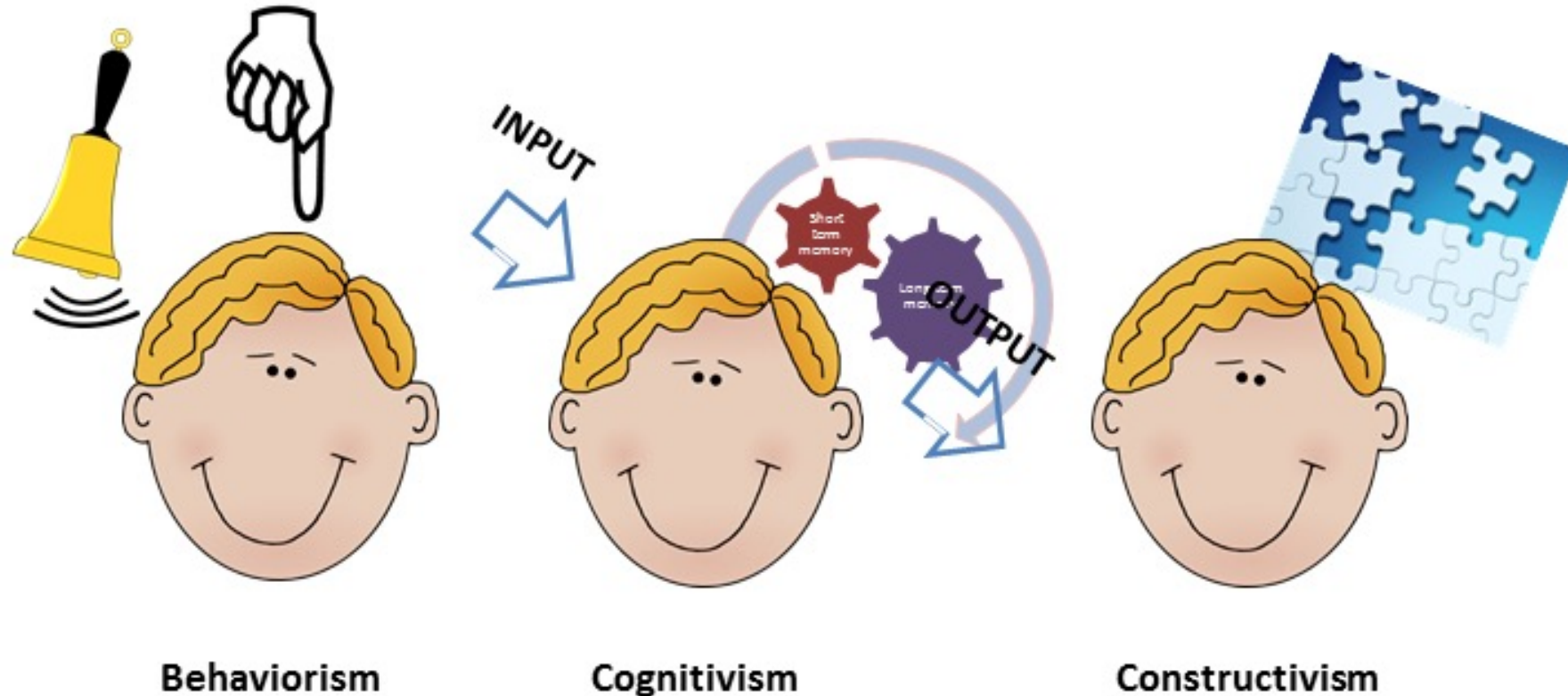


- The speed at which online instruction was activated can be considered ‘emergency online pedagogy’
 - Students were online by force of circumstance, and the teaching was not designed for the medium
 - Many tried to replicate conventional classrooms (e.g. via Zoom), with little regard as to how to teach effectively online
- It was implemented abruptly, involuntarily, and with variable access to appropriate technological infrastructure, staff training and support
 - E-learning is a distinct pedagogy, not just a set of technological tools to replicate face-to-face teaching

See, e.g., recent book ‘*Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education during COVID-19: International Perspectives and Experiences*’, Edited By Roy Y. Chan, Krishna Bista and Ryan M. Allen

Theories of Learning

- **Behaviourism:** views knowledge as a commodity to be transferred from teacher to student
- **Cognitivism:** views knowledge as more actively constructed by learners as they are required to process what they know, with the teacher acting more as a facilitator guiding student discovery
- **Constructivism:** views learning as individual – different for each person, controlled by the learner



...this is not to say that online learning isn't without challenges!

- The benefits of synchronous instruction may be limited online
 - E.g. synchronous participation fatigue
- The more sophisticated the technology, the greater the chance for technological issues
- Academic integrity
 - Perception of misconduct often looms larger than reality
- Engagement and student participation
 - Social presence, cognitive presence and teacher presence

Electronic media is a ‘vehicle’ for delivering instruction, and is not responsible for influencing student learning outcomes ‘any more than the truck that delivers our groceries causes changes in our nutrition’

Clark, R. E. (1983). Reconsidering research on learning from media.
Review of Educational Research, 53, 445–9, 445.



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Teaching and Learning in Environmental Law

Pedagogy, Methodology and Best Practice



The IUCN Academy of
Environmental Law Series



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*See Chapter 17: 'Never Mind the Platform, Here's the Pedagogy:
E-learning in Environmental Law' by Amanda Kennedy and Amy Cosby*