

**UBT College**  
**LAW FACULTY**

**GUIDELINES FOR COMPETENCY-BASED  
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The competency-based teaching and learning is a new approach that has been embraced in the higher education system in many developed countries with advanced educational system. The competency-based teaching philosophy challenges the traditional practise that is chiefly oriented towards content coverage and memorization rather than mastery of skills and competences.

Numerous higher education systems in the world face challenges in developing competent and confident individuals who do not only transform their industries but also society in general. Given the rapid economic, social, and technological advancements in the world, education systems more than ever ought to prepare students with skills for jobs that are to be created in the future and social societal problems (Lpez et al., 2017). Employers around the world argue that albeit high grades graduates lack competences for the today's rapid changing world (Mkongwa, 2018). According to Barman and Konwar (2011), the knowledge based economy relies upon human capital input oriented towards skill and competence rather than content.

Therefore, the need arises for shifting from traditional content teaching and learning based on memorization and factual knowledge to competence-based teaching and learning that focuses on understanding the concepts, skills and competencies which in turn calls for changes in teaching, learning and assessment approaches (Posner, 1995).

The competence-based teaching and learning can be defined as the system of instruction and teaching, assessment, grading and academic reporting that are based on students demonstrating that they have learned the skills rather than content (Mkongwa, 2018). This requires the following reforms in the educational system:

- Curriculum development with the focus on mastery of skills and learning outcomes;
- Modernization of teaching philosophy focused on mastery of skills rather than content coverage;
- Development of assessment system that measures the achievement of learning outcomes rather than knowledge of pure content.

Whereas curriculum development is covered by Guidelines on Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Learning Activity and Assessment Methods of Law Faculty, the

competency-based assessment is covered by Guidelines of Student Assessment of Law Faculty dedicated to the list of student assessment methods that professors are instructed to select for achieving their learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, this cannot be achieved without Competency-Based Teaching Philosophy. Therefore, the current document serves as a guideline for professors to embrace the teaching philosophies and approaches that are aimed at mastery of skills and achievement of learning outcomes rather than content memorization.

## **2. COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

The content-based teaching and learning and competency-based teaching and learning differ in many ways. Below are presented several differences that serve as a guide for instructors of Law Faculty to apply and recognize the importance of competence-based teaching philosophy.

### **Difference between TBT and CBT**

| <b>Traditional –based teaching</b>  | <b>Competence-based teaching</b>   |
|---|--|
| 1. Traditional-based teaching pays attention to few academic outcomes and does not take into account the full range of basic skills, such as social-emotional, including the application of skills. | CBT assists students in mastering the skills and applying those skills in career and life.   |
| 2. TBT is time-based. Once a student completes a course or a lesson it advances to the next level regardless of learning.   | CBT focuses on students demonstrating the mastery of learning, whereby instructors monitor the pace of mastery of skills and offer different support for students to master those skills within different time limits. |
| 3. Grading and assessment practices relies on assignment completion and not mastery of skills   | Grading in CBT is continuous and communicates the students the progress in mastering those skills so they can be lifelong learners.  |

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| 4.  | TBT revolves around the mentality that abilities of different students are differently carved in stone.                                    | CBT fosters growth of students and relies upon the fact that all students are equal in abilities to learn and all of them with right mix of challenges and support can achieve the same results |
| 5.  | TBT relies on extrinsic motivation   | CBT fosters and nurtures the intrinsic motivation.  |
| 6.  | Focuses on curriculum coverage and not on what students have really learnt   | Teaching, learning, support, and resources should be rooted in what is best for students in terms of engagement and intrinsic motivation.   |
| 7.  | Curriculum organized around memorization and comprehension of content knowledge rather than application of learning and mastery of skills. | CBT focuses on personalized learning and development of higher order competences such as analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving.   |
| 10. | Ranks students according to the grade and creates winners versus losers divisions creating inequality in society.                          | CBT nurtures the mentality that if given the right support all students can achieve equal results and be ready for their careers.   |

Several elements of the Competence based teaching philosophy are:

1. The Teaching Philosophy in CBT is Student-centred
2. It is learning outcome-based
3. CBT considers various assessment measures to determine the mastery of skills
4. It is practise oriented

### **Student-centred teaching philosophy**

In this teaching philosophy, instructors should recognize the fact that the learner is the centre of attention of the learning activities and learning process. Students' individual learning needs and styles are taken into account when setting priorities of what content to cover, what learning and teaching activities to use and what kind of assessment methods to use.

### **Learning Outcome-based teaching philosophy**

In this teaching philosophy students must demonstrate the mastery of all required skills and competencies set as learning outcomes before they advance to the next level.

### **Various assessment measures for various skill mastery**

Students can be measured for course proficiency also through apprenticeships, study visits, and work-related practical formats. For instance, writing a letter to a public official can be considered as a measure to assess mastery of public policy skill or writing learning outcome.

### **Practice-oriented competency-based teaching**

The teaching philosophy revolves around the gaining of practical skills by students and the achievement of tangible learning outcomes that serve the needs of industry and not just the possession of theoretical knowledge.

## **3. PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

The teaching philosophy of the Law Faculty does not completely shift to competency-based teaching from content-based teaching by sidelining and taking for granted the issue of content. According to Hong (2012), competency-based teaching should focus on the learning process and teaching the students about the importance of valuing the learning process and developing the skills in learning to learn and developing key competencies.

