Student learning approach and motivational orientations in the tertiary context of the United Arab Emirates: Implications for English for Academic Purposes course design

Submitted by James Patrick McLaughlin to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in TESOL, February 2014

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Abstract:

This thesis investigates the interaction of student learning approaches and course design at a tertiary institution in the United Arab Emirates. The students involved in the study were mostly male students attending an English for academic purposes program.

This study employed a mixed methods design utilizing questionnaires and interviews. The students completed the Revised Study Process Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F) to assess their learning orientation along the deep and surface approach dimensions. The questionnaire results on the deep and surface dimensions were inconclusive. However, the results of a factor analysis suggest a disposition among the students towards attainment of satisfaction from learning.

The evidence from the interviews indicates that the students were highly disposed towards practical learning outcomes, especially when these were linked to career skills. Interview evidence also points to the role of social relations amongst the students and with teachers as important learning factors. Finally, the interview analysis suggests the importance of affective factors.

The results of separate questionnaires administered to a small group of faculty and the students at large, along with the interview data, indicate that the English for academic purposes courses broadly supported deep learning approaches. However, contextual factors at the college led to a highly structured and outcome based approach to the course curricula. Although the courses may have been supportive of deep learning approaches for most of the students, the courses’ prescriptive and structured approach may not have been optimal for high achievers.

The implications of the findings of this study for EAP courses in the Gulf context are discussed as well as their implications for learning theory.
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(A) Rationale for the Study

It seems to be a common perception that United Arab Emirates tertiary students are poorly motivated and tend to exhibit poor learning strategies (King, 2011). The common wisdom seems to be that local students are concerned with their scores and grades but have little intrinsic interest in course content (Swan, 2012). But is this perception accurate or fair? And is it unique?

Kember (2000) reports the following description of students at the University of Hong Kong from Course Planning Committee minutes (1989):

Students in Hong Kong . . . expect lecturers to teach them everything that they are expected to know. They have little desire to discover for themselves or avail themselves of the facilities which are available to them within the teaching institution. They wish to be spoon fed and in turn they are spoon fed. Lecturers are under pressure to feed the student with a certain amount of academic and community needs information and the simplest way to do it is to adopt the old and traditional approaches to teaching.

However, when Kember (2000) administered the Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs, 1987) he found that students in Hong Kong had motivational characteristics comparable (and in some ways preferable) to students surveyed in Australia.

Kember (2000) attributed this contradiction to misperceptions about the manner in which students go about their learning. Misunderstandings of student learning styles, he suggested, may result from cultural differences between the students and their instructors. Foreign instructors may not fully understand the approach their students are taking and mislabel what they are doing. Instructors, therefore, should have a better understanding of their students' learning styles. In this way, they might develop instructional approaches which are more suitably tailored to their students' learning styles, their understandings and their backgrounds.
As stated, there seems to be a general perception that Emirati students are academically disadvantaged due to poor motivation and learning approaches. These students have been described as: over reliant on memorization; ill equipped for independent learning as a result of teaching practices that do not favour student autonomy; having a passive teacher centred (spoon-fed) learning style, holding teachers responsible for their learning; and oriented towards conflict avoidance (King, 2011).

Eleven years of teaching English for academic purposes at the tertiary level in the UAE tells me that students in this context are different to both their East Asian and Western counterparts in important ways. For example, they seem to require more individual attention and more highly structured content than seems to be the case for East Asian and Western students. On the other hand, common perceptions of how students approach learning in the UAE and other Gulf countries could, in many cases, be the result of misunderstandings. This study explores the motivational characteristics of tertiary students in a UAE vocational institution, their understandings and considers the implications to curriculum design.

My research responds to the following two primary research questions:

○ What are the learning approach characteristics of first year bachelor students?
○ Is the current approach to curriculum in the English for academic/professional purposes courses supportive of students taking a deep approach given the students motivational and learning style characteristics? In what ways?

(B) The Context

The study was conducted in the United Arab Emirates in one branch of a network of government supported technical colleges distributed throughout the country. At the time of the study, the system enrolled 16000 students across 16 campuses. The students were UAE nationals and occasionally students from other Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) nations. Most of the students came to the colleges upon graduation from high school. The branch in which this study was conducted was one of the larger colleges in the system with 2650 students.
Besides daytime students, there were, as well, mature students attending evening classes. Many students were also sponsored by government and government affiliated corporations.

English instruction at the system had recently moved away from being focused on International English Language Testing System (IELTS) preparation to being focused on English for academic purposes. These new courses were intended to support major courses and liberal studies courses which were required as part of the Bachelor of Applied Sciences program. The new academic preparation courses focused on developing research and reporting skills.

(C) Research Approach

The current study employs a mixed methods approach. Creswell (2009) describes mixed methods as an outcome of a pragmatic view to research which utilizes the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research. Under this approach, the researcher assumes that collecting diverse types of data provides a better understanding of the research problem. The approach has been described as especially appropriate to the social and health sciences where the issues are complex and multifaceted and where the use of either quantitative or qualitative data alone might not be adequate to address the complexity of the subject of investigation (Creswell, 2009).

The particular design format used was sequential explanatory (Creswell, 2009). The study began with two questionnaires being administered to the students. One focused on the students’ learning approaches. The other questionnaire focused on course characteristics that support deep learning. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed to selected faculty members also focusing on the deep learning supporting characteristics of the courses. In the second phase, open ended interviews were conducted with selected students. These had the purpose of gaining additional information and insight on how students went about learning and the relationship of this to the courses under investigation.
The questionnaire which focused on student learning approaches was the Revised Study Process Questionnaire 2 (R-SPQ-2F; Biggs, Kember and Leung, 2001). This instrument was used in order to obtain a broad quantitative picture of student motivation characteristics. The instrument is designed to provide information on student learning characteristics along the dimensions of deep and surface learning. The other student questionnaire along with the instructor questionnaire asked the respondents to rate the courses on characteristics which encourage deep learning.

The results of the R-SPQ-2F were subjected to Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability checks of the deep and surface dimensions and the sub-dimensions. In addition, a factor analysis was conducted to ascertain what additional factors might have been at play. The discussion of the results is expanded to other theories of motivation and learning associated with the deep and surface learning construct.

The interview format I employed is described by Cohen et al (2007) as standard open-ended. The topics and their sequence of discussion were determined in advance. The participants provided answers to open ended questions asked by the interviewer. This semi-structured interview format allowed for identification of emergent themes and deep analysis of responses. On the other hand, the built in organization of semi-structured interview format provided a degree of organization facilitating data analysis and comparison between subjects. As well, it helped to keep responses related to the research question.

Chapter 2 contains a detailed discussion of the learning context of the study in terms of the historical background and its implications for instruction. In Chapter 3, I overview the various theories of motivation and learning with emphasis on the theories which are most inclusive of the perspective of other theories and which seem to inform the deep versus surface approach construct. This chapter also involves a discussion of the role of culture on approaches to learning. Chapter 4 involves a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of the mixed methods approach and provides a justification of this approach. In this chapter, the specific methodological and ethical procedures employed are also described. Chapter 5 contains the results and analysis of the study. Chapter 6 involves a discussion of how the findings of the
study relate to theories of motivation and learning. The implications of the findings for English for academic purposes practice are also considered in Chapter 6.
Chapter 2 – Context

(A) The National Context

1. Change and distortion

When residents of the United Arab Emirates look at a picture of the region from 1950s and 60s they are struck by how much the country has changed. The UAE at present has all the trappings of any modern nation. The cities are cosmopolitan, consumer items are in abundance, there are options in education and those residing in the UAE often work for large multi-national corporations. In order for the UAE to have changed from being an obscure British protectorate to the home of the Burj Khalifa (the world's tallest building) in the span of 40 years, the nation underwent tremendous transformation.

Although development in the UAE has been extensive, Bahgat (1999) points out that progress has not occurred evenly. Distortions have worked their way into the country's social, economic and political fabric.

The World Bank (2003, in Godwin, 2006) classifies the UAE as a developing country with a high national income. This classification is, in part, due to the country's limited economic diversification and its heavy reliance on oil. It is also likely in part due to its archaic political structure (Godwin, 2006). The country's hereditary rulers pass laws by edict with no need for ratification by elected assembly. The ruling families control the government bureaucracy by controlling appointments to key positions. In addition, by controlling national wealth, the ruling families shore up their status through patronage and the distribution of financial support to the country's citizens, acting as a pseudo social security payment system (Godwin, 2006). In this regard, the UAE citizenry are, to varying degrees, given a stake in the status quo. The more modern attributes such as openness and entrepreneurship are tempered by the preexisting social and political structure. Termed the 'rentier' or distributive state paradigm, this system is associated with wealthy oil states. Rentier governments obtain the loyalty of citizens through what they give rather than through pluralism and political participation
(Delacroix, 1980; Findlow, 2006; Minnis, 2000). In addition, under this system, citizens find it advantageous to remain separate and distinct from the larger population of foreign workers who do not share their economic benefits to nearly the same extent.

One result of the rentier system is distortion in the staffing of public as opposed to private sector jobs. On the one side, the private sector is made up almost exclusively of foreign workers whereas national workers are employed almost exclusively in the public sector (Bahgat, 1999).

This state of affairs is best understood as an outcome of historical conditions rather than strategic public policy. In the 1970s, skill levels among the local population were inadequate to satisfy economic development driven by petrol dollars. As a result, foreign workers were imported to make up the labour short fall. In the 1970s labour importation continued. By 1978, UAE nationals represented 25 percent of the population of 850,000 but only about 10 percent of the labour force (Findlow, 2005). By 2005, the proportion of Emiratis to the overall population had fallen to 20 percent while remaining at 10 percent of the labour force (Daleure, 2011). Currently the population of the UAE is slightly over 5 million of which Emiratis make up 19 percent of the population (United Arab Emirates, CIA Factbook).

However, participation by Emiratis in the private sector is only 2 percent, though the private sector accounts for 52 percent of all jobs in the UAE (Daleure, 2011). The bulk of working Emiratis find employment in various arms of government including the police, army, government bureaucracies and state owned corporations. In the GCC as a whole, nationals working in the public sector accounted for almost 58 percent of all nationals employed in 2007 (Billing, 2009).

2. Emiratization

UAE nationals prefer to work in the government sector due to higher salaries and better employment conditions (Godwin, 2006). Godwin states that gradual alignment of public sectors salaries to those of the private sector would encourage movement of Emiratis towards the private sector. However, despite official rhetoric in support of Emiratization (of
the private sector, the government seems reluctant to take the necessary measures to bring about salary alignment. Substantial pay increases for Emirati public sector employees are regularly reported in the local media. For example, a recent newspaper article reported pay increases ranging from 35 to 100 percent have been instituted for most workers in government departments. The only government workers not included are those in the ministries of defense and the interior who were described as having salaries already well above the pay scale of other civil servants (Dajani, 2011). The article itself comments that pay increases of this sort set back efforts to encourage nationals to enter the private sector.

Under the rentier state model, these sorts of actions are interpreted as politically based and intended to sure-up loyalty to the political status quo despite the fact that they run contrary to economic rationalization. A second impediment to Emiratization is the widely held perception that Emiratis come up short in both skill and work ethic (Wilkins, 2001; Godwin, 2006).

In spite of the low proportion of UAE nationals to the population, their rate of unemployment is relatively high at 14 percent. Youth unemployment is as high as 60 percent and almost half of UAE nationals are under age 20 (Daleure, 2011; Shaheen, 2010). At the same time, public sector employment is reaching saturation and will be incapable of continuing to absorb the 15 to 20 thousand nationals entering the job market on a yearly basis. It is unrealistic to expect that the UAE state will, in the longer term, be able to maintain the social contract whereby oil wealth is distributed to the citizenry by way of highly paid government employment (Daleare, 2011; Shaheen, 2010; Fitch & Shaheen, 2010). As recent events in the region indicate, there is the potential for political instability stemming from unemployment and economic marginalization. Therefore, should this situation not be addressed it will possibly become a growing security concern.

One might expect that education would play the leading role in realigning the skills and expectations of young Emiratis towards being less dependent on government jobs. However, Shaheen (2010) points out that most private sector employers still lack confidence in the country's education system. A recent survey of industry executives indicated that they
perceived that Emiratis were particularly under equipped in the area of technical skills. One reason being most national students at the tertiary level choose to take courses in the humanities.

In addition, it appears that young Emiratis have not adjusted their expectations regarding employment. Shaheen (2009) refers to a recent study at Abu Dhabi Women's College which finds that 96 percent of students intend to work upon graduation, however only 11 percent wanted private sector jobs. With such a small appetite for private sector employment on the part of the country's future home-born work force, it would seem that government work has become a perceived entitlement. In order for this to change, it will likely require a multi-prong effort that will include making public sector work less financially attractive, providing incentives for private sector work (perhaps a program of temporary cash rebates) and education aimed at private sector needs.

3. The history of education in the UAE

During the 19th century, the Sheikdoms of the Trucial Coast that currently make up the UAE survived on subsistence economies that included fishing, animal husbandry, re-export trading and some limited agriculture (Davidson, 2008). Education during this period was primarily religious in which young men and boys were instructed on religion by local clerics. The approach relied heavily on rote learning of the Quran and the Prophet’s utterances. However, most local mutiwas were not themselves literate scholars and would not have been able to provide a formal education to their pupils. Thus, the bulk of the population, at the time, were not able to read or write, nor could they perform rudimentary mathematics (Davidson, 2008; Baghat, 1999).

With the development of the pearling industry in the first part of the twentieth century, the region began to enjoy unprecedented wealth. With this, a new wealthy merchant class came into being. One of the ways in which the new class of wealthy merchants displayed their influence was to act as social benefactors. Local patrons established a number of schools for boys in the Eastern Emirates between 1907 and 1926. The schools were housed in purpose
built structures and were staffed mostly by local teachers educated elsewhere in the Arab world or by Arab expatriate teachers, including Egyptians and Palestinians. A much wider range of topics was taught than before, often following an Egyptian curriculum, including basic mathematics, regional geography and some Arab history (Davidson, 2008).

However, as the century continued, this early effort at establishing formal education failed along with the region's pearling industry. A lack of economic diversification made the region especially vulnerable to economic upheaval. British colonial management limited the extent and scope of trade between the local sheikdoms and other regions. As well, technological development that would have made the local pearling industry more robust against competition, especially from Japan, was also constrained by colonial restrictions. At the same time, there had been little to no colonial support of infrastructure. Thus, in the 1930s when the pearling industry collapsed, the region was particularly hard hit. The area returned to subsistence levels that continued until oil exports began in the 1960s (Davidson, 2008). The poverty of the period meant schools no longer received local support and most were thus forced to shut their doors leaving the bulk of the population again without access to formal education (Davidson, 2008).

During the same period, Arab nationalism was spreading throughout the Arab world. In some cases, this led to the overthrow and replacement of British backed monarchies with nationalist governments. Educational associations were sometimes associated with the development and spread of Arab nationalist ideology (Davidson, 2008). In the early 1950s, the ruler of Kuwait began to support schools in the Trucial Coast Emirates (now the UAE) and furnished textbooks from Kuwait (Davidson, 2008; Daleure, 2011). Davidson (2008) suggests that the Kuwaiti monarchy was motivated to introduce its own form of curriculum, in part, to pre-empt threatening Arab nationalist curricula from taking hold instead.

As the local region began to develop politically and economically, local Sheiks took up the role of supporting education. In so doing, they interjected a healthy dose of nationalist imagery into local textbooks, however, using themselves as the symbolic manifestations of national identity (Davidson, 2008). Since independence, the rulers of the UAE have associated
themselves with education along with other forms of social development. The following statement from the founder of the UAE, Sheik Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan, is interesting not so much in its content but in how often one sees such sorts of quotes here: 'The wealth of any nation is its intellectuals and the progress of peoples and nations is judged by the level and extent of education they reach' (Lefrere, 2007).

4. Educational expansion
Despite education having been reintroduced prior to the Trucial Coast States gaining independence and becoming the UAE, the scope of education remained extremely limited. In 1962, the Trucial States had 20 schools and no high schools or tertiary institutions. However, shortly after independence, in 1972, the number of schools had increased to 74. Since then, with national policy emphasizing education, a total of 1,150 schools have been built accommodating 640,000 students (Godwin, 2006). As well, remarkable progress has especially been made in reducing the illiteracy rate. With less than 20 percent of the population literate prior to independence, by 2000, 75 percent for women and 70 percent for men were classified as literate (Clark, 2006).

Of the current population of one million UAE nationals, 250,000 are school children in the K-12 education system. At the tertiary level, 15000 attend the Higher Colleges of Technology, 16000 are at UAE University and 2000 at Zayed University. In addition, about 5000 UAE nationals study in private educational institutions or as overseas students in America, Britain and Australia (Godwin, 2006).

5. External influences in UAE education
With formal education being extremely small scale prior to independence and without a home grown education system having taken hold, the nation was required to import educational expertise. This can be seen as part of the wider trend towards the importation of labour since gaining independence. Findlow (2005; 2006) describes two competing influences in UAE education - external Arab and British/North American.
The county's public elementary and secondary education systems are based on an imported Arab model. Although it was Kuwait that established the second wave of non-religious schools in the Trucial States in the early 1950s, they were staffed by Egyptian and Qatari teachers as well as those from Kuwait (Findlow, 2005). Findlow (2005) states that since the initial setting up of public education, the Egyptian influence, in particular, has grown and become embedded within the infrastructure of public education in the UAE. She states that over the years, Egyptian educational personnel have evolved a 'self-sustaining sub-system' which has been 'strengthening its hold over parts of the national and educational infrastructure since before federation' (Findlow, 2005, p.290).

At the tertiary level, the Egyptian presence is also described as the primary influence at United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) in terms of staffing and administration. In 1980's Egyptian faculty made up 45 percent of the PhD holding faculty, with Iraqis being the second largest group at about 15 percent. In the mid 1990's nearly half of the faculty listed an Egyptian University as the place where they received their highest degree. In addition, top administration is described as having a high proportion of individuals of Egyptian origin (Findlow, 2005).

Findlow (2005; 2006) contrasts the Higher Colleges of Technology's approach as countering the trend of 'Arab-Islamic traditionalist considerations' evident in the K-12 school system and at UAEU. At HCT the so called 'Egyptian presence' is not in evidence as there were only twelve Egyptians out of a total 936 faculty in 1998 (Findlow, 2005). As well, the HCT has its origins in the North American model, being established in 1988 with the aid of the Canadian firm Educansult. With mostly non-Arab expatriate instructors, the colleges currently teach exclusively in English.

