Guided Independent Learning at K.U.Leuven

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11 April 2008

Research and education @ K.U.Leuven

The need for an overall educational concept

Need for a shared view on the meaning of excellence in higher education:

- External dynamics: quality assurance
- Internal dynamics:
  - faculty development and training
  - appointments of teachers and teaching staff

The need for Guided Independent Learning (GIL) as an overall concept

Evaluation of alternatives:

- Selfinstruction, PBL, Competence oriented education …

A deliberate choice for:

- explicitation of aims and objectives
- importance of communication in a research praxis
- decision making on a faculty level
- room for characterization of programmes
- confirmation of the autonomy and the critical role of the university

→ GIL as an answer to the need for external and internal justification

GIL: Characteristics

Guided Independent Learning is a comprehensive concept:

- Defines goals for university teaching, roles and responsibilities of students and faculty members
- It is referred to in all decisions with educational consequences

GIL: Characteristics (cont.)

GIL does not reject particular instructional approaches – still there are guidelines:

- Education has to be functional
- Participation in research activities is highly valuable

GIL entails an affirmation of the semi-autonomous position of the university

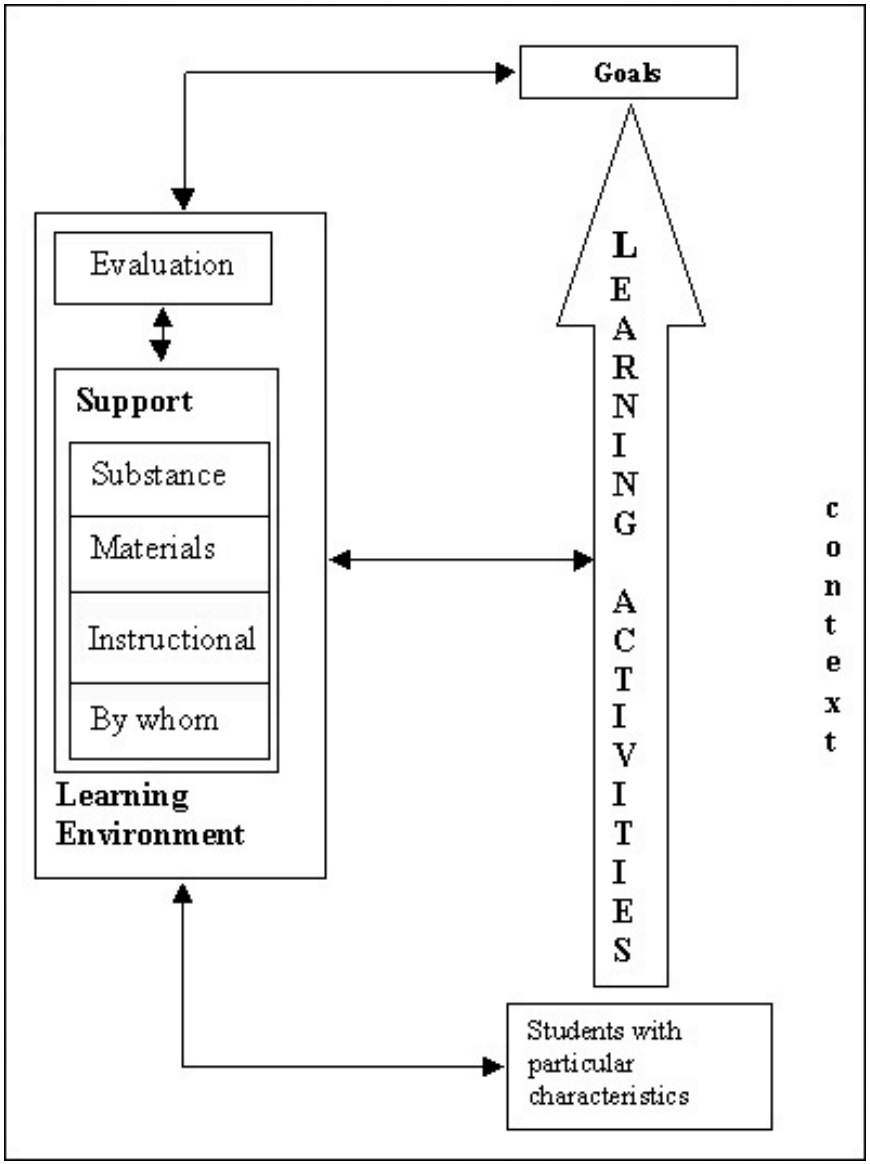
Pedagogical framework: GIL

- Learning is an active, constructive, cumulative, goal-oriented, self-regulated, contextualised, social process
- Students should acquire a critical scientific attitude and become actors in knowledge creation and sharing
- Graduates should be able to take up responsibility in society and articulate original viewpoints
- GUIDED INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Pedagogical framework: GIL (1)