Therefore, the competency-based teaching philosophy of the Law Faculty focuses on the following:

- Student learning needs and learning styles;
- Provision of necessary time to students to acquire the expected learning outcomes and competencies;
- Establishment of a supportive learning environment;
- Learning Outcome focuses curriculum with teaching strategies matched to the achievement of such learning outcome;
- Creation of meaningful contexts;
- Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching approaches;
- Constructive teaching and learning
- Cooperative, interactive learning (with peers, teachers.)

- Discovery learning
- Reflective learning

The matching of teaching strategies to outcome-based curriculum is regulated by Guideline on Constructive Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Learning Activity and Assessment Methods of Law Faculty.

### **Meaningful contexts**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty is to establish a meaningful learning context where students recognize the relevance and the need for acquiring the skills as included in the outcome-based curriculum.

### **Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching approach**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty focuses on analyzing the phenomena from multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary angles since the skills, learning outcomes and competences are holistic and the teaching approach should be integrative and holistic.

### **Constructive learning**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty is constructivist and teachers engage students in a process of constructing their own knowledge by interacting with the learning environment rather than absorption of knowledge from the professor as merely a knowledge transferor.

### **Cooperative and interactive learning**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty is that students construct their own knowledge and master the skills by means of learning from each other (peers). In this regard, the professors of the Law Faculty take into account the diversity of student learning needs for the purpose of achieving learning outcomes and accomplishing course objectives. Here the dialogue between the professors and students is established with respect to what are the best-suited teaching strategies to their learning styles.

### **Discovery learning**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty is embedded in a discovery-based approach and sidelines receptive learning. Students in this regard are assisted by professors to interact with

the learning environment, student colleagues, and their tutors to discover solutions to problems raised in class.

### **Reflective learning**

The teaching philosophy of the Law Faculty requires students to reflect on their learning, intrinsic motivation, learning approaches and learning progress. As students reflect they also learn how to learn.

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCE-BASED TEACHING**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty pays special attention to:

1. Enhancement of professor-student interaction;
2. Use Socratic teaching philosophy in legal classes of study programs;
3. Boost deep learning environment;
4. Boost the intrinsic motivation of students
5. Use of technology aides in teaching

### **Enhancement of teacher-student interaction**

The enhancement of professor-student interaction is achieved through teaching philosophy that honors the contribution of students in a lesson. Professors of Law Faculty serve only as moderators of the interaction that students make with the professor and with peers. In this way, students of the Law Faculty are free to express themselves and contribute to the subject matter through their ideas and perceptions. In this way, they not only develop their communication competencies but also nurture their self-confidence skills and master the subject matter philosophy

### **Socratic teaching in legal courses**

Students in this teaching strategy are given materials to read beforehand and come to class prepared and the whole learning process happens through dialogue with professors and peers through open-ended questions and not wrong answers.

### **Deep Learning environment**

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty aims at achieving the following goals:

- Improving the emotional state of the student (student at Law Faculty is happy and full of energy);
- Nurtures the Self-Context of students by boosting their self-confidence in the learning environment;
- Improves the social relationships of students with professor, peers, and Law Faculty community

The teaching philosophy that is aimed at improving the emotional state of the student, where students feel happy and full of energy at Law Faculty revolved around the following aspects:

- Boosting the emotional competence of students
- Attracting interest and curiosity
- Establishing a fun, dynamic, and challenging learning environment
- Developing affective learning environment for the student

Professors at Law Faculty embrace the teaching strategy that engages students emotionally, creates a sense of their belonging to the learning environment, connects students with the professor, and establish a fun and affective learning environment.

The teaching philosophy at the Law Faculty, which nurtures the self-context of the student in the learning environment pays attention to the following:

- Intrinsic motivation as opposed to extrinsic motivation
- Enables autonomy for student learning
- Self-regulation of learning goals and autonomous goal setting
- Attention regulation of students

Intrinsic motivation is achieved through professors of Law Faculty formulating practical oriented learning outcomes, which are up to date and industry oriented. In this way, professors explain the students about the relevance of the achievement of such Los for their career paths and daily lives. If students know the value of skills that they are learning how to master and where they can apply them, the intrinsic motivation increases.

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty revolves around motivating students to become autonomous in developing their motivation rather than professors imposing motivation through grades and other forms.

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty focuses on establishment of favorable learning environment in which peers interconnect with each other and establish the pace of learning.

The teaching philosophy at Law Faculty focuses on attention regulation through reducing cognitive load, which means that not too many information should be given during the class lessons. If students focus on learning few concepts related to the class instead of being bombarded with lots of information, the cognitive load is reduced and attention is also regulated to improve the students' deep learning.

The improvement of social relationships of students with professors and their peers and their belonging to the community of Law Faculty is achieved as follows:

- Professors at Law Faculty in their teaching philosophy make students feel that they belong to Law Faculty and are interconnected with one another;
- Boost student-student relationships through problem-solving team learning activities
- Boost student-teacher relationship by professors allowing sometimes students to take the role of the professor, especially in groupwork or through Learning to Learn Tutoring Program of Law Faculty;

### **Intrinsic motivation of students**

Teaching philosophy at Law Faculty develops intrinsic motivation by explaining the value of the skills that are taught in class for their future career. In this context professors are inspirers of students and conduct inspirational teaching.

### **Use of technological aids**

Teaching philosophy is to use technological aids to make the learning environment more fun and dynamic. The digital videos of Coursera, EdX, video documentaries from Netflix, movie debates, video presentations of students as assignments are some of the tools that help professors at Law Faculty to develop an experiential and transformative learning environment.

Additionally, the digital aids such as EON Virtual reality to create virtual environments where students can learn on a particular phenomenon makes the student experience the learning.

Professors at Law Faculty are instructed to use EON Virtual Reality tool of UBT to create VR classes or unit lessons.