Zayed University is the newest of the three state HE institutions founded in 1998. It has as its mandate' advancing the UAE as a participant in a modern global society' (Findlow, 2006). In addition, its curriculum emphasizes applied science and technology, and it operates a hybrid
US–Canadian–British academic and administrative model. In this institution, as well, English is the primary language of instruction (Findlow, 2006).

In the last decade, a number of private international universities and colleges have set up branches, especially in Dubai with the establishment of Knowledge Village (Godwin, 2006). In the private tertiary institutions, instruction is almost always in English. Godwin (2006) states private education providers are continuing to increase market share by developing a profile as a viable alternative to the government education system. In fact, Shah & Baporikar (2011) report there are currently over 200 foreign branch campuses across the GCC as a whole. Generally these are being established in special education zones within GCC countries such as Knowledge Village in Dubai.

Globalism and pragmatism appear to ideologically underpin the approaches to education taken by the HCT and Zayed University. The 'globalism-pragmatism' interest in these institutions can be seen in their attempts to associate themselves with Western based bodies and institutions. The HCT, in particular, has set up affiliations with universities in the UK Canada, France, Australia and USA. The HCT has also attempted to achieve accreditation through North American Accreditation bodies and various HCT departments have sought international accreditation for their specializations (Findlow, 2005). Findlow (2005) reports that Zayed University has also aggressively pursued international accreditation.

The drive for status through association with Western educational bodies is also found in the region's private education sector which advertise themselves on the basis of their accreditation status. For instance, the American University of Dubai advertises itself as ‘the only American accredited university in the Gulf’ (Findlow, 2005, p. 26).

The pragmatic interpretation of this sort of affiliation with external institutions and bodies is that it represents an accommodation to the globalized nature of education. When students receive credentials from accredited institutions, their credentials are more likely to receive international recognition. In addition, by helping to ensure that educational standards are maintained, international accreditation also addresses the needs of the local market (Godwin, 2006). However from the critical perspective, this phenomena is seen as a manifestation of
neo-colonialism where status is derived mainly by way of Western body affiliation rather than because of the implementation of high standards.

As discussed in the UAE context section, the employment conditions for the Emirati population will soon likely begin to change. In time, Emiratis may no longer be able to count on public sector jobs and will be forced to compete for work in the private sector. To the extent that imported educational institutions are seen as keeping to the academic standards of their parent institutions they may become the preferred choice for private sector recruitment. Emirati students attending internationally known private institutions may have advantages over their publically funded institution counterparts to the extent employers see Western based credentials as superior (Godwin, 2006). A recent newspaper article reported that employers in the country unanimously preferred graduates who had studied abroad, followed by those from branches of overseas universities, then from the publically funded federal universities, and, in last place, local private universities (Swan, 2013).

6. Language in UAE education
Findlow (2006) discusses the social and cultural implications of the rapid expansion of education in the UAE, especially as it pertains to the two dominant languages used in the country - Arabic and English. She states (2006) that in young nations, the language of the prior colonial power (or ruling class) tends to be used in business, whereas the indigenous language is the language associated with childhood, home, tradition, nationalism and traditional culture. Thus, in the UAE, English is the language of business and trade and may be construed as the language of neo colonial elitism, whereas Arabic is the language associated with history and tradition in Emirati culture. She breaks down the cultural linguistic associations as follows:

- Arabic—cultural authenticity, localism, tradition, emotions, religion.
- English—modernity, internationalism, business, material status, secularism (Findlow, 2006).
This linguistic dichotomy is reflected in the language of instruction in the nation's publically funded educational institutions. Emirati K-12 students are generally educated in Arabic. In contrast, the three publically supported higher learning institutions use English as their Medium of Instruction (EMI). The HCT currently has all subjects being taught in English. At UAEU and Zayed University, the majority of topics are taught in English (Findlow, 2006). As stated, the country's expanding market for private sector education tends heavily to English as the language of instruction.

Findlow (2006) states that the choice between instruction in English or Arabic is a choice between two educational value sets, 'The linguistic bifurcation of educational stages is coterminous with that between localism—authenticity and globalism—pragmatism.' She also points out, to the extent that English becomes the preferred language of higher education, it can be interpreted as symptomatic 'of neo-colonialist power politics in which Arabic is relegated as non-useful, and Arab culture is cast as ‘other’' (Findlow 2006, p. 26).

An alternative pragmatic perspective is that teaching in English promotes the use of internationally recognized interactional and linguistic norms thus facilitating maximally effective communication and the processes of the global economy (Chun, 2009).

From my own point of view, both perspectives have merit. Currently with English as the world's dominant lingua franca, individuals need good English skills to operate professionally in the international arena. However, the current local preference for EMI and international accreditation seems to be more an outcome of Western hegemony (especially North American and British) in the region. The indigenous intellectual base has not established itself sufficiently to challenge Western domination of higher education.

Regardless, of whether one accepts the pragmatic or neo-colonial interpretation of EMI in the region, the decision to teach in one language or another is socially and politically loaded.
7. **Deficiencies in UAE education**

Although greater availability of education to Emiratis might generally be seen as positive, Beghat (1999) discusses how expansion in education services has raced ahead of the capacity of the educational system to provide high standards. In addition, evidence indicates public schools are not adequately preparing students to meet the country's current social and economic needs. Public schooling with its lack of emphasis on creativity and problem solving skills and its orientation towards rote learning is described by critics as failing to prepare students for the modern workplace, especially in regards to the private sector.

Many of the issues in UAE education could be described as structurally embedded. The following list of deficiencies in UAE public education were reported in a national newspaper (Al Ittihad Newspaper, 2005 in Macpherson, Kachelhoffer and Medhat, 2007):

- Unsuitable Curricula. The traditional, repetitious, fragmented and redundant content, disconnected from community and national needs, is encouraging closed attitudes.
- Ineffective teaching methods. Rote learning is preventing the interaction needed to develop research, analysis and communication skills required for higher learning.
- Inappropriate assessment methods. Memory is being tested rather than skills and understandings, ability is not being taken into account, and the tests are encouraging the proliferation of private lessons outside school.
- Little use of ICT. Few schools use modern teaching and learning technologies. Computers tend to be old, unused, or used only for non-teaching purposes.
- Poor libraries and learning support. Libraries are poorly stocked, textbooks are rigid and unrelated to learning processes, and laboratories are badly maintained.
- Short school days and a short school year. Students in the UAE spend about half of the time in learning compared with students in other countries.
- Ineffective school culture. Discipline is weak. Truancy is high, especially by male students. Healthy meals are not available. The learning environments are unattractive.
- Poor facilities. Many school buildings are aged, poorly designed, badly equipped and maintained, with few facilities for sports and cultural activities.
- Low levels of professionalism. Teachers have low skills, qualifications, pay and status. They rely on traditional didactic teaching methods and do not use computers, libraries or other information resources. They are not interested in professional development and show little loyalty to their students and schools. The system provides no training, evaluation or incentives, and discourages creativity.
Professional deficiencies on the part of teaching staff in the K-12 system are often mentioned as the primary issues of UAE education. Dada (2011) for instance, states that those teaching at the secondary level are often not trained teachers but, instead, subject specialists with Baccalaureate degrees in a content field such as physics, mathematics, or English literature. As a result, many do not have the pedagogical knowledge to support their content knowledge. This problem is made worse in that expatriate teachers are often not included in professional development. Furthermore, to supplement low salaries many public school teachers take on extra students as tutors thereby taking away from the time and energy they might devoted to their classes (Dada, 2011).

The approach teachers take to their classes is characterized in the literature as outdated. A report by the UAE Ministry of Education (2006 in Daleure, 2011) describes problems in assessment and evaluation practices across levels. This includes exams that focus on memorization and which lack critical thinking, written exams derived exclusively from textbook material, and pass/fail comprehensive exams. English language instruction in secondary schools is particularly problematic with, generally, poorly trained instructors conducting English classes in Arabic and providing students little or no practice opportunities (Dalaure, 2011). In 2008, the World Bank is reported as stating that across all levels of education, the main classroom activities are copying from the blackboard, and listening to teachers. Group work, creative thinking and proactive learning are described as rare (Shah and Baporikar, 2011).

The outcome of the older approach to instruction is that students become highly reliant on their teachers as sources of knowledge and information subject to testing. Without
developing independent learning skills, students are disadvantaged in a higher education learning environment which tends to require greater learner independence.

Societal factors, as well, affect the quality and extent of education for students in the region. Due to their own lack of educational experience, many parents may not perceive the importance of regular school attendance, completing homework and learning to work independently and therefore do provide the guidance to their children (Daleure, 2011).

Swan (2012) discusses the problem of pervasive cheating in the UAE school system. She relates reports from educators who describe students who over the course of their school careers have engaged in cheating with little awareness or concern that it may be wrong. A particular problem in tertiary institutions is the widespread practice of plagiarism. Students in the UAE will pay considerable fees to have papers custom prepared in order to avoid anti-plagiarism software. The practice of cheating speaks to a surface motivational orientation where the external perception of learning and performance is the primary concern to the student. To the extent that cheating is as prevalent as Swan's article indicates, it suggests a failure of the education system to bring about motivation beyond the most basic competitive and public appearance level.

Another societal factor discussed is the difference in family expectations between boys and girls. At home boys are less likely to be encouraged to do their homework and are free to spend time outside their homes. In contrast, in Emirati society, girls are expected to stay at home and do homework. Returns for male educational involvement are perceived as lower because work opportunities and other social benefits have been more readily available to Emirati men than women. For women, on the other hand, marriage prospects are reported as improving with higher education. As Table 1 indicates women in the UAE tend to have much higher participation rates in higher education than men (Daleure, 2011).
Table 1 Education participation rates by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Male % (out of total males in age group)</th>
<th>Female % (out of total females in age group)</th>
<th>Gender Parity Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Daleure, 2011, p. 51

8. Higher education underdevelopment

The publicly funded tertiary systems are described as having issues relating to planning, institutional linkages along with low student and faculty professional attainment. In a survey forty policy-makers and experts in fourteen public and university institutions in the United Arab Emirates were asked state what they saw as the primary deficiencies in the UAE's education system. The causes most cited by them were:

... inadequate assessment and monitoring of educational needs and inadequate planning. Other important factors are the lack of flexibility of educational institutions, the lack of modernisation and dynamism and the weak incentives for enrolment in technical education. In addition, the lack of incentives, low involvement and spending by the private sector, low spending in technical education and weak linkages between universities, colleges, technical and training institutes are also mentioned, but of somewhat less importance.

Muysken and Nour (2006, p.970)

Shah and Baporikar (2011) sum up the deficiencies in tertiary education in the Middle East. These include sparse research activity, low levels of knowledge attainment, weak analytical and innovative abilities, unclear goals and lack of academic freedom as issues. The authors
state that this means higher education in the region contributes little to the intellectual activities in the GCC and, instead, the primary role of higher learning institutions is to grant certificates. Only two Saudi universities were ranked in the top 500 worldwide in 2010 (Shah and Baporikar 2011). The QS Top Universities website ranks UAE University 370 in 2013 which perhaps indicates some improvement in this situation (QS World Universities Rankings, 2013).

When compared to South Korea, a recently industrialized nation also having undergone significant change, deficiencies in UAE educational attainment are readily apparent. In South Korea, the rate of tertiary enrolment in 1998 was 72 percent whereas in the UAE it was 12 percent. The number of years of education expected for a typical South Korean student in 2000 was 15 years but in the UAE it was slightly below 11 years. Finally, the percentage of GDP spending in research and development in Korea which often occurs at universities was 2.7 percent from 1996 to 2000 whereas in the UAE it was .02 percent (Muysken and Nour 2006). This last point speaks to the point made by Shah & Baporikar (2011) above that tertiary institutions in the region are especially underdeveloped in their role as places of technological and intellectual innovation.

9. Reform proposals

The deficiencies in education in the UAE and the GCC as whole has led to calls for reform of the current system of education. According to Macpherson, Kachelhoffer and El Nemr (2007) after consultations with international consultants, current principals and teachers, and communities in the UAE, the Ministry of Education proposed five strategies quoted below:

- Clarify an educational policy - to stress the development of understanding, character formation and community values to prepare students for an active role in a modern knowledge society, and to mobilize social and political support for investment in education in order to achieve national prosperity and development
- Set internationally benchmarked performance expectations in all aspects and levels of education – to reflect the nature and needs of the UAE community in a global context
○ Launch a national 10-year reconstruction plan - to bring all school facilities, curriculum, pedagogy and outcomes up to international standards

○ Restructure educational management – to have the Ministry focus on improving performance levels, replace Education Departments with regional support centers, merge small schools to raise their viability and quality, and boost leadership capacities in school communities

○ Mobilize appropriate resources and support – to achieve all of the above.

These proposals appear aimed at addressing criticisms leveled at UAE education. However, five years on it is unclear what progress has been made across the UAE public school system.

One innovative program recently reported on in the UAE's National Newspaper is the Schools of Tomorrow programme. The article reports improved test results at 11.5 per cent higher in science, 20 per cent in English and 32 per cent in mathematics, compared to the year before for the 18000 students in the 44 schools across Dubai and the Northern Emirates. These results were apparently achieved despite complaints by professionals within the program of underfunding and poor resources. The program is based on a system where experts from the United States, Europe and Australia are employed to teach and train local teachers in implementing new curriculum approaches (Ahmed, 2012a). However, a recent newspaper article calls into question the skills of Emirati teachers graduating from local training programs. The article states that many of the students now graduating local colleges cannot be employed due to their underdeveloped skills (Ahmed, 2012b).

Since 2010 there has been a drive in the Abu Dhabi region to modernize the public school curriculum and improve the quality of instruction starting at the elementary level. A higher proportion of teachers are now Emirati though the vast majority are women. Also there has been a trend to replace expatriate Arab teachers with Western educated teachers. Newspaper accounts report mixed results with the project. To the extent that such initiatives are successful it will take some time before the results are seen in higher education in the UAE (Hashemi and Collins, 2011; Ahmed, 2010; Zacharias, 2013).
10. Traditional culture and modern education

Minnis (2000) reports on research carried out into work environments and education in the oil rich sultanate of Brunei which may provides clues to conditions in the UAE. The author states that although Brunei appears modern to the outsider, it is actually organized on traditional norms, rituals and customs. Work and educational institutions tend to reflect the traditional culture. A study of professional work places in the sultanate found those occupying professional positions exhibited: an emotional resistance to change; aversion to risk taking; and preference for clear organizational structure and clearly stated rules and regulations. In addition, good family affiliations, having a recognized credential and conformity to group norms were described as most important as attributes of organizational workers (Hofstede 1991 in Minnis, 2000).

Of the three publically supported tertiary institutions in the UAE, the HCT and Zayed University, in particular, are based on imported Western models whereas UAEU has both Egyptian Arab and Western influences (Findlow, 2005). However, as discussed in the section dealing with the history of education in the region, formal learning has only recently been introduced. As such, the academic tradition is not a part of Emirati culture in the same way or the same extent as with populations where formal education is more long standing. As well, the traditional culture of the UAE may resist the type of innovation and change often associated with universities in the West. Though somewhat adjusted to local conditions, tertiary institutions still represent an external presence.

11. Implications for educators

Upon arrival in a Bachelor program students are faced with expectations which, in many cases, they have not been prepared for. As discussed above, students educated in the UAE's public K-12 system have received a form of education which does not meet the standards of the industrialized nations. This is compounded by the fact that the students must deal with a change in the language of instruction from Arabic to English, a foreign language. From my
experience, in order to mitigate these problems instructors scaffold their instruction and possibly provide more individual attention than is usual in Western based colleges. In addition, the performance standard expected may initially be watered down from what would be expected at leading Western institutions.

Educators coming to this context may find local students have motivational characteristics and learning approaches different from what they have come to expect. As well, they may find they need to adjust their instructional methods and expectations as a result. They may face challenges with student motivation in particular. Although students value post secondary credentials they may not value the educational process in the same way as their Western counterparts.

(B) The Institutional Context

1. The college system

The college which is the context of this study is part of a government funded network of career preparation colleges distributed throughout the United Arab Emirates. At the time of this study, the system currently enrolls 16000 students across 16 campuses. These students were mostly UAE nationals and occasionally students from other GCC nations. Students tended to come to the colleges upon graduation from high school. At the college there were also mature students attending evening classes and students were being sponsored by government departments and corporations. The network to which this college belongs is one of the three major government supported tertiary institutions set aside for Emirati students. The language of instruction at the college is English.

At the time of the study, the standard teaching load for a classroom instructor was 20 fifty minute periods a week. The academic year was composed of two terms of 18 weeks. Some teachers were appointed to the position of Lead Faculty (previously termed Curriculum Coordinator). These individuals worked within specific college departments. Their role was to develop curriculum and assessment materials at the college which should have followed the mandates of centrally developed ‘approved curriculum.’ Prior to this report, those appointed
to the position received reduced teaching loads and a stipend. At the time of writing, the stipends and lightened teaching loads had been discontinued.

2. The college ethos

This section examines system policies that related to the curriculum. I have selected three official sources of information that point to what the colleges saw as important in terms of what students learned and experienced in the classroom. Although I do not intend to suggest a direct cause and effect relationship between official policy and classroom practice, there was probably a strong influence.

I will first consider the systems Strategic Plan Summary 2008-2010. The document states that one of the important challenges to face the colleges was the need to adapt to 'evolving employer needs.' It as well stated the system ‘must continue to review and revise its core program offerings to develop UAE national professionals to be effectively employed in the emerging economic sector.' This speaks to how the system saw its mission primarily as preparing UAE nationals for employment. To meet its mission, the document stated that the following approaches were to be in place:

- commit to an ongoing process of continual quality improvement in all its functions which will be measured and monitored by best practice international accreditation processes.

- curriculum design will clearly and explicitly articulate learning outcomes at course level and program or graduate outcomes at the summative level. These outcomes emphasize both the vocational and professional competencies as well as other meta skills such as critical thinking, leadership, ethics, problem solving, teamwork, communications, global awareness, information literacy and the like.

- teaching and learning methods will integrate with authentic workplace contexts and provide ample learning opportunities to the students to meet the target learning outcomes.

- assessment principles will incorporate continual formative and summative assessments that provide timely developmental feedback as well as assure student attainment of learning outcomes at the desired breadth and depth.
The words and phrases I have underlined speak to a strong system wide orientation to outcomes. Outcomes were to be measurable and used as indicators of student success. In addition, the course content was to be aimed at work related skills suggesting a highly instrumental focus. The document also refers to 'meta skills' as a desired outcome speaking to an interest in developing student reasoning and problem solving abilities on top of job related training.

