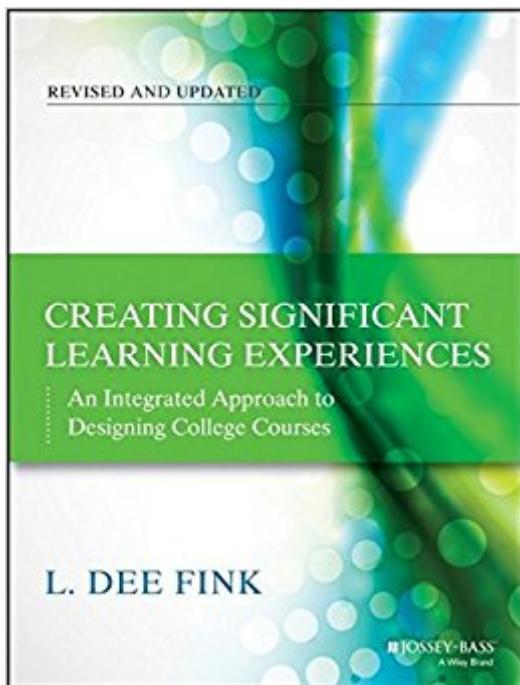


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# Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach To Designing College Courses



## Synopsis

"Dee Fink challenges our conventional assumptions and practices and offers an insightful approach to expanding our learning goals, making higher education more meaningful. This is a gem of a book that every college teacher should read." *Ken Bain, author, What the Best College Students Do* Since the original publication of L. Dee Fink's *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*, higher education has continued to move in two opposite directions: more institutions encourage faculty to focus on research, obtaining grants, and publishing, while accreditation agencies, policy-makers, and students themselves emphasize the need for greater attention to the quality of teaching and learning. Now the author has updated his bestselling classic, providing busy faculty with invaluable conceptual and procedural tools for instructional design. Step by step, Fink shows how to use a taxonomy of significant learning and systematically combine the best research-based practices for learning-centered teaching with a teaching strategy in a way that results in powerful learning experiences. This edition addresses new research on how people learn, active learning, and student engagement; includes illustrative examples from online teaching; and reports on the effectiveness of Fink's time-tested model. Fink also explores recent changes in higher education nationally and internationally and offers more proven strategies for dealing with student resistance to innovative teaching. Tapping into the knowledge, tools, and strategies in *Creating Significant Learning Experiences* empowers educators to creatively design courses that will result in significant learning for their students. "As thought-provoking and inspiring today as it was when it was first published, it is a 'must' for anyone serious about creating courses that challenge students to learn deeply." *Elizabeth F. Barkley, author, Student Engagement Techniques*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Dee Fink challenges our conventional assumptions and practices and offers an insightful approach to expanding our learning goals, making higher education more meaningful. This is a gem of a book that every college teacher should read." --Ken Bain, author, "What the Best College Students Do" Since the original publication of L. Dee Fink's "Creating Significant Learning Experiences," higher education has continued to move in two opposite directions: more institutions encourage faculty to focus on research, obtaining grants, and publishing, while accreditation agencies, policy-makers, and students themselves emphasize the need for greater attention to the quality of teaching and learning. Now the author has updated his bestselling classic, providing busy faculty with invaluable conceptual and procedural tools for instructional design. Step by step, Fink shows how to use a taxonomy of significant learning and systematically combine the best research-based practices for learning-centered teaching with a teaching strategy in a way that results in powerful learning experiences. This edition addresses new research on how people learn, active learning, and student engagement; includes illustrative examples from online teaching; and reports on the effectiveness of Fink's time-tested model. Fink also explores recent changes in higher education nationally and internationally and offers more proven strategies for dealing with student resistance to innovative teaching. Tapping into the knowledge, tools, and strategies in "Creating Significant Learning Experiences" empowers educators to creatively design courses that will result in significant learning for their students. "As thought-provoking and inspiring today as it was when it was first published, it is a 'must' for anyone serious about creating courses that challenge students to learn deeply." --Elizabeth F. Barkley, author, "Student Engagement Techniques"

L. Dee Fink has been an instructional consultant for more than thirty years. A former president of the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education (POD), he consults on the topics of faculty development and integrated course design at two- and four-year colleges and accrediting associations around the world.