Students' responsibility:

The learning process



Students' responsibility: the learning process

Starting point:

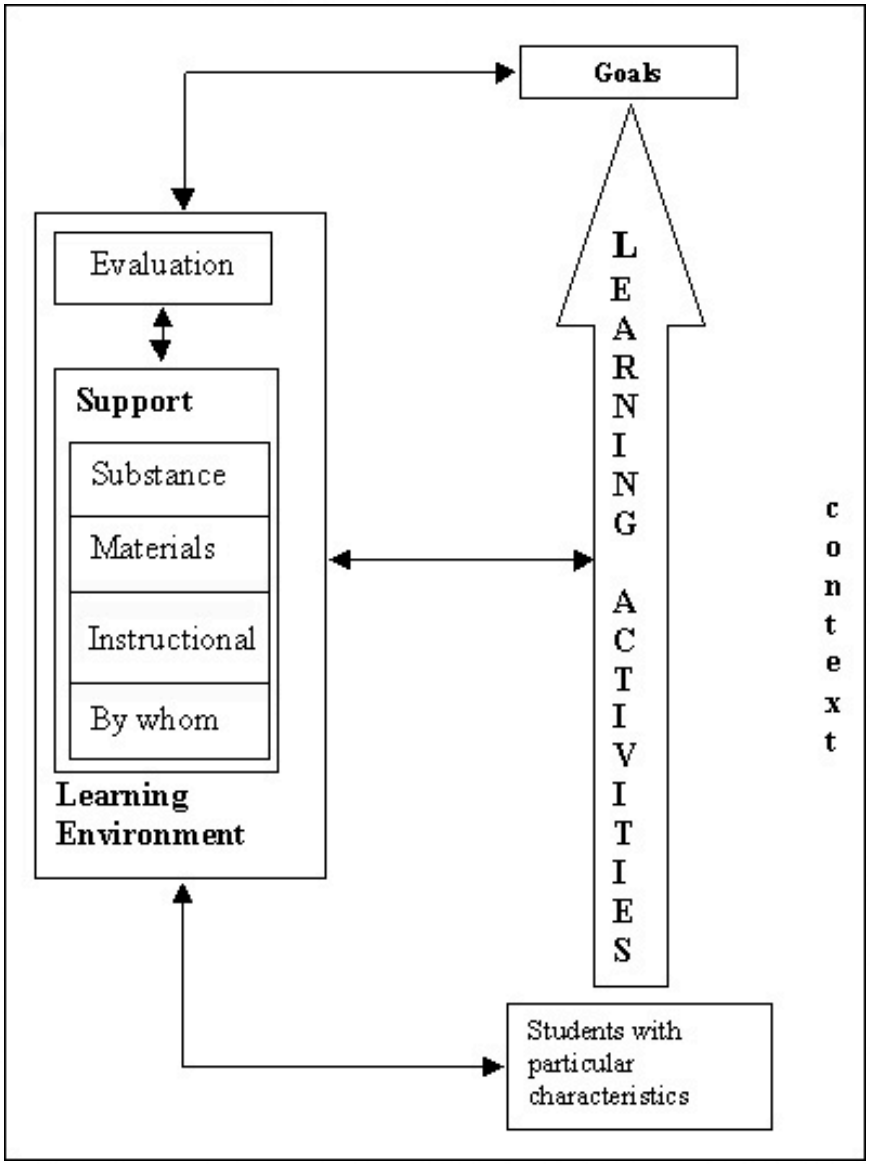
- learning is an active, constructive, cumulative, goal-oriented, self-regulated, contextualised, social process

Students should

- acquire an in-depth understanding of the instructional goals
- select and engage in appropriate learning activities
- call for additional help if the learning environment provides insufficient support

Pedagogical framework: GIL (2)