To ensure adherence to the outcomes approach, course leaders and curriculum coordinators were required to produce Course Assessment Files. A CAF was a compilation of documents on assessment procedures used in a given course. CAFs had to include handouts for students stating course goals, the assessment plan and the policies on late submission and cheating. The weighting of assignments and tests had to be specified for the course, along with copies of the assignment and test documents that were given to students. A CAF also had to contain the criteria used in grading tests and assignments. Finally, it contained examples of student product of sub standard, average and above average quality. All of this was kept by the coordinator responsible for the course at the college so that it could be produced in case of an audit by college authorities. The CAF requirements ensured that course leaders throughout the system developed their courses with a focus on outcomes. As well, it helped ensure that teachers followed this approach by requiring them to implement specified assessment strategies.

A final indication of the ethos driving curriculum in the system was the feedback instruments the Colleges employed. Student feedback results were part of the evaluation process for teachers and, so, could be considered important to teachers in practical terms. As such, they probably influenced teacher practice. Below are some of the factors that teachers were rated on by their students. The items below reinforce the product orientation at the colleges.

- Marks and returns my work quickly.
- Is able to answer my questions about the course content.
- Always lets me know how well I am doing in the course.
- Explains course content clearly.
The above criteria suggest an expectation that instructors would come to their classes with pre-existing detailed knowledge of is expected from students in the course. Further, instructors should have provided feedback on student success towards outcomes by timely marking and through other forms of feedback.

A couple of items also speak to a concern with the students' personal and social development beyond the product they produce.

- Helps me take responsibility for my own learning.
- Encourages me to participate actively in class.

3. **Program change in the system**

Just prior to the study, the college system had undergone a reorganization of its program structure from a two tier diploma program into a one tier bachelor track program. Additionally, masters credentials had been introduced in some departments. A doctoral credential in business had recently been put in place as well. Such changes can be seen as a part of effort, at the time, to raise system’s academic status and to give the colleges a more academic focus.

Most students entering the colleges were enrolled in the ‘Foundations’ program in which they received instruction to develop their English skills in preparation for the bachelors program along with some math instruction. The students remained in Foundations for up to two years depending on the level they entered at. Starting in the 2011-12 academic year, entrance into the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) was contingent upon a student receiving an overall band of 5 in the IELTS. Once in the BAS, students received 4 hours of English for academic purposes a week. These courses were designated as *Liberal Studies Communication (LSC)* Courses.
Prior to 2011-12, English instruction in the first year of the bachelor program was divided between two focuses represented by different course designations. One course aimed at preparation for the IELTS and the other course aimed at English for academic purposes. Students took eight hours of IELTS preparation and four hours of the English for academic purposes. All students were required to achieve an IELTS score of 6.0 as a condition of graduation.

4. The LSC Curriculum

In this section I will describe the Liberal Studies Communication Courses which being taught at the college in the year in which this study was conducted.

Of the courses in Table 2, I classify the first four courses as English for academic and professional purposes (EAPP). Most of the remaining courses I classify as English for special purposes (ESP). I classify Inter-cultural communications as a liberal studies course. Each of the above courses involved four hours of instruction per week and was taken in addition to the students’ major subjects.

This study investigates the relationship between two of these (Academic Reading and Writing 1 and Academic Spoken Communication) and student approaches to learning in the current context. In later chapters, the findings are discussed in terms of learning theory and implications for teaching practice.
### Table 2 Course offerings in liberal studies, 2012-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Academic Reading and Writing 1 (EAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Academic Reading and Writing 2 (EAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Academic Spoken Communication (EAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Professional Communications (EAP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>English for Business Studies (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>English for Computer Users (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>English for Engineering Technology (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>English for Classroom Management (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>English for Health Sciences (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>English for Media (ESP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Inter Cultural Communications (LS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon entering the bachelors program students took Academic Reading and Writing 1 which focused on developing skills used in essay and report writing. In the second semester they took Academic Spoken Communication which was concerned primarily with developing the students' public speaking skills. As with other courses, the general requirements of each of these courses came from the system’s central services unit. The specific task requirements and grading rubrics were developed in house at the college. All information pertaining to both courses including student task requirements, due dates and grading rubrics were posted on course dedicated web pages so as to be readily available to students and teachers.

Academic Reading and Writing 1 introduced the students to research, report and essay writing skills. It was designed based on the assumption that students had received little to no previous training in research and composition. The course provided highly structured activities, early on, aimed at developing information retrieval, summarizing and referencing abilities. It was intended that through early structured practice, these skills would be
sufficiently synthesized into the students' repertoires to demonstrate basic competency in their report and essay assignments later in the course. To further help students to understand what was expected of them, samples of the various assignments were available on the course webpage.

Assignment scores in Academic Reading and Writing 1 were divided between three areas of focus - task completion, writing competency and referencing. Teachers gave scores for each of these factors on an ordinal scale. For the areas of task completion and referencing, the rubrics describe what was expected. The score for writing was determined using writing bands employed across the system and were based on expected competency levels in the Year 1 BAS. Although the grading rubrics specified expected outcomes from student submissions, it was up to teachers to judge how well the assignment met requirements.

Academic Spoken Communication aimed at developing public speaking and presentation skills. The assignments included a mock interview, a mock meeting and two graded oral presentations. In addition, there were a number of reports and feedback activities based on the speaking tasks. Besides the graded speaking tasks, the students watch videos on the dos and don’ts of meetings and presentations. They then completed task sheets about the videos to draw attention to the important aspects of public speaking. Students were provided opportunities to develop their abilities in low stakes practice activities before performing under assessment conditions. The students were encouraged to use the reports and essays from the Academic Reading and Writing 1 as source material for the two graded presentations.

Ordinal rating of sub-skills was also built into the grading instruments used in Academic Spoken Communication. For instance, the grading rubrics used for the formal and semi-formal presentations divided a presentation score into five factors: content, attitude and body language, visual aids, question fielding and language competency. The rubrics gave descriptions of what was expected for each factor. In the case of language competency, the score was based on the system wide oral language competency descriptors.
For each course, students submitted portfolios of work which they had completed over the semester but which were not marked. The portfolios were worth 10 percent and were scored using ordinal rubrics along the dimensions of format, completion and care of presentation. As well, for both courses students completed a vocabulary assignment. The students were required to complete on-line cloze tasks of lists of words worth ten percent of their final mark. The webpage contained links to the word lists the students were being quizzed on along with supporting games and practice activities.

Academic Reading and Writing 2 was designed to reinforce and further develop the skills of Academic Reading and Writing 1. Professional Communications involved the students making use of the skills developed in the courses so far discussed. However, in with this course the reports and presentations were related to the students’ major areas. In addition, it involved other professional skills such as CV and cover letter preparation.

5. LSC’s relation to the models of curriculum

In this section I will look at the English for academic purposes curriculum in relation to curriculum approaches discussed in the literature. As stated, the system’s curriculum ethos strongly tended towards the outcomes approach. This ethos was reflected in the design and implementation of the two courses which were the subject of this investigation - Academic Reading and Writing 1 and Academic Spoken Communication.

Taba's (1962 in Smith, 2000) model of curriculum design emphasizes behavioural objectives to bring about changes in student behaviour. From here the approach to curriculum development translates into a neat linear ordered set of design steps. Aspects of this model can be seen in the way the LSC curriculum was developed.

Step 1: Diagnosis of need
Step 2: Formulation of objectives
Step 3: Selection of content
Step 4: Organization of content
Step 5: Selection of learning experiences
Step 6: Organization of learning experiences

Step 7: Determination of what to evaluate and of the ways and means of doing it.

This model is reflected in the design of the subject curriculum. The curriculum approach in the system was a trade off between centrally determined requirements, on the one side, and local materials development and administration on the other. Step 1, need diagnosis, occurs centrally (if at all) at the Colleges' Central Services department - however it is unclear if a formal process was ever implemented by which needs were determined. An example of an implicit need reflected in the Academic Reading and Writing 1 course objectives was that students need to be able to write at a basic academic standard. Step 2, the course objectives were sent to curriculum coordinators at the regional colleges. These syllabuses described the outcomes in terms of behavioural outcomes and skills that the students were expected to demonstrate. Steps 3 to 7, branch college coordinators developed the course materials and oversaw their implementation. College based course coordinators as well selected and organized content and drew up grading rubrics.

It was up to teachers to implement the curriculum in the classroom and bring about the desired learning outcomes in the students. To the extent that the student submissions and performance measured up to specified criteria, student work was judged to be good or very good. When the results did not meet expectations, students were counselled by their teachers on how to improve their results. When problems were more widespread, course coordinators engaged in reassessment and redesign of tasks at the local level. This is characteristic of the product approach in that it assumes that if certain conditions are in place desired outcomes will result. The courses of interest in this study were therefore, by necessity, based on a deterministic model. This model presupposes that curriculum exists prior to and outside of what happens in the classrooms (Grundy, 1987).

Although the design and implementation of these courses were derived from a product curriculum, characteristics of the process model can also be found. The following list represent considerations for designing content under the process model (Rath, 1971 in
McKernan 2008). My comments are interspaced with bulleted points from the list with each comment referring to the set of points above it. When all things are equal, content is better when it:

- permits students to make informed choices in carrying out the activity and to reflect on the consequences of their choices.
- assigns to students active roles in the learning situation rather than passive ones.
- asks students to engage in inquiry into ideas, application of intellectual processes, or current problems, either personal or social.

The students taking these courses were able to make choices in carrying out tasks. For example, they could choose what topics to report on (within parameters) for their reports and presentations. They chose what information to use and they had some flexibility in how they arranged it. During presentations, they exercised a degree of creative control over visuals and PowerPoint formatting. As such, they actively developed their own product. Further, they had opportunities to apply intellectual processes such as inquiring into current social problems as part of some assignments. For example, the final essay assignment in Academic Reading and Writing 1 and the formal presentation in Academic Spoken Communication involved discussion of a topic of social significance.

- involves students with realia (i.e. real objects, materials and artefacts).

Students accessed sources such as library data bases and the internet. As well, they made use of professional presentation software.

- it asks students to examine in a new setting an idea, an application of an intellectual process, or a current problem which has been previously studied.
- requires students to examine topics or issues that citizens in our society do not normally examine - and that are typically ignored by the major communication media in the nation.
- involves students and faculty members in "risk" –taking
• may be accomplished successfully by students at different levels of ability.

The students were challenged to engage in problem analysis. For example, an assignment in Academic Reading and Writing 1 asked students to consider how a certain technology that they were describing had led to improved efficiency. It also asked them to speculate how the technology might be used in the future. The major assignment in the course asked students to discuss possible remedies to a problem under investigation. However, at the same time, tasks were designed to have enough structure built into them that they would be manageable to most of the students.

There is little indication that risk taking was encouraged in the design of the courses in that the grading rubrics did not provide awards for originality and depth.

• involves students in the application and mastery of meaningful rules, standards, or disciplines.

• is relevant to the expressed purposes of the students.

The reading and writing skill course was intended to develop the students’ research and reporting skills to an acceptable academic standard. For example, the program required students use a standard referencing format in their assignments. However, although these sorts of skills are important to tertiary learning, it was not clear to what extent the students recognized and appreciated this importance. Student plagiarism and erroneous referencing were an ongoing problem that instructors dealt with. As discussed earlier, academic conventions in writing are not culturally rooted in the UAE. It may have been that the presentations and other oral assignments which went the Academic Spoken Communication class were perceived as being more meaningful by the students. The oral tradition is, on the other hand, very deeply rooted in the traditions and culture of the Emirati people.

• gives students a chance to share the planning, the carrying out of a plan, or the results of an activity with others.
In Academic Spoken Communication there were a number feedback tasks which gave the students a chance to analyze and assess public speaking performances of other students while recommending improvements. The meeting activity in this course involved is a group task in which students had to coordinate among themselves and plan together to conduct a successful mock meeting. The portfolio assignments in both courses include critical reflection exercises in which students assessed their own learning over the semester and considered ways to improve their learning.

Beyond, the basic call for discussion of ‘solutions’ in the essay assignment which may in a few cases have elicited analysis of social power relations, there was little in the program that could be described as promoting critically based social consciousness.

6. **Practical and academic implications of the academic preparation courses**

The courses highly delineated grading rubrics could be seen as an approach we developed to bring about the mandated outcomes. Intrinsic motivation on the part of the students towards achieving outcomes could not be assumed. However, since students are generally motivated towards better marks (and a higher GPA), the grading rubrics served to help focus student effort towards the prescribed outcomes. As well, they served as tools by which instructors could arrive at and then justify their marks.

The readymade aspects of the courses may have helped teachers in another practical sense as well. As stated earlier, instructors were assigned 20 class periods a week. This is an unusually high teaching load for a tertiary institution. In addition, class sizes could range from just a few students to nearly 30 students in a single class. Instructors were often moved between levels and programs and may have had to teach in more than one program at the same time. These conditions represented a considerable demand on instructor time, especially for new teachers to the college. One of the benefits of courses with existing outcomes and content was that it significantly reduced teacher preparation requirements.
However, the other side of this coin was that some teachers likely found the course requirements rigid, overly prescriptive and constraining.

The courses were designed to meet their prescribed requirements within the existing context of the college. However, were they educational? The product model is critiqued as an approach that had been inappropriately imported into education from industry. Curricula based on outcomes might be a suitable approach when the objective is to develop the specific skills needed to perform certain tasks, that is when you want to train someone to do something ‘the right way.’ However, training does not equate to education. Education implies the careful use of knowledge to construct new meanings, interpretations and understandings. The crucial element of education is that we learn to think and create so as to become autonomous social actors (McKernan, 2008; Smith, 2000).

The product curriculum also has implications for control of learning. Young (1998) states that the view of curriculum 'as fact' (product) presents the curriculum as something existing beyond and outside the context in which it is taught. It, therefore, exists beyond the control of either students or teachers. Grundy (1987) states that the 'technical interest' in curriculum also implies a certain power relationship within the learning environment. It implies primary power resides in those who formulate the objectives. Students, under the model, only have reactive power by either being unwilling or unable to participate in the learning situation.

It would seem that the English for academic and professional purposes curriculum described in this study was foremost a form of training towards prescribed outcomes. This is indicated by its adherence to centrally determined outcomes and its focus on form over substance. The purpose of the training was to realize the requirement that students perform rudimentary research, academic writing and oral presentations. Although elements of process were built into the courses (mostly at the branch level), what drove their design was outcome. As I mentioned in the college’s ethos section, system documents indicate an over arching concern with control and product.
(C) Summary
This study was conducted in a national context where formal education is a relatively recent introduction for most of the local population. In addition, despite modernization and the superficial trappings of Western culture, the social and political structure of Emirati society remains resistant to change. In addition, the attributes of the rentier state perpetuate a situation where Emiratis are dependent on public employment and where private sector employment is unusual for Emiratis. As this imbalance is unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term, it is important that Emirati students have sufficient knowledge, skills and intellectual attributes to make the transition to employment which is market driven.

The network of colleges of which the college of this study is a part, was established to provide Emiratis the sorts of skills and knowledge needed for technical and managerial work. This vocational orientation has led to curricula which are highly oriented towards outcomes and perceived employer needs.

The English for academic purposes courses investigated in this study employed the approach in which the students were expected to demonstrate competency on pre-established learning outcomes. Although there was an effort to build-in socially relevant content, the overall approach was for the students to demonstrate specific and differentiated skills associated with academic English.
Chapter 3 – Motivation and learning theories

(A) Introduction

The literature on motivation and learning approaches indicates a fair degree of cross-pollination as well as a high degree of overlap between perspectives. In addition, some researchers have proposed that the various theories of motivation are actually describing convergent phenomena using different terminology and focusing on differing areas (Marsh et al, 2003).

I begin with a discussion of motivation and its relationship to human behaviour. I distinguish the terms intrinsic and extrinsic as they are used in the motivation literature. I next review those motivation theories which are especially relevant to education. Those overviewed at the beginning of the chapter tend to be more narrowly focused. However, later in the chapter, I look at theories which are inclusive of other theoretical perspectives. These more inclusive theories are language learning theory, self-determination theory, goal theory and social cognitive theory. Finally, I consider the case for higher order factors and the conceptualization of motivation and learning strategies as either deep or surface.

Throughout the chapter I discuss the link between motivation and learning strategies. I consider the relationship between learning approaches and educational context and then discuss implications for curriculum design and instruction. Finally, I review current research on the interaction between culture and motivation and discuss the implications to education in the international context.

Taken as a whole, motivation theory is able to inform educators as to what approaches to curriculum design and instruction are likely to support student learning and what approaches can be detrimental to it. By the end of this chapter, a theoretical framework underpinning the investigation will be in place.
(B) What is Motivation?

The Oxford Online Dictionary defines motivation as the reason or reasons for acting in a particular way. In terms of learning, educational psychology points to five behavioural patterns that indicate motivation to learn. The first is an individual's attention and activity. When a person attends to something he or she is presumably motivated towards learning or understanding it. Persistence also points to motivation. That is when someone devotes significant time to achieving an outcome. Activity level is the third indicator of motivation. Individuals who exert their full mental or physical energy are motivated. The fourth indicator is continuing motivation. That is when someone returns to an activity without external incentives. Performance is fifth. Success in an activity is not a direct outcome of motivation. However, a student who works intensively, persists in the face of difficulty, and who repeatedly returns to the task will probably learn more and will tend to perform better (Stipek, 1993).

Discussion on the topic of motivation is often divided between the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. When an individual is intrinsically motivated he or she engages in the behaviour for its own sake. The act is sufficiently rewarding, stimulating or pleasurable in and of itself to cause the behaviour. No external inducements are needed. When a behaviour is extrinsically motivated, on the other hand, some form of inducement external to the activity causes the behaviour. Such external inducements can range from physical rewards (such as food) to fulfillment of one's sense of self-identity (under self-determination theory). However, the act itself is not sufficiently rewarding to bring about the behaviour (Stipek, 1993; Amabile et al, 1994; Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier and Ryan, 1991).

Intrinsic motivation theory claims that human beings are naturally disposed to develop skills and learn. People learn best when they see themselves as engaging in learning behaviours for their own reasons - because they want to rather than because they have to. Intrinsic motivation causes an individual to want to achieve mastery of a skill and, thus, is conducive to mastery learning (Stipek, 1993). From a biological perspective, people are predisposed towards learning activities that are adaptive. The intrinsic competence motive causes a
person to develop the skills needed to deal well with the environment. This, in turn, improves the individual’s chances for survival. Thus, intrinsic motivation is an inherited adaptive aspect of the human psyche (Stipek, 1993).