This book was on a list of recommended reading for designing eLearning. Even though it's title specifies college courses, this book is a great resource for anyone who designs learning, including corporate programs. I love the emphasis on activity- and problem-based learning. Studies have

shown time and again that lecture-based teaching is not effective for learning transfer. I've been out of college for 20 years now and I really can't recall the majority of what I "learned" there (although the student loans keep reminding me that I was there.) I think the first goal for anyone in the instructional design world today is to move from auditive assessments to educative assessments. Instead of asking folks to simply recall information, let's have them apply it to see if they really know it. Some favorite moments:<sup>\*</sup> When I talk with faculty, many say their biggest concern is low student attendance in class. Many see daily class attendance running around 50 percent by mid-semester in their lower division courses. And they report other problems as well. Many of the students who do attend spend much of their class time checking their phone message and so on. Students do not complete reading assignments. The energy level in class discussions is low. Students focus on grades rather than on learning. Textbooks keep getting larger and larger, which means teachers have to work harder and harder to cover the material. Many say they have lost the joy in their teaching. And when they try to change, they often feel unsupported by students, colleagues, and their institution.<sup>\*</sup> Students, for their part, have similar concerns. They often complain about courses not being very interesting, that they just sit and take notes and then cram for exam after exam. They have difficulty seeing the value or significance of what they are learning. They, too, see the textbooks getting larger and larger; for them this means greater cost as well as more material that they have to learn, master, or memorize for the test.<sup>\*</sup> In this teaching strategy (team-based learning), students read the related material on their own, then come to class and take a test on that material both individually and as a group. This sequence, called the "readiness assurance process," brings nearly all students up to a moderate level of content understanding quickly and effectively. Then the students are able to spend a significant amount of time working in class in small groups, learning how to apply that content through a series of practice application exercises. Eventually students take a test that measures both their content understanding and their ability to use that content. Then the cycle starts over, focused on the next major topic in the course.<sup>\*</sup> By working through this sequence and getting frequent, immediate feedback on their performance, the small groups gradually evolve into and become something quite different: learning teams. Once these newly formed groups have jelled and become cohesive teams, the members become very committed to the work of their teams and the teams become capable of accomplishing some very challenging learning tasks.

Highly recommend. © Angela Risner 2014. Unauthorized use and/or duplication of this material without express and written permission from or Angela Risner is strictly prohibited. Excerpts and links may be used, provided that full and clear credit is given to Angela Risner with appropriate and specific direction to the original content.

Very timely work; What Fink proposes requires a paradigm shift, the enormity of which may overwhelm educators who are simply looking to reuse the exact content and delivery methods that they may have used for decades, while this is disturbing, this frequently happens. For these, Fink has a distinct message: reflect and take responsibility for the teaching methods and integrative strategies you choose to adopt. His call to action is inspirational and well worth analyzing - simply because of the rapid ongoing changes in society and generationally.

Excellent book for any higher education educator. The author discusses with enough detail the concept of significant learning and how to apply it in a college course setting to increase student engagement, including online teaching. Indisputably, Fink is an authority on the topic of teaching - learning.

I purchased this book for a class in my Masters in Ed work called Online Pedagogy. It is very thoughtfully and practically written. From the start I could see its potential in course design, and I plan to continue to use it even after this class has ended. Great, easy to follow charts and explanations of theory. I highly recommend it.

I recommend this text to any teacher in higher ed. The longer that you have been in the profession, the more eye-opening this book can be.

A call and exposition of significant learning in higher education. Fink's work is an excellent resource for students and professors who are looking to become better teachers.

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Great product

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