- Teachers' responsibility:
- Coaching the students' learning process

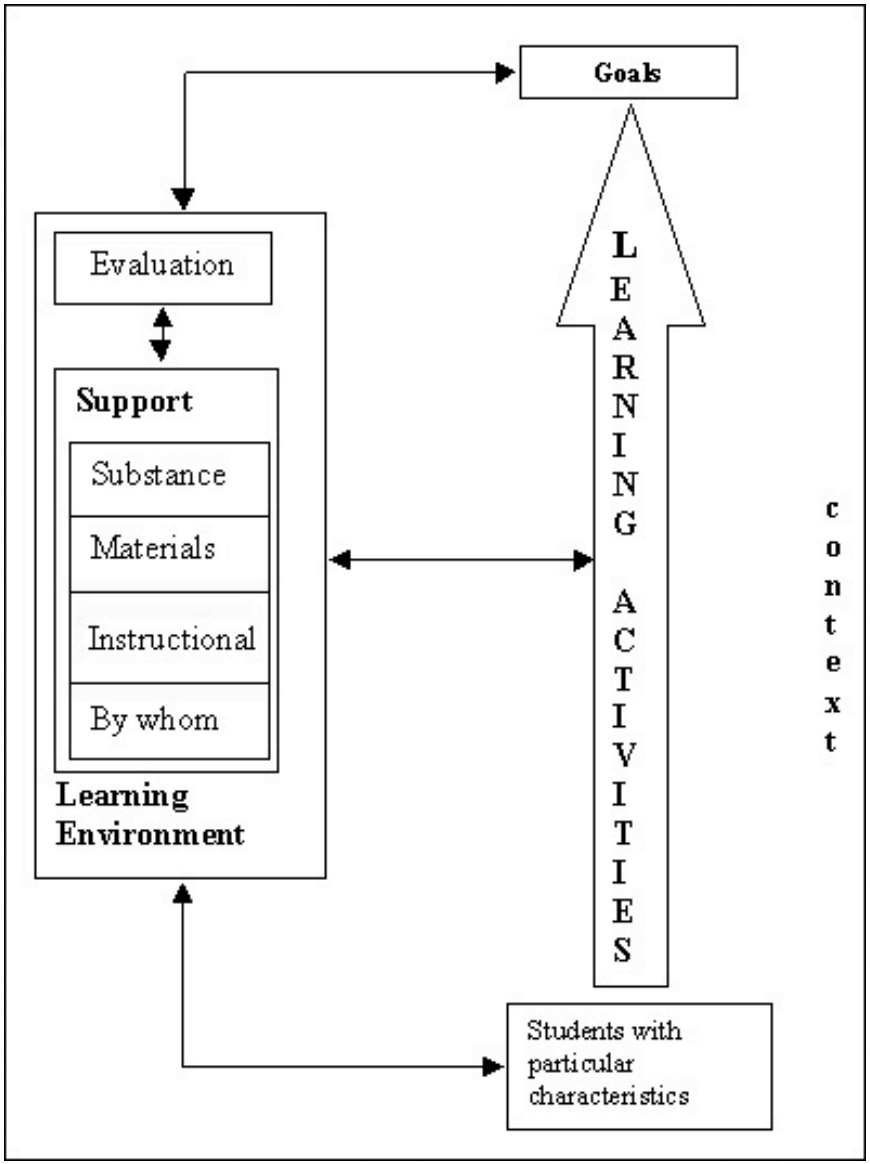


Teachers' responsibility: support of students' learning process

- to define adequate goals in agreement with programme responsibles
- to consistently construct an assessment approach for these goals
- to elaborate an environment that in line with GIL-principles, encourages self-regulation by providing sufficient and goal-directed support

Pedagogical framework: GIL (3)

- Organisation's responsibility:
- Support students and teachers in the learning process



Toledo: digital learning environment

Logo

Alcatara-bridge in Toledo

Bridge between students and faculty

Acronym

Toetsen en **Le**ren **D**oeltreffend **O**ndersteunen
Effectively supporting Testing and Learning

Aim is

to implement and support (technically and pedagogically) a digital learning environment for all students and faculty at the K.U.Leuven

What changes does it imply for students?

- more lifelike, relevant, research oriented tasks
- distribution of learning activities over the academic year, perception of increased study pressure
- a change of forms of evaluation and criteria: assessment of development of academic skills and discipline related knowledge
- increase of independence: increase of uncertainty
- intensive support

What changes does it imply for teachers?

- they are expected to rethink their goals and approach
- (re)develop the curriculum
- to support and to coach students

What changes does it imply for the organisation?

- more professional attention is given to education
- ‘material’ implications
- GIL as leitmotiv for educational policy and support:
  - teaching assessment and quality assurance
  - professional development
  - curriculum development: implementation of bachelor-master structure
  - educational innovations