Various factors can influence intrinsic motivation. Learning contexts that increase a sense of competence will enhance intrinsic motivation. Conversely, situations that engender feelings of incompetence tend to dampen intrinsic motivation. Curiosity is a factor that also affects intrinsic motivation. This is because we tend to derive pleasure from activities and events that are optimally (intermediately) surprising, incongruous, complex or discrepant from our expectations or beliefs. Autonomy is a third factor related to intrinsic motivation (Stipek, 1993). *Locus of control theory* states that individuals are intrinsically motivated when they perceive themselves as the *locus of causality*. Under locus of control theory, when individuals believe that they are engaging in a behaviour where the cause is external - because of rewards, constraints, or a desire to please another person they have an external locus of causality (Stipek, 1993).

In regards to extrinsic motivation, *self-determination theory* views this as a complex and leveled phenomenon. The degree to which extrinsic motivation has been subsumed into a person's psychological makeup can affect how they go about learning. Under self-determination theory individuals with *integrated regulation* have subsumed into their self-concepts an extrinsically motivated behaviour to the point that they perceive themselves as the locus of causality, although the actual root of their motivation is essentially external. Therefore, it is conceivable that an individual with an internal locus of control in relation to behaviour can still, in essence, be extrinsically motivated (Deci et al, 1991).

The concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation run through the various theories of motivation. Neither is a simple concept nor are they, necessarily, mutually exclusive from one another in regards to any particular behaviour (Amabile et al, 1994; Shah and Kruglanski, 2000). For example, a rock star may love performing but may also love the money and the other benefits that come with the job. He is therefore motivated in both ways at the same time.
(C) Theories of motivation

1. Self-efficacy theory

The influential psychologist Albert Bandura is the leading proponent of self-efficacy theory stating that among the mechanisms of human agency none is more central or pervasive than beliefs of personal efficacy. Under this theory, self-efficacy beliefs are at the root of motivational behaviour in that one has to believe one has the power to produce desired effects, otherwise one has little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties. Self-efficacy beliefs, according to Bandura (2002) affect: whether individuals think in self-enhancing or self-debilitating ways; how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of difficulties; the quality of their emotional life; and the important life choices they make.

Zimmerman (2000) states that the self-efficacy construct is distinct from other motivational constructs in its specificity and close correspondence to performance in regards to a task. Efficacy beliefs differ conceptually and psychometrically from trait self belief measures, in particular, because efficacy beliefs are specific to particular tasks in particular circumstances. Zimmerman states that two decades of research have clearly established the validity of self-efficacy as a predictor of students' motivation and learning.

Bong and Skaalvik (2003) outline factors known to affect self-efficacy perceptions. These include first, experience with the task. Experiences of success strengthen efficacy beliefs, whereas repeated failures undermine it. A strong sense of efficacy based on past successes tends to withstand temporary failures. Another factor is vicarious experience. People tend to base their own self-efficacy beliefs on the performance of others with the same task. Vicarious experience exerts more influence when there is no concrete measure of adequacy and when people see their models as being more similar to themselves. Verbal persuasion is another influence on efficacy beliefs. This is most effective when the people who convey the efficacy information are viewed as knowledgeable and credible. However, disconfirming mastery experience easily outweighs self-efficacy beliefs created solely on the basis of verbal
persuasion. The final factor mentioned is physiological reactions. Heightened physiological reaction to the task (sweating, heartbeats, fatigue and so on) can affect efficacy self appraisals.

Efficacy beliefs can be influential at the group as well as the individual level. Under social cognitive theory (discussed later in this chapter), efficacy perceptions can emerge at the group level through shared beliefs about the group’s power to produce desired outcomes. Although efficacy beliefs reside within members, it is more than sum of the group members’ individual self-efficacy beliefs. It is an emergent group property that influences the coordinative and interactive dynamics of group functioning (Bandura, 2002). The implication of this perspective to education is that individuals within a learning group (such as a classroom) are influenced by and at the same time contribute to the group’s shared beliefs and efforts towards learning activities.

Bassi et al (2007) and Zimmerman (2000) report research evidence on the effectiveness of efficacy beliefs towards learning. They state that students with high self-efficacy reported higher academic aspirations and pursuits than low self-efficacy students. They also spend more time on homework, and tend to associate learning activities with optimal experience. They state that research has indicated that self-efficacy beliefs positively affect performance and accomplishment by influencing individuals to persist in the face of setbacks. They also point to evidence that indicates self-efficacy belief is actually more predictive than objective achievement in subsequent academic choices. Finally, in their own study, Bassi et al (2007) found that the more high school students feel competent in an activity and enjoy it, the more frequently they perform it. This, they state, stresses the crucial role efficacy belief has on the way students pursue academic goals in the short and long term. As well, they state, since self-efficacy beliefs develop quite early in students’ academic careers, timely intervention is needed (Bassi et al, 2007). Zimmerman (2000) reports research that indicates that students with high efficacy belief have stronger self-monitoring approaches. He states that efficacious students are better at monitoring their working time, more persistent, less likely to reject correct hypotheses prematurely, and better at solving conceptual problems than ineffectacious
students of equal ability. In addition, self-efficacy tends to influence the standards students set for themselves in completing tasks.

Bong and Skaalvik (2003) discuss research on instructional procedures which raise or alter students' self efficacy beliefs. Teachers can provide more short term goals over long term goals; they can provide students access to individuals like themselves who have had success with learning tasks, such as slightly more advanced peers; finally, they can providing feedback as students progress towards goals and prompt students to self evaluate.

2. Locus of control theory

Locus of control theory is discussed in relation to attribution theory (discussed later) but is described as a theory in its own right by Eccles and Wigfield (2002). According to this theory, one expects to succeed to the extent one feels in control of one's success or failures (has internal locus of control). This is opposed to the perception in an individual that his success or failure is an outcome of factors external to the individual (external locus of control). Unknown control is in addition to internal and external control. Whereas internal locus of control encourages self directed action and is, therefore, positively associated with motivation, external locus of control and unknown control undermine motivation (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

The theory posits that three critical beliefs may be related to one’s sense of locus of control. The first is that particular causes produce certain outcomes. The second critical belief is that one has access to the means needed to produce the various outcomes. Finally, control beliefs are the expectations individuals have that they can produce desired events (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

Zimmerman (2000) suggests the locus of control construct which refers to an individual's general orientation is less adaptable to context than the self-efficacy construct and is, therefore, less predictive of performance on certain types of tasks. He refers to research (Smith, 1989) that found that locus of control measures did not predict improvements in
academic performance and anxiety reduction in high anxiety students who underwent an intensive coping skills training program. However, self-efficacy measurements did predict improvements.

3. Attribution theory
Attribution theory holds that individual striving is based on what individuals attribute their success or failure to. Ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck are the most important achievement attributions (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

Under attribution theory, attributions are classified into three causal dimensions. The first is *locus of control*, as previously discussed, which can be seen as either internal or external to the individual. This dimension is linked to affective outcomes. Success perceived as internal to the individual enhances one's pride or self-esteem. However, attributing success to external causes enhances one's gratitude. Failure attributed to internal causes is associated with shame, but when it is externally attributed it is linked to anger. The second is the *stability* of attributional causes. This is whether and the extent to which the perceived causes of an outcome are seen as stable or subject to change. Attributing an outcome to a stable cause such as intelligence or aptitude will lead an individual to downplay the role of effort in success. The third dimension is *controllability*. This dimension contrasts causes of success one can control such as skill and efficacy from those one cannot control such as aptitude, luck, mood or another's actions (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

Weiner (1985) states that pride and self-esteem are experienced as a consequence of positive outcomes being attributed to oneself. However, people experience negative self-esteem when a negative outcome is ascribed to oneself. He notes that people often attribute positive outcomes to the self, even when not warranted. Conversely, people may attempt to protect their egos by attributing negative outcomes to factors outside themselves.

Hopelessness is a negative state particularly associated with the stability dimension. Here, the individual associates negative outcomes with stable causes. If the future is anticipated to remain as bad as the past, then hopelessness is experienced (Weiner, 1985).
In terms of educational implications, teachers might improve students' motivational characteristics to the extent that they, through their teaching approaches and curricula, reinforce attributions associated with high motivation. These would be approaches that encourage an internal locus of control, high perceived controllability, stability in internal attributions associated with success and instability with attributions associated with failure.

4. Modern expectancy-value theory

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) describe modern expectancy-value theory as an elaboration of the expectancy value model which sees motivation as a product of perceived outcomes related with a task. Four aspects of task value are outlined.

The first aspect is attainment value. Drawing on self-schema and identity theories, attainment value relates to the personal importance of doing well on a task by confirming or disconfirming salient aspects of one's self concept. Tasks that provide the opportunity to demonstrate important aspects of one's self-schema such as masculinity, femininity, and/or valued skill area competence will have higher attainment value.

The second aspect of expectancy value is intrinsic value. This refers to the enjoyment individuals get from performing the activity or the personal interest the individual has in the subject. They state this is similar to the constructs of intrinsic motivation and flow discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

Utility value which refers to how well a task relates to current or future goals is the third dimension of expectancy value. A task can be viewed positively by an individual if the individual sees the task as contributing to valued objectives, even if the task is not experienced as interesting in and of itself. Examples of this are students who take classes they do not enjoy because these classes are required in order to pursue other interests, because it allows them to be with friends or it pleases their parents.
The final dimension is cost which is conceptualized as the negative effects of engaging in the task. Examples of cost include performance anxiety and fear of failure; the amount of effort needed to succeed; and lost opportunities that result from making one choice over another.

This theory proposes that motivation is the outcome of complex interconnected network of factors. Motivation which supports identity related outcomes (attainment value) can lead a person to strive in the face of difficulties regardless of whether the behaviour is in itself intrinsically motivating. This concept of motivation emerges again under self-determination theory (discussed later in the chapter) in the form of integrated motivation. The utility concept emerges under goal theory (performance-approach) as motivation causing behaviour focused on attainment of valued outcomes. The cost dimension emerges in goal theory as a factor leading to non effective learning strategies (the performance-avoidance concept).

5. **Self-worth theory**

Self-worth theory emphasizes the motive of self-worth such that people tend to work to maintain a positive self-image. Given the importance of the educational context to the lives of students, students will attempt to create and maintain a sense of academic competence in order to help maintain their overall sense of self-worth. The socially and academically competitive environment of modern educational institutions can make it difficult for many students to maintain their beliefs in academic competency. As a result they may develop strategies to maintain the belief that they are academically competent. These include procrastination, making excuses, avoiding challenging tasks, and perhaps most important, not trying. High performing students, as well, may engage in avoidance of challenging tasks where there is an opportunity for failure and diminishment of the student's sense of self-worth (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

Under this perspective, educational environments which encourage students to focus on mastery, effort, and improvement and which reduce the frequency and salience of competitive, social comparative and evaluative practices would allow more students to hold
on to their sense of self-worth without having to resort to failure-avoidance strategies (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

It seems probable that when students are receiving instruction in a second language (as is the case in the current study) the students are more vulnerable to having their sense of self-worth diminished due to the extra demands placed on their coping abilities by the second language.

Covington (2000) suggests self-worth is related to goal theory which is discussed later in this chapter. Self worth perceptions can influence goal selection and hence the sorts of goal associated learning strategies they employ.

6. Interest theories

This theory differentiates between individual and situational interests as they pertain to motivation. Individual interests are described as a relatively stable orientation towards certain 'domains' (Schiefele, 1999, in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

The first is feeling related interest with an object or activity such as involvement, stimulation and flow (as discussed later in this chapter). The second aspect is value related interests in regards to the personal significance or importance of the object or activity. Both of these aspects relate directly to an object or event in itself rather than to how these relate to other objects and events of interest. As such, individual interests are not based on instrumental value, making this conceptualization somewhat akin to intrinsic motivation. Situational interest, like feeling related interest, refers to the emotional state aroused by the specific features of the activity or task. This is related to the concept of flow which is discussed later as an attribute of intrinsic motivation (Schiefele, 1999, in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

The educational significance of interest (as it is defined by this theory) is that it is strongly related to indicators of deep-level learning such as recalling of main ideas, coherence of recall, responding to deeper comprehension questions, representation of meaning. It is not,
on the other hand, associated with surface-level learning such as responding to simple
questions or verbatim representation of text (Schiefele, 1999, in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002).

7. Flow theories

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) describe flow theory as a theory of intrinsic motivation which
focuses on the subjective experience of people engaged in an activity. Flow is experienced
when an individual is fully engaged in an activity and is characterized by a holistic feeling of
being immersed in, and carried by, an activity; a merging of action and awareness; focus of
attention on a limited stimulus field; lack of self-consciousness; and feeling in control of one's
action and environment. Flow can only occur when a person feels he or she has the abilities
to master the challenges that are presented by the action (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, in Eccles
and Wigfield, 2002).

The theory suggests that flow sustains long term perseverance and effort towards developing
associated skills by rewarding effort with the intrinsically gratifying sense of optimal
experience. When individuals perceive both challenge and high skills in a given activity optimal
experience or flow is likely to occur. Optimal experience is a state of high concentration,
involvement, a sense of control, clear goals and feedback and satisfaction. Activities
associated with flow tend to be preferentially selected and repeated over time because of the
suggest that direct feedback associated with flow activities can also have positive benefits for
perceived self-efficacy. In turn, one's sense of self-efficacy along with other flow experiences
lead to further task engagement enhancing competency in a virtuous cycle of skill cultivation,
satisfaction, and goal setting. To the extent that flow is associated with learning tasks in
formal education environment it would be conducive to mastery learning of the topic.

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) suggest that flow theory can be tied to a model of biological
adaptation. Flow, in play behaviour, for example, impels individuals to develop the skills
needed to survive.
Flow, as an attribute of intrinsic motivation, is important for individual growth. It is relevant to determining which of a person’s activities, interests, and goals will be most heavily developed. Thus, it plays an important role in directing one's path through life (Bassi et al., 2007).

To the extent that flow is associated with intrinsic motivation and learning for mastery this is a positive outcome from an educational perspective. However, it should be remembered that most students do not have the luxury of pursuing their interests to the exclusion of all other concerns. Students generally need to balance and direct their learning resources towards achieving good overall outcomes. This other dimension of learning is discussed in terms of learning skills under social cognitive theory later in the chapter.

(D) Goal Theories

Goal theories are motivation theories that focus on goals as the primary motivational driver. The leading goal theorists have divided the sorts of goals that drive human behaviour into two main categories.

Nicholls and colleagues (1990, in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002) term the first ego involved goals. Individuals with such goals seek to maximize favorable evaluations of their competence and avoid negative evaluations of competence. The second classification under their scheme is task involved goals. Individuals with these sorts of goals focus on mastering and increasing their competence.

Dweck (1999, in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002) conceptualizes goals in a way similar to Nicholls. However, she uses the term performance goals in place of ego involved goals and mastery goals in place of task involved goals. Covington (2000) uses the term learning goals to refer to goals that correspond with task involved and mastery goals where increasing one's competency, understanding, and appreciation for what is being learned is the objective. He states the term performance and ego goals can be used interchangeably where the objective is outperforming others and setting oneself above one's peers.
The terms *performance-approach* and *performance-avoid* are extensions of the performance goal construct and are used by a number of motivation goal researchers (Elliot & Church, 1997; Midgley et al., 1998; Skaalvik, 1997 in Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). Performance-approach goals imply performance in achievement tasks for performance or competency gaining reasons. However this drive for performance is primarily motivated by the need to perform well for an audience or in relation to others. In contrast, performance-avoidance goals concern disengagement or avoidance in order not to appear stupid. As one might expect, generally, performance-approach goals appear to have more positive consequences on motivation and achievement than do performance-avoidance goals.

Elliot and Church (1997) provide the following description of what they refer to as the trichotomous framework of goal orientations. First, a *mastery goal* is focused on the development of competence and task mastery. A *performance-approach goal* is directed toward attainment of valued outcomes. A *performance-avoidance goal* is focused on avoiding unfavorable judgments of competence.

Mastery and performance-approach goals are characterized as self-regulation towards the positive outcomes of task mastery and normative competence, respectively. These orientations promote processes, such as excitement and task absorption, which support both mastery and achievement outcomes. Performance-avoidance goals, on the other hand, are characterized as self-regulation according to potential negative outcomes. This avoidance orientation yields processes, such as anxiety and task distraction, which produce the helpless pattern of achievement outcomes (Elliot and Church, 1997; Elliot 1999).

Covington (2000) refers to research which links goal types to self-regulatory strategies as described by social cognitive theory. He refers to correlational and laboratory studies which indicate that students who espouse a learning-goal orientation report engaging in more self-regulated learning than those who espouse learning goals less. These differences in self-regulation include, first, greater self-monitoring of what is being learned so that the student recognizes when she knows something sufficiently to meet the demands of the task and when she does not. Second, such students employ organizing strategies such as paraphrasing and
summarizing. Also, they make positive adaptive attributions to their failures to understand new materials. Learning oriented students tend to believe that sustained effort is required for success and that incidences of failure suggest a failure to employ the right learning strategies rather than implying incompetence. Covington states that the adoption of learning goals is positively associated with pride and satisfaction in success and negatively associated with anxiety in the event of failure. Kaplan and Maehr (2007) state that mastery goal orientations focus on learning, understanding, developing skills, and mastering information in the pursuit of personal development and growth. They, as well, refer to numerous studies that indicate that mastery goals are associated with the following positive learning attributes: self-efficacy, persistence, preference for challenge, self-regulated learning, employment of deep learning strategies, retention of information learned, positive affect and willingness to cooperate with others.

Covington (2000) states the evidence concerning the presumed relationship between performance goals and the quality of self-regulated learning is more complex than for learning goals. He states that although researchers have generally reported positive associations between performance goals and superficial, rote rehearsal strategies and negative or nil relationships with deep-level processing, no clear pattern has emerged regarding either task persistence or the amount of effort devoted to task achievement. However, when performance goals are divided into their respective performance-approach or performance-avoidance components, the evidence suggests performance-oriented students who approach success may employ sophisticated study strategies that help them in their goal of outperforming others. On the other hand, adopting performance-approach goals is also associated with superficial processing and inefficiency. However, this can be offset by a tendency for extra rehearsal so that there are overall gains in performance. Performance-avoidance oriented students whose goal is to avoid failure display a pattern of reduced effort and persistence. Such students are inclined to create face-saving excuses for having done poorly. In sharp contrast, learning goals were positively associated with deep-level processing, persistence and high effort leading to increases in achievement (Covington 2000).
Covington (2000) states research and factor analysis from several studies confirms the entirety of this trichotomous framework – learning, performance approach, and performance avoidance. Performance-avoidance goals are associated with superficial processing and inefficient study processes which were, in turn, are linked to subsequent decreases in academic performance.

Elliot and Church (1997) report experimental research that links goal orientations to intrinsic motivation. They report the results which indicate that performance-avoidance goals undermine intrinsic motivation compared with either mastery or performance-approach goals. It is interesting to note that they found that those with both mastery and performance-approach goal orientations manifested equivalent levels of intrinsic motivation (enjoyment and interest in the task for its own sake) although performance-avoidance goals undermined intrinsic motivation.

Following up on this research Elliot and Church (1997) looked into the interaction between goal orientation, motivation and academic performance. They proposed a conceptual framework whereby both motivational disposition and performance expectations influence student goal setting. Achievement goals, in turn, were proposed to influence achievement relevant behaviour. They report factor analysis of survey data which yielded the three anticipated achievement goal factors: mastery, performance-approach, and performance avoidance. Mastery goals were linked to achievement motivation whereas performance-avoidance was linked to fear of failure. Performance-approach was linked to both. Competence expectancies were validated as an independent antecedent of achievement goal adoption. Mastery/learning and performance-approach goals result from high competence expectancies and performance-avoidance results from low competence expectancies. To sum up, the study indicated that learning/mastery goals result from achievement motivation and high competency. At the other end, performance-avoidance goals come from fear of failure and low competency expectations. Performance-approach goals are rooted in both fear of failure and high competency expectations.
Elliot and Church (1997) then reported the results in terms of student academic performance outcomes and motivation. They report that mastery goals facilitated intrinsic motivation but evidenced no reliable effect on graded performance. Performance-avoidance goals were negatively associated with both intrinsic motivation and graded performance. Performance-approach goals manifested no relationship with intrinsic motivation but were positively associated with graded performance. An interesting implication of this study is that individuals oriented towards performance-approach may, in some cases, outperform their mastery oriented classmates in terms of graded evaluation. This may be because performance-approach students attend more heavily than mastery oriented students to what they must do to get high grades. Despite this, performance-approach oriented students might not, as a rule, attain the same degree of real world or practical mastery of skills as their mastery oriented counterparts.

Grant and Dweck (2003) refer to this phenomenon, stating that there is substantial agreement among researchers that those who adopt learning/mastery goals engage in deeper, more self-regulated learning strategies, have higher intrinsic motivation and tend to perform better, particularly in the face of setbacks. However, they concede that several studies have failed to find better 'performance outcomes' resulting from learning goals although enhanced intrinsic motivation is found.

Evidence suggests that the inconsistent relationship between school achievement and mastery goals may be related to the type of assessments employed. Mastery goals are associated with achievement on open-ended assignments and projects but less so with performance with close ended assessments such as multiple choice and one right answer questions (Kaplan and Maehr, 2007). A meta-analysis of 24 studies found an overall moderate effect of mastery goals compared to performance goals on graded outcomes. In addition, the analysis indicated that mastery goal orientation had a large effect when tasks were complex (e.g., problem solving) and small to non-existent when tasks were simple (e.g., rote learning). The analysis also indicated that the benefits of mastery goal orientation was
greater in older students and when tasks were performed groups rather than alone (Utman, 1997 in Kaplan and Maehr, 2007)

Grant and Dweck (2003) refer to research they conducted which indicates that the relationship between learning goals and course grades is influenced by the tendency on the part of learning/mastery goal oriented students to engage in deeper processing of course material. A positive impact of learning/mastery goals on course grades is present when the course content is characterized by a high degree of challenge, when tasks are personally important and when complex processing is required of students. They propose that courses need to have more difficult content in order for learning oriented students to be advantaged. In addition, they state that when students with performance goals encounter setbacks or poorer than expected performance, they are more likely to experience a negative impact on perceived self-efficacy towards the task, personal attributions and loss of self-worth, and a loss of intrinsic motivation. They state, 'Thus, ability (performance) goals tend to predict a pattern of negative affect and cognition, as well as poorer subsequent performance, after a significant setback or a series of setbacks' (Grant and Dweck, 2003; performance added by me). They attribute the tendency for performance oriented students to be negatively affected by poor performance as possibly resulting from defensive withdrawal of effort or negative feelings interfering with concentration or test performance. However, they also state that as long as students are experiencing fairly sustained success, performance oriented students may actually have improved graded performance due to their strong orientation towards achieving high outcomes.

Elliot (1999) states that achievement contexts that are structured toward challenge but where the possibility of success is seen as good will likely activate the need for achievement in students. This, in turn, leads to mastery and performance-approach goal adoption. However, learning contexts which are structured towards threat, that is where the possibility for failure is salient, likely activate fear of failure. This in turn leads to the adoption performance-avoidance and performance-approach goal pursuit, but not mastery pursuit.
Goal theory incorporates the conceptualizations of other theories discussed earlier in this chapter (self-efficacy, attribution, expectancy-value, self-worth, interest and flow theories) and arranges them into three constructs of learning and performance in educational settings. As such, the theory provides a convenient model for educators and educational researchers. As is discussed in Chapter 6, the model also appears to have provided the theoretical underpinning a number of learning approach research instruments.

(E) Social Cognitive Theories

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) place social cognitive theory under their section on theories that integrate motivation and cognition. However, to a greater extent the theory is concerned with how cognitive processes affect student learning approaches. They refer to Zimmerman as the leading proponent of this model. Under the theory, learning is also social in that it often comes about from replicating others during direct social interactions or by way of external media.

The theory emphasizes the role of self-regulation as it pertains to motivation and learning, especially in the educational context. Zimmerman (2002) discusses the construct of metacognition which he defines as awareness and knowledge of one's thinking as vital in determining how and to what extent students regulate their learning.

Self-regulation, similarly, is described as a process where students regulate themselves in a 'pro-active' way rather than when things happen to a student because of teaching. Self-regulation refers to the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that contribute to the student’s goals. Self-regulated learners set goals and task-related strategies guided by their awareness of their own strengths and limitations. Such learners monitor their behaviour in terms of their effectiveness and self-reflect on their progress towards their self-set goals. This enhances self-satisfaction and motivation to continue to improve methods of learning. Zimmerman states that because of their superior motivation and adaptive learning methods, self-regulated students are not only more likely to succeed academically but to view their futures optimistically (Zimmerman, 2002).
According to Zimmerman, self-regulation involves the selective processes that must be personally adapted to each learning task. The component skills include:

(a) setting specific proximal goals for oneself, (b) adopting powerful strategies for attaining the goals, (c) monitoring one's performance selectively for signs of progress, (d) restructuring one's physical and social context to make it compatible with one's goals, (e) managing one's time use efficiently, (f) self-evaluating one's methods, (g) attributing causation to results, and (h) adapting future methods (Zimmerman, 2002).

The presence or absence of these self-regulatory processes bear on the student's level of learning (Zimmerman, 2002). I have put the word, ‘level,’ used by Zimmerman, in italics as it relates to the constructs of deep and surface learning which I discuss later in this chapter.

Zimmerman (2002) states that self-regulation is important because the development of lifelong learning skills is a major function of education. He states that the ability to learn skills informally is needed for success in work environments after students leave high school or college. In professional, semi-professional and entrepreneurial work, in particular, individuals need to be able to assess the skill requirements of their work and then employ strategies for developing these skills in themselves. Such capacity for skill self-development is needed for an individual to be competitive and highly effective in non-menial work.

Zimmerman (2002) discusses research that indicates that experts differ from non-experts in their application of knowledge at crucial times during learning experiences, such as correcting specific deficiencies in technique. Evidence suggests that experts devote considerable time to skill development and practice (approximately four hours a day) and that they find these activities highly motivating. As well, they vary their methods of study and practice in order to discover new strategies for self-improvement. The time, strategies and reflection devoted by experts contributes greatly to their skill levels. This description of learning and motivation seems to correspond somewhat to the description of motivation and learning under the flow theory.
According to Zimmerman (2002) motivation in novices can involve self-regulatory processes, such as self-monitoring. By being aware of subtle progress in learning, students can increase their levels of self-satisfaction and their self-efficacy beliefs to perform at high levels of skill. Zimmerman states, ‘Clearly, their motivation does not stem from the task itself, but rather from their use of self-regulatory processes, such as self-monitoring, and the effects of these processes on their self-beliefs’ (Zimmerman, 2002, p.97). This comment seems to equate the experience of motivation with a high-level self-regulation in learning.

Zimmerman (2002) illustrates his conceptualization as a looping feedback system being at play. The first phase discussed is referred to as the forethought phase which involves task analysis, goal setting, and strategic planning. Self-motivation beliefs are at play in this phase and these include self-efficacy, outcome expectations, intrinsic interest or value, and learning goal motivation. The second phase, which is the performance phase, involves imagery, self-instruction, attention focusing, and task strategies. The third phase is self-reflection. This involves the process of self-judgment which includes both self evaluation and making causal attributions. As well, it involves self-satisfaction and affect along with adaptive and defensive strategies.

Zimmerman (2002) states that the self-regulation approaches employed by novices are quite different from those of experts. He states that novices do not engage in high quality forethought and instead attempt to self-regulate what they learn reactively. That is, they do not set specific goals and do not self-monitor systematically. Consequently, they tend to rely on comparisons with others to judge their performance and its effectiveness. However, as other learners are also progressing, their performance is set against constantly increasing criteria that are very difficult to surpass. As well, when learners make comparative self-evaluations they are more likely to make self-deficiency based attributions which are also normative in nature. This produces lower personal satisfaction and prompts defensive reactions.

In contrast, he states, the self-regulation of experts is characterized by high levels of self-satisfaction and the setting of hierarchical goals - with process goals leading to outcome goals.
in succession. They employ 'powerful' strategies and self-observe their effects. They self-evaluate their performance against their personal goals rather than the performance of other learners. Thus, they make strategy (or method) attributions instead of ability attributions. This, in turn, leads to greater personal satisfaction with their learning progress and encourages further efforts to improve their performance. The learning adaptive processes that experts employ enhance various self-motivational beliefs such as self-efficacy, outcome expectations, learning goal orientation and intrinsic interest.

Lodewyka, Winneb and Jamieson Noel (2009) discuss the implications of task structuring in learning settings from a social cognitive perspective. They break learning tasks into two overall types - well-structured tasks (WST) and ill-structured tasks (IST). They describe well structured tasks as usually involving a linear and hierarchical format that comes with needed resources and useful information or sub-goals. These might include worksheets or reports on a clearly defined topic with detailed requirements provided. They are likely to have identifiable specific answers and more precise grading criteria such as rubrics indicating how the product is going to be assessed. In contrast, ISTs involve more ambiguous problems in which the learner must connect or synthesize information, apply knowledge to an authentic context, seek out additional resources and information independently, consider various perspectives and work with less precisely defined requirements embedded in the assignment description. As well, assessment criteria which might aid the learner in self-determining success or progress are less clearly spelled out.

The way learning tasks are structured interacts with student self-regulated learning. Self-regulated learning, as discussed above, is the self directive process through which learners transform their mental abilities into learning outcomes. When students are confronted with a task, they employ their cognitive skills to interpret and pull out the salient aspects of the task and then they employ self-regulation to direct and monitor their performance towards success. However, failure to appropriately define the task and understand what is needed for success can undermine task performance which can result in further setbacks, frustration, and anxiety with the task. This can be particularly the case for students working on ISTs who do
not understand what skills are required to accomplish task objectives and who focus too much on irrelevant details within the task (Lodewyka, Winneb and Jamieson Noel, 2009).

The cognitive skill of critical thinking (along with the other cognitive skills—rehearsal, organizing and elaborating) is linked to learning and performance outcomes (as well the meta-cognitive/self-regulatory strategies of planning, monitoring, time management, study environment management, effort-regulation and help-seeking play an important role). Critical thinking, in particular, is a learning strategy that aids the learner to process and integrate information more deeply. In regards to learning tasks, it is focused on deciding what to do. Critical thinking facilitates learning and achievement by facilitating the gathering, interpreting, evaluating, and selecting information so students can make more informed decisions. The critical thinking aspect of self-regulation in particular is important in regards to a student’s ability to handle the less certain more spurious aspects of learning tasks (Lodewyka, Winneb and Jamieson Noel, 2009)

ISTs are perceived by students to be considerably more complex than WSTs. This is because they lack clear procedures, have numerous possible answers and processes, and do not provide the same sorts of scaffolds to guide the learners towards the best outcomes. ISTs require more information, knowledge, problem-solving strategies and, in short, critical thinking skills to compete successfully. Students are more likely to experience self-efficacy while working in WSTs and will tend to perform better on WSTs since they are embedded with more supports than more ambiguous tasks. However, academically challenging tasks that require students to engage in more complex processing and which require a degree of creative problem solving, such as constructing arguments from multiple sources, promote deeper understanding of the learning material. Students are forced to set their own sub-goals rather than having sub-goals clearly labeled for them. Although many students perform better on WSTs, they might not optimally challenge them to process information and to monitor and control their own learning. Thus, they may not do as much to develop student cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities. WSTs, instead, focus students on competing procedures and submitting a neat product that meets stated requirements rather than on understanding and
explaining the material to be learned in its complexity. This may lead students to become procedure dependent while dampening self-regulation and the ability to transfer learning to other contexts. Not so surprisingly, moderate academic achievers experience the most difficulty with ISTs (Lodewyka, Winneb and Jamieson Noel, 2009).

Lodewyka, Winneb and Jamieson Noel (2009) report the results of their own study which found that students' reported value for and management of tasks were significantly higher during the WST than during IST. However, students reported using significantly more cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies, particularly critical thinking and peer learning on the IST than the WST.

As well, they found compared with high academic achievers, low achieving students calibrated their achievement less accurately on each task and experienced lower grades, interest, ease, and management capability on the IST than the WST. High academic achievers, on the other hand, were more interested, self-efficacious and less anxious on the IST compared with lower academic achievers. As well, high academic achievers comprised most of the students reporting boredom on the WST.

The discussion above seems to point to convergence with aspects of goal theory. Research under goal theory indicates learning/mastery goal oriented students cope better with demanding course content. Research under social cognitive theory suggests students with higher cognitive and meta-cognitive skills cope better so called ill-structured tasks. Learning/mastery goals are probably associated with better developed (meta) cognitive skills.

(F) Self-Determination Theory

1. The motivation continuum

Edward Deci and Richard Ryan are the two researchers most associated with self-determination theory (SDT). Deci et al, (1991) outline the central aspects of SDT. Locus of causality is central to their theory, such that when a behaviour is self-determined, the person
perceives that the locus of causality is internal to his or her self. Internal locus of causality is an attribute of *intrinsic motivation*.

Intrinsically motivated behaviours are engaged in for their own sake. That is for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from their performance. Intrinsically motivated individuals do things which interest them with a sense of volition and without the inducements of material rewards or the imposition of constraints. They state that intrinsically motivated behaviours represent the basis of self-determination in that they emanate from the self. Extrinsically motivated behaviours differ from intrinsically motivated behaviours in that they are done for instrumental reasons (Deci et al, 1991).

Noels, Pelletier, Clement & Vallerand (2000) state motivation types are not categorically different but rather lie along a continuum of self-determination from intrinsic through various levels of extrinsic motivation.

They propose that intrinsic motivation can be broken into a three part taxonomy. The first type of intrinsic motivation under their model is what they call IM knowledge. This is the motivation for doing an activity because of feelings associated with exploring new ideas and developing knowledge. The second type is IM accomplishment which refers to the feelings that come from mastering a task or an achievement goal. The third type is called IM stimulation which refers to motivation based on the sensations stimulated by performing the task - aesthetic appreciation, fun or excitement. This third type appears to correspond to the construct of flow. The common basis of these three subtypes is the pleasurable sensations experienced during self-initiated and challenging activities.

Moneta (2004) states the experience of *flow* indicates pure intrinsic motivation under SDT. Under both flow and self-determination theory, the quality of an intrinsically motivating experience is linked to the individual's skill level in relation to the task. When skills and challenges are low the person tends to experience apathy, and the quality of the experience is lowest. However, when the person does not have sufficient skill to meet the challenges of a task, anxiety is the result. When skills are greater than the challenges posed by a somewhat challenging task, boredom or relaxation is experienced. In the flow scenario, both the
challenge and the skills are high and the person tends to experience flow in consciousness and the quality of the experience is highest. Research indicates that the flow state leads to feelings of being more concentrated, excited, active and happy than in any other condition (Moneta, 2004).

SDT postulates that there are three basic human needs - autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Activities that satisfy these needs foster intrinsic motivation. Development of these needs and skills is promoted by activities that provide the following: optimal challenges, autonomy support, competence feedback, and a secure 'relational base.' The fulfillment of these needs leads an individual to experience choice and freedom in activities, to interpret the environment as informational, and to seek out opportunities for autonomy. In short, activities that meet these needs have an autonomy orientation. An autonomy orientation, in turn, predisposes an individual to be more intrinsically motivated, and, therefore, more likely to experience flow (Moneta, 2004).

Trait intrinsic motivation refers to the personal disposition to tackle and endure challenges, and to derive intrinsic enjoyment throughout the process. It is therefore likely that persons with more trait intrinsic motivation have a greater appreciation of challenges and, thus, their optimal challenge/skill ratio is biased toward challenges (Moneta, 2004).

Extrinsically motivated behaviours differ from intrinsically motivated behaviours in that they are done for instrumental reasons. The individual believes that the behaviour will lead to some desired outcome which is not part of the activity itself.

Deci, Vansteenkiste and Lens (2006) report findings that extrinsic motivation does not necessarily undermine intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can coexist and extrinsic motivation can even enhance intrinsic motivation. Such evidence led SDT theorists to refine extrinsic motivation into types based on their degree of autonomy or self-determination. This, in turn, is an outcome of the degree to which an individual internalizes what was initially externally regulated behaviour.
Internalization is the transformation of external factors into internal processes. In self-determination theory, internalization is viewed as a natural process by which people are inherently predisposed to internalize and integrate activities that are not inherently motivating to them but which are useful for effective functioning in the social world.

Secondly, the theory sees the extent to which the process of internalization and integration occurs as a function of the social context (Deci et al, 1991). A central proposition of SDT is that social contexts that are supportive of competency, relatedness, and autonomy promote self-determined action (Deci et al, 1991).

Deci et al (1991) identify four types of extrinsic motivation:

*External regulation* is extrinsic motivation with no internalization. It refers to behaviours engaged in because of factors external to the person such as to get a reward or to avoid a punishment. An example would be student doing an assignment to gain a teacher's praise or to avoid parental rebuke. It represents the least self-determined form of extrinsic motivation. In addition, because externally regulated action is experienced as coerced and determined by external forces, it is accompanied by external locus of causality (Deci et al, 2006).

*Introjected regulation* is when an individual takes in but does not accept as one's own the cause of the regulation. This regulation involves internalized rules or demands that cause an individual to behave in certain ways. Introjectedly regulated behaviours are, generally, reinforced with psychological pressures such as guilt or rewards like self-aggrandizement. Although, introjected regulation resides within the person it is not part of the 'integrated self' and, therefore introjectedly regulated behaviour is not self-determined (Deci et al, 1991).

*Identified regulation* is the next form of regulation up the ladder of internalization. Identified regulation occurs when the person has come to value the behaviour. With identification, the person does the activity with a sense of willingness because the regulatory process has become more fully part of the self. These behaviours are more autonomous because identification with the behaviour allows the person to feel a sense of choice or volition about their behaviour. An example would be a student doing extra work on math because he or she sees it as important in order to achieve his academic and professional goals. However, the
motivation is still extrinsic because the activity is done to achieve a valued outcome, rather than because it is interesting to the student. Nevertheless, the behaviour is relatively self-determined because it is done willingly, for personal reasons, rather than because of perceived pressure (Deci et al, 1991).

*Integrated regulation* is the most developmentally advanced form of extrinsic motivation. With integrated regulation, the regulatory process causing the behaviour has become so fully integrated within the person's 'coherent sense of self' that it is part of the person's identity. Integrated behaviour is valued and important to an individual and is perceived as fully self-determined. Behaviours regulated by integrated processes usually come into play in the adult stages of development. Integrated regulation like intrinsic motivation is described as being an 'autonomous' form of self-regulation. The extent to which extrinsic motivation has become fully integrated is indicated by markers associated with intrinsic motivation - behaving willingly, being creative, and displaying conceptual or intuitive understanding. However, intrinsic motivation is distinguished from integrated regulation in that intrinsic motivation is characterized by interest in the activity itself, whereas integrated regulation is characterized by the activity being strongly associated with valued outcomes and personal identity (Deci et al, 1991).

The final category of motivation under SDT is its absence. Amotivation occurs when people see no relation between their actions and the consequences of those actions. In such a situation, people have no reason, intrinsic or extrinsic, for performing the activity, and they would be expected to quit the activity as soon as possible (Noels, Pelletier, Clement & Vallerand, 2000).

Vallerand, Pelletier & Koestner (2008) state that one of the most researched postulates of STD is that the most self-determined types of motivation (identified, integrated and intrinsic) lead to the most adaptive outcomes. On the other hand, less self-determined forms of motivation are either unrelated to or negatively related to adaptive outcomes. Finally, amotivation (or the lack of motivation) has been systematically and positively related to maladaptive outcomes. They state that these findings have been obtained repeatedly. A
further specification to the linkage between motivation and learning outcomes is that when the task is interesting, intrinsic motivation should lead to the most positive outcomes. However when the task is less interesting (or even dull) intrinsic motivation becomes less relevant and the most self-determined forms of extrinsic motivation (integrated and identified regulation) should be more pertinent and lead to the most positive outcomes. They state research supports this hypothesis.

Vallerand et al (2008) state that while STD posits that individuals can move from lower to higher levels of self-determination very little data exists in relation to this issue. Some evidence exists indicating a developmental trend towards higher forms of autonomous motivation but it is still not clear how such development operates. They call for future research on this issue.

2. Classroom practices and motivation in SDT

Vallerand et al (2008) findings indicate that highly self-determined motivational orientations are, in part, an outcome of the educational context. They state that high levels self-determined motivation were found in university students but not in high school students who study in more controlling contexts where attendance and subjects are mandated.

Deci et al (2006) describe educational practices that should support greater internalized regulation of learning. They suggest education contexts which support learner autonomy have instructors who empathize with the learner's perspective, allow opportunities for self-initiation and choice, provide a meaningful rationale if choice is constrained, refrain from using pressure and contingencies to induce behaviour, and provide timely positive feedback. These contrast with controlling contexts, which tend to pressure students to think, feel and act in certain ways. They name two types of controlling contexts - externally and internally controlling. Externally controlling environments tend to use overtly coercive strategies such as reward contingencies, deadlines, and use of controlling language ("have to", "should", "ought"). They state that such strategies place learners under pressure to engage in learning by enacting externally controlling regulation. On the other hand, internally controlling
contexts cause learners to place themselves under pressure to engage in uninteresting activities. The theory holds that the social environment, in particular, can easily evoke the controlling processes that reside within individuals through such tactics as guilt-inducement, shaming procedures, and the use of conditional regard (Deci et al, 2006).

One of the implications of the discussion above is that using grades and other forms of reward can undermine intrinsic motivation in education. Lepper and Henderlong (2000) discuss how the use of rewards in educational settings affects motivation. They state that there has been an extensive and on-going controversy since the 1970s about under what exact conditions intrinsic motivation is positively or negatively affected by rewards (and punishment). In addition, they state that although some research suggests detrimental effects to intrinsic motivation coming from extrinsic rewards, two meta-analyses (Cameron and Pierce, 1994; Eisenberger and Cameron, 1996 in Lepper and Henderlong, 2000) reported that there are no systematic general or overall effects of rewards on motivation. They state that the meta-analyses study authors argue that rewards have detrimental effects only under very limited conditions (usually induced during experiments) and that these conditions are not the sorts of conditions that normally occur in the real world.

Lepper and Henderlong (2000) argue further that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can co-exist in the same person. Students read books because they enjoy it (intrinsic motivation) and because it earns the approval of teachers and parents. They state it would be inappropriate to label such behaviours as either exclusively intrinsically or extrinsically motivated as both forces are clearly at work. They maintain that despite experimental demonstrations that superfluous extrinsic contingencies can undermine extrinsic interest in controlled experimental contexts, in the real world intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may exert simultaneous positive influences on behaviour. They point to experimental evidence supporting this position.

Amabile et al (1994) also present evidence that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are additive. As an example, they describe a creative artist who is strongly intrinsically interested in an artistic project while, at the same time, is motivated to win praise and recognition for the
work. They go on to refer to survey and experimental studies which indicate that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, rather than being mutually exclusive, coexist and that this coexistence can support learning and complex problem solving skills.

Lepper and Henderlong (2000) state that evidence shows that learning is most effective when it is linked to topics which students are interested in outside the classroom. For example, Asher and his colleagues showed that students’ recall of the content from educational essays was highly correlated with prior measures of their interest in the topics of these essays (Asher, 1981; Asher, Hymel, & Wigfield, 1978).

Under SDT either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation can lead to learning. However, self-regulated learning (which is more extensive and adaptive learning) is related to intrinsic motivation and the more highly self-determined types of extrinsic motivation. Under STD, school contexts that support a greater sense of self-determination in students will promote better learning. There is also little evidence that grades and other forms of social approval will undermine the desired forms of motivation and learning unless they are applied in coercive and controlling ways.

(G) Second Language Learning Motivation

1. Conditions leading to language learning motivation

Although the institution and curriculum discussed in this study have an EFL context, the course syllabuses discussed as part of this study are not EFL courses per se. These syllabuses aim at developing academic support skills (researching, integrating information into reports, and oral presentation skills). Despite this, since the current study occurs in a context where Arabic, not English, is the first language of the majority of the students, a look at second language learning motivation theory is appropriate. In addition, many of the motivational factors discussed here as important to second language learning are arguably transferable to other learning situations.

One of the key concepts of the theory is Gardner's construct of integrative motivation which is based on psychological and emotional identification with the target language (Gardner
1985, in Dornyei, 2003; also in Noels, Pelletier, Clement and Vallerand, 2000). Dornyei, (2003) argues that in the absence of a identifiable second language (L2) group in the learner's environment, identification can be generalized to the cultural and intellectual values associated with the language, as well as to the actual L2 itself. Instrumental motivation refers to the perceived practical benefits of learning the second language for purposes external to the language itself and beyond integration purposes such as job advancement or course credit. This construct recognizes that for many language learners it is the usefulness of L2 proficiency that provides the greatest driving force (Csizer and Dornyei, 2005; Noels, Pelletier, Clement and Vallerand, 2000).

Fields (2011) discusses problems with dichotomizing integrative and instrumental motivation in language learning an increasingly globalized world. Lamb (2004, in Fields, 2011) argues that a younger generation is emerging internationally which may be called bicultural. Such learners are rooted in their local cultures but have an additional global identity that necessitates speaking English to other 'global citizens.' Under this perspective, motivation to learn English is integrative, but not towards any particular Anglophone society. It is rather a wish to integrate with the expanding global culture which predominantly cross communicates in English.

From the point of view of second language learning motivation, Emiratis, in most cases, are unlikely to have an integrative motivation under the traditional definition described by Dornyei. Various cultural and socio-economic factors bind Emiratis to their existing identities. These include national and pan-Arab identity, regional tribal identity and their belief in the Islamic faith (see Chapter 2). From a socio-economic perspective, Emiratis hold a privileged status in their homeland with tangible benefits which are likely to run counter to integration motivation.

For example, a qualitative study by Fields (2011) concluded that the Emiratis who participated in the study were primarily instrumentally motivated:
The present research has shown that Emirati students are mainly Instrumentally motivated. Their own local culture creates a deep sense of comfort and identity. They do not want to give this up to be global citizens and have no desire to work or study abroad. While integrative motivation in a globalised world and the Ideal L2 Self come into play, these are ultimately functions of the practical necessity of using English in their local context and should be seen as sub-factors of a dominant instrumental motivation.

Despite these counter integrative influences, instrumental motivation is likely to be strong for many Emiratis. English is the formal language of instruction in the government sponsored colleges and universities which have been set aside for Emirati citizens. As well, it is the language of instruction in most private universities in the UAE. To advance in the civil service it is important to obtain a credential from one of the nation's tertiary institutions. Therefore, Emiratis wishing to advance in public and semi-public bureaucracies will be motivated to acquire sufficient English ability for entry into post secondary institutions (Fields, 2011). After successful entry into a bachelors program, continued success will likely depend on improvement in one's academic English skills in-line with course requirements. As well, a globalized integrative motivation as described by Fields (2011) may be developing in some Emiratis. This would manifest itself in terms of international travel, business and networking which many young Emiratis express interest in.

2. Motivational components of language learning

In terms of the motivational process of L2 learning, Dornyei (2003) discusses his situated approach to motivation. It involves three temporal stages. The first stage is the preactional stage during which motivation is generated in regards to an object. Generated motivation leads to the selection of the goal or task that the individual will pursue. During the actional stage the generated motivation is actively maintained and protected while the particular action lasts. This motivational dimension has been referred to as executive motivation. It is particularly relevant to sustained activities such as studying an L2 and to learning in classroom settings, where students are exposed to a great number of distracting influences, such as off-task thoughts, irrelevant comments from others, anxiety about the tasks, or physical
conditions that make it difficult to complete the task. The third stage is the postactional stage which follows completion of the action. This stage involves retrospection and evaluation of how things went. The way students process their past experiences in this retrospective phase will determine the kind of activities they will be motivated to pursue in the future.

These three phases are associated with largely different motivational attributes. That is, people will be influenced, while they are still contemplating an action, by factors different from those that influence them once they have embarked on the activity. As well, new motivational components become relevant when they look back at what they have achieved and evaluate it (Dornyei, 2003).

The functions associated with the preactional stage are setting goals, forming intentions, and launching actions. These are in turn influenced by goal properties such as relevance, specificity and proximity; by values associated by the learning process itself; the outcomes and consequences of learning; attitudes towards the L2 and its speakers; expectancy of success and perceived coping potential; learner beliefs and strategies; and environmental support or hindrance.

The actional stage is associated with the motivational functions of generating and carrying out subtasks, ongoing appraisal of progress, and self-regulation. The main motivational influences at this stage are the quality of the learning experience in terms of pleasantness, need significance, coping potential, and self-image; the learner's sense of autonomy; teachers’ and parents’ influence; classroom reward and goal structure (e.g. competitive or cooperative); influence of the learning group; and knowledge and use of self-regulatory strategies such as goal setting, learning and motivational strategies.

The post-actional stage is associated with the motivational functions of forming causal attributions, elaborating standards and strategies or, conversely, dismissing intention and further planning. The main motivational influences here are the individual's attributional characteristics; self-concept beliefs; and reward feedback in the form of, for example, praise and grades. These share characteristics with Zimmerman's (2002) conceptualization of the self-regulatory process under social cognitive theory.
Dornyei (2003) discusses his summary of motivational teaching practices for language learning:

1. Creating the basic motivational conditions
   - Appropriate teacher behaviours
   - Pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom
   - A cohesive learning group with appropriate group norms

2. Generating initial student motivation
   - Enhancing the learners’ L2 related values and attitudes
   - Increasing the learners’ expectancy of success
   - Increasing the learners’ goal orientedness
   - Making the materials relevant to the learners
   - Creating realistic learner beliefs

3. Maintaining and protecting motivation
   - Making learning stimulating and enjoyable
   - Presenting tasks in a motivating way
   - Setting specific learner goals
   - Protecting the learners’ self esteem and promoting their self confidence
   - Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image
   - Creating learner autonomy
   - Promoting self-motivating strategies
   - Promoting cooperation among learners

4. Encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation
   - Promoting motivational attribution
   - Promoting motivational feedback
   - Increasing learner satisfaction
   - Offering rewards and grades in a motivational manner
The above information is presented in Dornyei (2003) as a circular arrangement of boxes where the final factor (encouraging positive retrospective self-evaluation) is shown feeding back into the first factor (creating the basic motivational conditions).

Dornyei (2003) links SL motivation theory to other theories discussed in this chapter. Firstly, the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are associated with the L2 concepts of integrative and instrumental orientation. Language learning theory is linked to attribution theory (Weiner) in that how we subjectively attribute our success or failures in language learning shapes our motivational disposition towards it. If we, for example, attribute past failure in learning a second language to low language learning ability, then we are less likely to try to learn the same language or other languages again. However, if we believe that the problem was because we applied insufficient effort or used unsuitable learning strategies, we are more likely to give it another try. Goal theories feature in L2 motivational research where goals are typically referred to orientations (Dornyei, 2003).

(H) Higher Order Variables

1. Performance and learning

Marsh et al (2003) investigate whether research carried out under the various theories of motivation is actually representative of the same underlying constructs. They posited what they referred to as a Big-Two-Theory of academic motivation and evaluated the proposition that the various motivation constructs can be represented as two higher order (HO) factors which they refer to as performance and learning.

They refer to research that has found consistent support for two overarching orientations in motivation and learning approaches in educational settings. The first is the learning (also variously referred to as task or mastery) and the second is performance (or ego) orientation. They state that central to the learning orientation is attention to the process of successfully completing or mastering tasks, working to increase competency and knowledge, the tendency to see learning as an end in itself, the belief that sufficient effort will result in better academic performance, the aim of improving new or existing skills overtime towards self-referenced
standards, focusing on the quality of improvement, a sense of intrinsic value, and long-term commitment to academic excellence. On the other hand, the performance orientation is focused on social comparison processes in which the individual works to do better than other students or to attain success based on little effort. It also involves a desire to gain positive judgments and avoid negative judgments of one's competence, external evaluations of self, orientation towards the extrinsic value of performance as a means to a desired goal, and the belief that ability is a fixed attribute that cannot be altered by effort. The intention of their own study was to determine whether these two categories of motivation orientations could be represented adequately by two higher order factors through factor analysis (Marsh et al, 2003).

Above the authors discuss learning qualities described under motivational theories so far outlined, especially, goal theory, self-determination theory (SDT) and social cognitive theory. As well, there are references to attribution and self-efficacy.

Marsh et al (2003) discuss the links between HO theory and other motivational research. They describe analysis suggesting a high degree of conceptual and empirical convergence under the various motivational models despite differing terminologies for phenomena. However, they state that despite the convergences it would not be appropriate to combine all motivation theories into two HO constructs because the various theories differ in their focus and conceptualizations. For example, the theoretical perspectives of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation under SDT place more emphasis on underlying needs whereas motivation orientations under goal theory place more emphasis on what people are trying to do.

Marsh et al (2003) selected eight constructs they report as widely referred to under various theories of motivation that they posit are representative of the two higher order variables:

- Learning
  - Mastery
  - Intrinsic
  - Cooperative
  - Individual
Performance

- Individual
- Competition
- Approach Success
- Avoid failure

The researchers report that factor analysis of questionnaire results of the above eight factors provided support for the proposed existence of the HO learning and performance factors and their underlying Big-Two-Factor Theory.

Although Marsh et al (2003) make the case for the existence of HO variables in student populations within individuals the distinction is not likely to be so neat. The authors suggest learners may strive for both outcomes at the same time. For example, performance-approach oriented students under goal theory (or integratedly regulated students under SDT) may employ learning or approach to meet performance goals. Research has demonstrated that successful students are able to coordinate learning and performance orientations in a complimentary fashion (Marsh et al, 2003).

2. Deep and surface constructs

Lyke and Kelaher Young (2006) discuss learning strategies as divided into the constructs of surface and deep. Surface strategies are defined as rehearsal strategies and typically involve reading or repeating ideas over and over. Rehearsal strategies can themselves be broken down into shallow and deep, where shallow rehearsal involves simple repetition and deep rehearsal involves association learning where the learner employs mnemonic devices which require a secondary level of processing. Surface strategies (rehearsal and deep rehearsal) are useful for managing information that is needed for recall on a short-term basis. Students are more likely to employ rehearsal strategies in courses where the assessment strategies rely
predominantly on objective tests and quizzes, as opposed to papers and more authentic assessments (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006).

In contrast, deep strategies are defined as organization and elaboration strategies. Deep strategies are more useful for integrating new information with previous knowledge. Examples of elaboration strategies are paraphrasing, identifying important points, making analogies and generalizations, making connections, and expanding on the material that has been presented. These strategies tend to be generative in nature and require the student to use more sophisticated and elaborate schema in organizing and integrating the information. Similarly, organization strategies involve making outlines, charts and concept maps. These strategies require students to link concepts and ideas in a particular order, so that students have reorganized their own schemas. Deep strategies are likely to be chosen in courses that offer more authentic assessment strategies such as projects and papers that require students to make sense of the material (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006).

Lyke and Kelaher Young (2006) state that deep cognitive strategies generally produce better understanding of course material than do surface strategies. Students who employ deep cognitive strategies are likely to be more engaged with the material than are students who employ surface strategies. The authors link deep strategies to self-regulated learning (discussed under social cognitive theory). They state students who are effectively self-regulated ought to know how deep strategies work and when best to apply them. Although many students are able to engage in self-regulated learning, this is often contingent upon the demands of the context. Students must become aware of deep approaches to learning, but they must also be challenged to use them. Thus, personal and contextual factors influence use of various cognitive strategies.

Lyke and Kelaher Young (2006) go on to discuss personal factors linked to deep or surface learning approaches. They refer specifically to goal theory research. Some students have goal orientations that cause them to be motivated for primarily internal reasons, such as curiosity, wanting to learn, and trying to understand. Others have goal orientations based on external reasons, such as getting good grades, competing with others, and seeking approval. They
conclude (citing various researchers) that students with *intrinsic goal orientation* tend to value cognitive processing strategies that require a deeper level of encoding than students with extrinsic goal orientation. On the other hand, extrinsically motivated students are more likely to use more surface-level processing strategies, such as memorization and guessing. They refer to deep level strategy users as *learners* and describe them as invested and engaged. They refer to surface strategy users as *students* and describe them as doing what they need to do to respond to the demands of the course.

Trigwell, Prosser & Waterhouse (1997) investigated the connections between deep and surface learning approaches (as indicated by the Study Process Questionnaire, SPQ) and student perceptions about what is important for doing well in the course. They state that numerous studies have reported differences between deep and surface learning approaches and that students' awareness of their learning environment is related to the approach they adopt. Where students perceive the nature of the assessment as encouraging memorization and recall, and perceive the workload demands of the subject as high, they are more likely to adopt a surface approach. They report that a deep approach is associated with perceptions of high quality teaching, a degree of student control over what is learned, and clear awareness of the goals and standards in the subject. They refer to their own study which found that qualitatively different approaches to teaching were associated with qualitatively different approaches to learning. Specifically, in classes where teachers describe their approach as teacher focused and towards transmitting knowledge, the students reported that they were more likely to adopt surface approaches to learning the subject. To a lesser extent, where staff reported taking approaches that was more 'student focused' and towards changing students’ perceptions of the subject of study, the students reported adopting significantly deeper approaches to learning.

Lyke and Kelaher Young (2000) discuss the results of their study which found that intrinsic goal orientation was positively related to the use of deep cognitive strategies in undergraduates. That is, higher levels of pretest intrinsic goal orientation corresponded with greater use of deep cognitive strategies. Extrinsic goal orientation did not relate significantly
to use with deep cognitive strategies positively or negatively. On the other hand, students' extrinsic goal orientation had a main effect on their use of rehearsal. Specifically, students with low levels of extrinsic goal orientation were reportedly less likely to use rehearsal strategies than students with either moderate or high level extrinsic goal orientation. Their findings suggest that there is a fairly direct association between intrinsic goal orientation and use of deep strategies, and an association between low levels of extrinsic goal orientation and less use of rehearsal.

Lyke and Kelaher Young (2006) state that the findings of their study suggest in order to have students truly engage in their own learning, university instructors need to pay particular attention to developing an intrinsic goal orientation in their students. They suggest one way to achieve this might be to focus instruction on students' individual interests, although they concede this may be administratively overwhelming in large classes. Offering choices in assignments would be another way to capitalize on individuals’ interests. They suggest placing less emphasis on extrinsic aspects of the course such as grades, especially public displays of grades or performances. Reducing emphasis on the extrinsic aspects of performance may help students begin to focus on the more important aspects of learning.

Kember (2000) reports his own investigation of the relationship between curriculum and learning approaches in East Asian students. He found that a curriculum designed according to a didactic 'spoon-feeding' approach did not encourage students to adopt a deep approach or think critically as they proceeded through their program, whereas a program designed to stress independent learning and student-centred approaches had a measure of success in increasing deep learning as such approaches increased by the end of the year of study. Kember (2000) links this outcome to the characteristics of East Asian students (in this case Hong Kong) who he describes as highly oriented towards group outcomes and perceived social requirements. The author suggests East Asian students are likely to move towards a either a deep or shallow learning approach if they perceive it as socially approved and preferred. It should be noted that movement from didactic to more student centred approaches requires sufficient time and support for students to adapt (Kember, 2000).
Other researchers investigating learning approaches provide analysis that corresponds to the descriptions of deep and surface learning approaches as described above. For example, Guven's (2008) description of self-directed learning seems to converge with deep learning as discussed above:

- To acknowledge a certain learning situation accurately
- To select the most appropriate learning strategy for own learning
- To observe and pursue the degree of the effectiveness of the strategy and
- To get motivated enough to learn

Weinstein and Mayer's (1986 in Guven, 2008) taxonomy of learning strategies appears to show a continuum of shallow to deep strategies:

- Rehearsal strategies
- Elaboration strategies
- Organization strategies
- Comprehensive monitoring strategies
- Affective strategies

Rehearsal strategies are described by Guven (2008) as involving mental repetition and useful for learning required information. Elaboration involves assigning meaning to new information by associating it with prior information. This can include creating mental images, memory supporters, paraphrasing, summarizing, creating analogies, taking productive notes and answering questions. Organizational strategies are used to create easier comprehension of new material. Some of the strategies are outlining the main ideas, sketching an information scheme, or tabulating the information. Comprehension monitoring strategies involves learning techniques applied by the students to accomplish learning goals by developing their own learning strategies. Such students are able to accurately determine what to learn and why and what speed they need to learn it at. Finally, affective strategies help students to overcome the instinctive or sensitive obstacles that emerge during learning. These strategies
include minimizing the fear of failure, decreasing anxiety, motivating oneself or eliminating distractions from learning. These strategies represent a progress from shallower to deeper approaches. Rehearsal and elaboration strategies fall under shallow approaches whereas organization, comprehension and affective strategies fall under deep strategies as described by Lyke and Kelaher Young (2006).

Sungur (2007) defines the construct of metacognition. The author states metacognition is the deliberate, conscious control of one’s cognitive processes. It enables students to plan, sequence, and monitor their learning in a way that directly enhances their performance. Under this definition, metacognition is directly relevant deep learning as the process which causes students to develop their deep learning skills and to select deep learning strategies where appropriate.

(I) Cultural Factors in Motivation and Learning

In this section I will discuss cultural implications to motivation and learning approaches. The theories and research so far discussed in this chapter come mostly from research in Western educational settings. Until recently, there has been relatively little investigation into motivation and learning approaches in Asia or the Middle East, as a whole, and there has been particularly little in regards to the Arabian Gulf Region.

Littlewood (2001) describes motivational orientation as being a dimension which varies along cultural lines. Achievement motivation is primarily individually oriented. He describes individually oriented achievement motivation as being motivated to succeed in order to satisfy personal goals and reach individual self-fulfilment. The other kind of achievement is socially motivated where the individual is motivated to succeed because success will bring prestige or benefits to the in-group. Where individuals belong to societies with a more collectivist orientation, they will tend to exhibit a higher degree of socially oriented motivation.
Moneta (2004) states that those with Western backgrounds (European, North American) possess a model of the self as independent, whereas East Asians possess a model of the self as fundamentally interdependent. The perception of choice is highly significant for Westerners because it reaffirms their sense of self by allowing them to engage in behaviour consistent with previous behaviour. East Asians have more malleable self-identity across contexts and are therefore their motivation to be consistent is weaker hence 'choice' may be less important to them.

Moneta (2004) suggests that because of their cultural heritage, Chinese may value the *toa* state more than the intrinsic motivational experience of flow. Toa, which emphasizes compassion, moderation and humility philosophically seems to run contrary to an attitude of ‘do whatever it takes’ (suggestive of performance-approach) or ‘I do it only because I love it’ (suggestive of intrinsic motivation). Cultural factors may influence motivation so that theories developed in the West may need to be interpreted in light of local cultural factors.

Hamamura et al (2009) cite research (under the goal theory model) that indicates that Asians and Asian Americans are more likely than European North American students to be oriented towards performance-avoidance. North American students of European ancestry, on the other hand, more often display performance-approach characteristics. They state while there is no consensus on why such cultural differences exist, one explanation is that cultures differ in their conception of what is involved with being a good person. Whereas high self-esteem is particularly desirable and functional in North America, face is particularly desirable and functional in East Asia. European North Americans who value self-esteem will want to achieve standout performance and will therefore be oriented towards performance-approach. Standout performance in that European North American cultural context boosts self-esteem (Hamamura et al, 2009).

Hamamura et al (2009) describe East Asian culture as hierarchical and collectivistic (as compared to the West) where the self is embedded in a social network. In such a cultural context, being a valued person entails maintaining one's face. They refer to Ho (1976, in Hamamura et al, 2009) for their definition of face, ‘the respectability and/or deference which
a person can claim for himself from others by virtue of the relative position he occupies in his social network and the degree to which he is judged to have functioned adequately in that position.’ Hamamura et al (2009) posit that the greater tendency of Asians to performance-avoidance is because compared to self-esteem, face is harder to manage. Increasing face is difficult because the amount of face a person has is anchored to one’s position in the social hierarchy. An individual increases his face as he moves up the social hierarchy (e.g., moving from undergraduate to post graduate to doctoral candidate). However, face is chronically vulnerable to factors outside the individual because it is dependent on the expectations of others. Face is easily lost when an individual falls short of group expectations. Hence, face is something that is difficult to gain but relatively easy to lose. As well, in collective societies loss of face can have significant consequences to the individual. Since East Asians would tend to be more concerned about face as a vulnerable resource, their self-regulation should be oriented towards avoiding the loss of face (Hamamura & Heine, 2008; Heine, 2005 in Hamamura et al, 2009). To support this proposition, they report the results of three of their own studies which indicated that Japanese tended to be, on average, more sensitive to information that indicates the presence or absence of negatives, whereas Americans are, on average, more sensitive to information that indicates presence or absence of positives (Hamamura et al, 2009).

Kember (2000) discusses his own study of East Asian students. In particular, he discusses contradictions in common perceptions of students in Hong Kong. On the one hand they are seen as passive, relying on rote-learning, resistant to teaching innovations, and largely extrinsically motivated, which are usually regarded as negative qualities. On the other hand, they are seen as having high levels of achievement motivation; they tend to be high achievers, are good at project work, and are willing to invest in education. So, on the one side, East Asian students are perceived as having learning characteristics associated with poor academic performance and low achievement, but, at the same, are perceived as high achievers.

To explain this contradiction, Kember (2000) calls into question the assumption that East Asian students can be characterized as being purely extrinsically motivated. He refers to
evidence indicating these students are highly motivated by courses that provide good career preparation while also being intrinsically interested in their content. He refers to research findings that indicate that Hong Kong students approach academic tasks in a way that combines memorization with attempts to reach understanding. He suggests students both try to understand concepts and then make sure the material is learnt so they can obtain a good grade in the examination. Therefore, from a learning strategies perspective, students there may be combining what I have previously referred to surface and deep learning strategies so as to maximize outcomes. However, those observing the students may misinterpret what they see as a one sided focus on memorization (Kember, 2000).

Supporting this proposition, Covington (2000) reports a study by Purdie and Hattie (1996) which indicated that compared with Anglo high school students, native Japanese high school students favor memorizing and rote rehearsal strategies when studying. As well, they are primarily motivated by feelings of obligation to others. By contrast, Anglo students are more likely to favor self-testing as a means to assess their level of understanding, as well as to create plans and goals for both motivating and organizing their studies. However, in either group, the highest achievers were those who employed all the above mentioned strategies. In effect, high achievers studied in more complex way than the low achievers in either group combining rehearsal, self-assessment and meta-cognitive strategies.

Kember (2000) suggests that the curriculum design can affect the learning approach the students adopt. McKay and Kember, 1997 (in Kember 2000) found Hong Kong students are likely to move towards a either a deep or shallow learning approach based on their perceptions of what was expected and what was likely to lead to the most positive outcomes. These findings, as well, support the findings of Hamamura et al (2009), above, who suggest that Asian students are highly oriented towards socially approved outcomes.

McKay and Kember (1997, in Kember, 2000) found in study of East Asian students that curriculum designed according to didactic 'spoon-feeding' approach did not encourage students to adopt a deep approach or think critically as they proceeded through their program. However, when a program was designed to stress independent learning and
student-centred approaches there was a measure of success in increasing deep learning in that the reported use of deep approaches rose by the end of year of study. Kember (2000) links this outcome to the characteristics of east Asian students (in this case Hong Kong) who he describes as highly oriented towards group outcomes and perceived social requirements. The author suggests East Asian students are likely to move from shallow to deep learning approaches if they perceive such approaches as socially approved. However, movement from didactic to more student-centred approaches requires sufficient time and support for students to adapt. Perceptions that East Asian students resist non didactic teaching styles likely result from situations where the students are not given sufficient time and support to adapt from familiar teaching styles to unfamiliar instructional approaches (Kember, 2000).

Marton et al (1997, in Littlewood, 2001) reported that many high school students in Hong Kong were motivated to adopt more independent learning approaches but felt constrained from doing so in their current learning contexts.

Kember (2000) states that the evidence suggests that within countries influenced by Confucian tradition characterizations of motivation that associate it with individual drive and competitive performance may be inappropriate. In addition, according to the author, achievement motivation with a collective emphasis should not be confined to countries with a Confucian tradition. Other societies which have strong extended family, village or tribal affiliations may share a tendency towards group centred motivation.

The Emirati population of the UAE seems to share with East Asians a greater orientation towards collectivism and conformity than is the case with Westerners (in dress, social attitudes and especially religion). To the extent that they are more conformist and collective then Westerners, we might find Emiratis share with East Asians a similar concern for the enhancement and preservation of face. Indeed, the context of the current study was highly homogenous – almost all Emirati men working towards employment (or advancement) in the UAE government and semi-government sector. In this context, conformity and reputation would have been important aspects of individual success.
Naffsinger (1995) describes the Arab in society as being expected to show personal integrity to be socially acceptable. He states, that for Arabs, dignity and stature are granted only to those who show themselves as flawless. The author continues:

> the society of the Arab world has no place or respect for those whose errors or faults come to public knowledge. Blame, fault, or error accruing to an Arab personally brings his immediate fall from social grace and a loss of dignity or face. He therefore feels revulsion and bitterness for anything that tends to compromise him in this way (Naffsinger, 1995, Dignity vs. objectivity section, para. 3)

Although strongly worded, Naffsinger’s above characterization does seem to resonate with my own experiences. Students in the program did seem to be highly reluctant to admit or accept fault or failure. As well, motivation often seemed highly focused on the achievement of external and publically visible outcomes.

Fields (2011) discusses a qualitative study of the English study habits of Emirati tertiary students (with Band 6 on IELTS or higher) studying in the UAE. The author describes cognitive strategies in most cases being related to vocabulary in context while reading, often by using a bilingual dictionary and writing translations directly in the book. However, metacognitive strategies were described as almost entirely absent. On the other hand, social-affective strategies were described as most developed among participants. This study seems to suggest that although Emirati students are poor at managing their own learning they are effective at overcoming emotional hurdles and working with others towards learning.

Weak metacognitive skills may be the reason that students in the UAE seem to need considerable scaffolding and feedback built into their learning syllabuses. This may also explain their apparent preference for group study over individual study. Working and studying in groups, even for individual assessments, may provide an informal organizational support system that may, in part, compensate for what may be undeveloped metacognitive skills.
(J) Summary

In this chapter I have described the various theories of motivation which take into account learning and which have implications for education. An attempt was made to show how concepts from more narrowly focused theories (described earlier in the chapter) inform four other theories of motivation and learning which were discussed in greater detail – goal theory, social cognitive theory, self determination theory and language learning theory. These four theories also share conceptualizations with one another. Higher order variables represent an attempt to arrange the concepts of the theories into overarching constructs which describe motivation and learning strategies in terms of simplified dimensions. The deep versus surface approaches construct is particularly important to this study as it underlies the quantitative component of the current investigation (outlined in the next chapter). Finally, I considered cultural factors and their implications for motivation and learning. Learning conceptualizations developed in the Western cultural context might not necessarily transfer neatly to other cultural contexts. Researchers should therefore be sensitive to how cultural factors may influence motivation and learning.
(A) Discussion of Social Research Approaches

The current study employed a mixed methods approach. In this section I overview the two major methodological traditions in social research - the quantitative and qualitative approaches. I then consider the critical perspective whose advocates allow for the mixed methods approach. Finally, I discuss the mixed methods as an approach in itself with consideration of the theoretical issues which surround it. I finally outline my own perspective on the mixed methods approach in relation to the current study.

1. The Quantitative Approach (and the positivist tradition)

Underlying the quantitative approach is the positivist (and more recently the post-positivist) perspective. Central to the positivist perspective is the ontological assumption, termed the realist view or objectivism, that reality exists independently of a conscious perceiver and that things contain their own meaning (Crotty, 1998; Cohen et al, 2007). Determinism is another underlying assumption which holds that all events have causes which are determined by other circumstances (Cohen et al, 2007). This notion that reality exists independently of the perceiver carries over to the epistemological assumption that knowledge is objective. The position assumes no dichotomy between knowledge of the world coming from the senses and the world as it is. The observer is able to stand apart from that which is being observed and may know things as they really are. This can be achieved by intentionally taking on the role of impartial observer and making use of the scientific method (Cohen et al, 2007; Grix, 2004; Pring, 2000). Empiricism is fundamental to the approach. Empiricism requires that claims in the form of hypothesis be verified by observation and direct experience. Observation which is systematic and highly controlled leads to data which can be used as evidence to support or refute hypothesis (Cohen et al, 2007).
By the mid twentieth century, the positivist view that things are knowable was beginning to seem naive even to the natural sciences. The paradoxical characteristics of elemental particles, for example, did not lend themselves to the positivist model of investigation and explanation. It became clear that rather than simply observing and noting natural laws, scientists constructed scientific knowledge through a process of conjecture, revision and falsification. The post-positivist position holds that things are real beyond our individual understandings. However, knowledge and understanding of a phenomenon is never complete and irrefutable. Research interpretations are always subject to later revision or falsification. Science, therefore, strives to achieve the best understanding possible based on empirical methods (Crotty, 1998).

In scientific research, validity, reliability and generalizability are basic goals. The major scientific methodologies are experimental and quasi-experimental designs along with correlation studies. However, only true experiments conducted under highly controlled conditions demonstrate cause and effect relationships with a good degree of confidence and then only within the same population as the experimental group (Angen, 2000; Cohen et al, 2007).

In education, one of the goals of empirical research has been to investigate variables associated with student performance. However, due to practical limitations of true experimental designs to educational settings, quasi experimental designs or correlation studies are often used instead. Although these approaches may suggest cause and effect relationships, they do not demonstrate causality. Therefore, conclusions resulting from quasi experimental methods can, at best, only be made tentatively (Cohen et al, 2007; Donmoyer, 2006).

Surveys have emerged as a common method for collecting data in empirically based social research including education. Whereas in experimental studies they seek to determine if a specific treatment influences an outcome, in social survey research, they provide a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population (Creswell, 2009). Researchers use data from surveys to make generalizations about the population.
Such generalizations may be simply descriptive or they can provide the basis for explanations (Cohen et al, 2007).

In the past, curriculum design based on empirical approaches emphasised control of classroom conditions to affect student performance. This, in turn, had its core the purpose of meeting institutional and socially perceived needs (Cohen et al, 2007). Today’s empirical researchers probably would not share the same confidence in their ability to directly affect student learning outcomes. Real world contextual factors mean that findings do not neatly transfer into everyday classroom situations. However, quantitative researchers would likely assert that empirical techniques can still help teachers and curriculum designers to improve student learning.

2. The Qualitative Approach (and the interpretive tradition)

The qualitative approach to data collection is most strongly associated with the interpretive research paradigm. This approach grew out of methods employed by anthropologists and social scientists doing field research. It came to prominence in social science as a reaction to what many saw as the limitations of the scientific method to understanding the complexities of social reality.

From an ontological point of view, the interpretive perspective holds that reality is subjective. It is consciousness that brings meaning to the universe and therefore reality must be seen in reference to the perceiver. Pring (2000) characterizes the position as holding that there are as many realities as conceptions of it. From a research point of view, the reality of a researcher is different than that of a research subject. In the educational arena, teachers, administrators and students have different realities based on the way they experience life.

Interpretivism does not accept that human behaviour is determined; rather it holds that people take deliberate action. Social situations are fluid, evolving, multi-layered and subject to multiple interpretations (Cohen et al, 2007).
Constructivism is the primary epistemological concept underpinning interpretive research. Constructivism holds that people construct meaning through interaction with the ‘realities’ of the world. People may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon. As well, knowledge is developed and transmitted within a social framework and culture plays a primary role in the generation of meaning (Crotty, 1998).

Social researchers construct meaning as well. Pring states researchers attempt to make sense of the situations that they find themselves by constructing connections and meaning frameworks through which experience is sieved and made intelligible. Thus, facts are created not discovered (Pring, 2000). Social phenomena are always subject to interpretation and, therefore, objective analysis is impossible (Grix, 2004). Rather than objective truth, interpretive researchers seek to generate consensus about meaning within the context of study (Pring, 2000).

Theory in interpretive research emphases contextual linkage. In contrast to postpositivism, theory comes after research and should not precede it. As well, interpretive research is on a smaller scale and usually involving a smaller number of participants to facilitate thick description and facilitate insight. Theories ought to be emergent and grounded in research data. Theories must consider the meanings and purposes of the social actors being investigated. As well, the theories social researchers generate should make sense to the social participants they investigate (Cohen et al, 2007). Individuals and events are unique and as rule cannot be generalized, therefore, generalizations are to be avoided (Cohen et al, 2007). Along the same lines Grix (2004) characterizes social researchers as needing to be able to grasp the subjective meaning of social action. Lather (2006) describes interpretive or naturalistic approaches as having the purpose of understanding.

One cannot apply the concept of validity to qualitative research. Investigators using qualitative research methods generally do not seek (nor purport to be able) to show cause and effect. As well, as stated above, they should not make statements generalizing beyond the scope of the study. However, qualitative researchers may lend credibility to their research through techniques such as member checking where the researcher returns to the informants.
for confirmation of accuracy. *Triangulation* is a technique to find convergent meaning through multiple methods, investigators and/or data sources. *Peer review* is where other researchers critique the research findings (Angen, 2000).

Qualitative methodologies emphasize systematic and detailed analysis of social episodes in context. Detailed and exhaustive description is employed to capture the complexity of situations under investigation (Cohen et al, 2007). One of the investigative approaches associated with qualitative research is case studies in which the researcher explores, in depth, a program, event, activity, process or one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time or activity (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative data sources include open ended questionnaires, interviews, observations, documents, audio-visual records, texts and images. Data are analysed for themes and patterns from which interpretations are made or emergent meanings are drawn. The process of collection is flexible and tends to evolve in response to the realities encountered in the field (Creswell, 2009). The appeal of these open ended methods to interpretive researchers is that they allow for subtle, unexpected and contextually relevant information to come out.

In education, rather than looking at the field in terms of interventions and outcomes as is the case with positivism, interpretive researchers using qualitative methods see classroom situations as dynamic, changing and improvisational. Teachers and learners are involved in a continuous give and take while co-constructing meaning. In such a context, learning cannot be totally preplanned, even by the classroom teacher. The best curriculum developers and administrators can hope to do is set the stage for learning to occur (Donmoyer, 2006). The role of the interpretive researcher in education is to examine the dynamics of classroom or administrative environments so as to provide insight and possibly guidance to field participants.

3. **The critical perspective**

Adherents to the critical perspective believe neither the positivist nor interpretive paradigms provide an adequate account of the social universe. According to them, research from both
perspectives tends to overlook the political and ideological contexts of much of their research. Like interpretivists, critical researchers see the scientific approach as insensitive to the subjective views of social participants. However, they hold interpretivists to account for not taking into adequate account the role power structures play in shaping actor perceptions (Cohen et al, 2007).

Critical theory employs a constructivist view of knowledge with the focus on the interplay of individual or group understandings (Ernst, 1994). Theory in the critical approach may, also, be understood in reference to Crotty’s (1998) discussion of the usefulness of interpretation within constructivism. According to Crotty, there are forms of interpretation which are liberating, fulfilling or rewarding that are in contrast with interpretations which impoverish the human condition. Although there is no such thing as a true or valid interpretation, there are useful interpretations standing out in contrast to interpretations that serve no useful purpose. Research should lead to positive social outcomes. This position supposes the reality of a shared existence. Here, it is useful to note, according to Crotty (1998), realist ontology and constructivist epistemology are conceptually compatible. Therefore, even though knowledge is constructed it may still derive from something external and real.

4. The mixed methods approach

Creswell (2009) describes mixed methods as an outcome of a pragmatic worldview to research which utilizes the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research. Under this approach, the researcher assumes that collecting diverse types of data provides an understanding to the research problem. The approach is described as especially appropriate to the social and health sciences where the issues are complex and multifaceted and where the use of either quantitative or qualitative data alone is inadequate to address the complexity of the subject. As well, according to Creswell (2009), more insight can be gained from a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research than from either by itself. Their combined use provides an expanded understanding of research problems.
Greene, Carecellig, and Graham (1989, in Mastenbroek and Doorenspleet, 2007) list five purposes of mixed method designs: triangulation, complementary, development, initiation, and expansion. The purpose of triangulation is to establish convergence of the results between research methods. With complementary designs one method is used to complement the other. For example, qualitative work is intended to elaborate on quantitative work. In development designs, one method is employed to inform the other study. With initiation mixed methods, the different methods contradict one another, which can lead to fresh insights. When expansion is the goal, the researcher uses different methods for different aspects of a study, where outcomes of one builds on insights gained from the other.

Creswell (2009) states that in mixed methods studies, theory typically shapes the focus of research, determines who participates in the study, how data are collected, and informs the implications of the study which is often for change or advocacy (with this we can see a link to the critical perspective). He states, typically, a mixed methods study will begin with a broad survey in order to generalize results to a population. The second phase will tend to focus on qualitative open ended interviews to collect detailed views from participants. Data collection can be sequential where qualitative data, builds on the other, quantitative data. This he terms the Sequential Explanatory Design:

\[
\text{Quantitative data collection} > \text{Quantitative data analysis} > \\
\text{Qualitative data collection} > \text{Qualitative data analysis} > \\
\text{Overall interpretation(s)}
\]

Although mixed methods approaches have been widely applied, issues remain on their theoretical and methodological ramifications. The pragmatism position on mixed methods approaches holds that if the purpose of research is to better understand a phenomenon, then the researcher should use whatever methods he or she finds helpful. As well, researchers need not be entangled by philosophies or ‘paradigms’. 
Some advocates of mixed methods contend that the notion that researchers ought to adhere to one particular ‘approach’ is in itself an academic fallacy. From this point of view, the so-called paradigms of the social sciences are not true paradigms at all (as first described by Kuhn in regards to the natural sciences) but are instead academic schools of thought and practice within the social sciences. They have over time evolved into quasi-political entities that strive to stake out, maintain and attract converts to their particular approaches to research. Critics of the paradigm conceptualization argue that one cannot neatly divide data based into a dichotomy of quantitative and qualitative based on worldviews (Creswell and Tashakkori, 2007; Gorard, 2003).

However, other authors have raised concerns to what they see as ontological problems in mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches within the framework of a single study. For example, Mastenbroek and Doorenspleet (2007), contend that researchers need to be aware of the assumptions underpinning their research. Although they concede that mixed methods approaches can work, they reject that it meaningful to employ quantitative methods while adhering to the subjectivist ontology associated with the interpretive research ‘paradigm’. This is because quantitative methods have at their root realist assumptions that run contrary to the assumption (associated with interpretivism) that reality is subjective. They conclude that mixing methodological approaches is only possible within the postpositivist (or realist) paradigm.

It is my position that researchers need not restrict themselves to either qualitative or quantitative methods for a given research project. I accept that employing both quantitative and qualitative methods can aid the researcher in developing a better overall understanding of complex and multifaceted topics. However, I also recognize the position, as put forth by Mastenbroek and Doorenspleet (2007) that it makes no sense to employ quantitative methods while holding to purely subjectivist outlook of reality (associated with interpretivism). In addition, I accept Crotty’s (1998) contention that realist ontology and constructivist epistemology are conceptually compatible. Researchers in either the social or ‘hard’ sciences construct understandings of a real universe. Even what is referred to as ‘hard
data’ needs to be put through an intellectual process (in the mind) for it to have meaning. Therefore, meaning construction occurs when either quantitative or qualitative methods are used.

I would describe my philosophical position in relation to the current study as realist. Although our understandings are constructed they relate to an underlying reality. From here, I would contend there can be positive practical outcomes from social research. In the case of the current study, I hoped the findings might provide an evidentiary basis for curriculum discussion and possibly to inform curriculum development in the Arabian Gulf context.

(B) Description of Current Study

1. Overview, research questions and research design

The subject students of this study attended the English for academic purposes curriculum (Chapter 2) men’s tertiary technical college in the UAE. The research questions guiding this research design were:

- What are the learning approach characteristics of the first year English for academic purposes students?
  - Which dimension (deep or surface) is indicated as stronger by the Revised Study Process Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F)?
  - What personal and experiential factors do student interviewees report as being influential in the approaches they take to learning?
- Is the current approach to curriculum in the English for academic/professional purposes program supportive of students taking a deep approach given the students’ motivational and learning style characteristics?
  - Which course elements encourage the adoption of either deep or surface learning (as indicated by the questionnaires and through the interviews)?
What other aspects of the student experience with the subject courses do the student interviewees perceive as being important in influencing their learning approaches?

A theoretical proposition underlying these questions is that the deep learning approach is more supportive of mastery learning (and is therefore better) than the surface approach. Those who have a surface approach tend to be motivated to appear to have met a set standard and tend to engage in reproduction strategies. Deep approach learners are motivated to achieve mastery or competency in the learning content. They therefore engage in more diverse and effective strategies to achieve competency. For example, they engage in elaboration strategies such as paraphrasing, identifying important points, making analogies and generalizations, making connections, and expanding on the material that has been presented (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006). A second theoretical position underlying this study is that the curriculum can influence student learning approaches (see Chapter 3).

In terms of data collection and analysis, the design of this study may be termed *complementary* as described by Greene, Carecellig, and Graham (1989, in Mastenbroek and Doorenspleet, 2007). Here, I intended qualitative interviews to elaborate on information gained from questionnaires. My approach may also be termed a *sequential explanatory* design as termed by Creswell (2009). This design entails the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2009). The first phase of my study involved the collection and analysis of questionnaire data. The second phase involved qualitative data collection from interviews. As well, the quantitative data analysis was used to help select candidates for the interviews.

In the first phase, to gain a general picture of the subject curriculum in regards to deep versus surface learning aspects, I gained the cooperation of a small number of my colleagues experienced in the subject program. These volunteers were asked to complete a questionnaire on the two subject courses – Academic Reading and Writing 1 and Academic Spoken Communication. The instructors rated assignments within the program as to their
deep and surface learning attributes (Appendix 1, described in detail below). I tabulated the responses to give an overall indication of the extent to which the curriculum could be described as currently supportive of deep learning approaches.

I, next, surveyed the subject student population on their approaches to learning along the deep and surface dimensions using a translated version of an existing instrument. The instrument used was the Revised Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs, Kember, & Leung, The revised two factor process questionnaire: R-SPQ-2F, 2001) (See Appendix 2). The goal here was to gain a general picture of the students in terms of their overall orientation towards a deep, surface or a mixed learning approach. To the extent that students in general may have exhibited a surface orientation, this might have suggested that the students would benefit from a more supportive and scaffolded curriculum which encourages them to gradually apply deeper learning approaches. On the other hand, if the population showed an existing tendency towards the deep approach, this would have indicated that the curriculum ought to forego a great deal of its scaffolding. A less structured design would provide the students more latitude to apply their existing deep learning approaches and would encourage greater mastery learning.

In addition, to the Revised Study Process Questionnaire the students completed eight additional items. Here, they rated their current academic communication course on factors found to be associated with encouraging deep and surface learning. This was to shed additional light on whether the courses subject to this investigation supported the students adopting deep learning (Appendix 3, described in detail below).

After the surveys were completed, in the second phase, I interviewed a smaller group of eleven students (including one trial interview) to develop a more penetrating understanding on students' learning approaches. The focus here was to gain insight on student approaches to learning – to gain detailed descriptions of their strategies and motivations towards learning. As well, I hoped to gain more detailed insights of what aspects of the target curricula encouraged or discouraged deep learning. I cross referenced student responses with the
course content analysis to gain insight on how the current curriculum encourages deep learning approaches on the part of students.

2. Data collection: Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty

Students in the subject institution often arrive insufficiently prepared for bachelors level education (see Chapter 2). Therefore, one of the main purposes of the academic preparation courses being investigated was to reduce student dependence on instructors and foster independent learning. The theoretical position associated with this desired course outcome (and underlying this study) is that deep learning approaches go with self-directed and mastery based learning (see Chapter 3).

As discussed in Chapter 2, official course syllabuses at the host institution emphasize student learning outcomes. Course leaders are required to show that their assessments or assignments demonstrate student achievement in the prescribed outcomes. Coordinators tend, then, to develop learning materials that help students to meet the outcomes set forth in assessments. As such, a given assessment or assignment will tend to represent a body of student work and instruction. For this reason, this curriculum analysis is centered on the courses’ assignments.

Four instructors were asked to do the content survey. These represented the instructors who had taught both subject courses at least twice. They are all familiar with the course content and had first hand in-class experience with the various assignments. In addition, all had lived in the UAE four or more years. They were, therefore, familiar with the students’ learning styles and cultural characteristics.

The content survey took the form of a questionnaire on which the participating instructors indicated the extent they agreed with statements about the courses’ major assignments on a Likert scale. Each the questionnaire’s items was derived from literature on how curriculum influences deep and surface learning approaches. As such, the questionnaire was intended as a source of evidence, based on instructor perceptions, as to what course components would best encourage deep approaches to learning (See Appendix 1 for the complete questionnaire). Below are the items which the instructors rated for each assignment.
1. The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.

2. The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.

3. The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.

4. The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.

5. The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.

6. The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.

Item 1 comes from research that indicates that an intrinsic goal orientation towards a subject is associated with deep learning. If a student is personally interested in what is to be learned, he or she is more likely to take a deep learning approach to it (Lyke and Kalaher Young, 2006).

Item 2 comes from research that East Asian students are likely to move towards deep learning if they see the content as relevant to career success (Kember, 2000). In East Asian countries career achievement is described by Kember (2000) as highly important. This item assumes that the students in the UAE share with East Asian students a collectivist orientation where individuals are likely to place high value on socially recognized achievement. As I discuss in Chapter 3, UAE nationals appear to share with East Asians a strong orientation towards collectivism and conformity. Most UAE nationals find employment in public bureaucracies and government owned corporations. Advancement in public institutions often signifies achievement in the UAE context.

Item 3 is based on an investigation that shows East Asian students will tend to move to deep learning approaches if they perceive such approaches as socially recognized (Kember, 2000).
If the students perceive the course content and activities, which encourage deep learning, as socially approved, they are more likely to incorporate such approaches. The item also relates to research that indicates that students from collectivist cultures tend to be highly sensitive to social expectations in terms to how they go about learning (Littlewood, 2001; Hamamura et al, 2009).

For item 3 to be relevant and indicative of whether an assignment (and its supporting material) supports deep learning one must assume that the content does already, to some extent, support deep learning – that it is not based primarily on a didactic 'spoon-feeding' approach which would encourage surface learning (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006). Item 3 can only be indicative of support for deep learning if results from the other items also suggest the assignment component supports deep learning.

Item 4 is based on research that learning which is self-directed converges with deep learning (Guven, 2008; Biggs, 1987).

Item 5 comes from investigations suggesting that when teaching is student centered, students will tend to move towards deep learning approaches (Trigwell, Poser and Waterhouse, 1997).

Item 6 is drawn from research that student emotional factors are important to developing deep learning approaches. Students are more likely to adopt a deep approach when they overcome their fear of failure by achieving success with challenging content. Structuring challenging course material in such a way that students are likely to achieve success can aid in this outcome (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006).

3. Data collection: Student questionnaires
The second aspect of data collection in phase 1 involved questionnaires distributed to the students enrolled in the two courses investigated in this study – Academic Reading and Writing 1 and Academic Spoken Communication. There were two parts to the questionnaire. The first part was intended to indicate student learning approach orientations along the deep and surface approach dimensions. The second part of the questionnaire was intended to
indicate whether the students perceived the courses being as having attributes which would support the students adopting the deep learning approach.

a. The Student Learning Approach Questionnaire
(The Revised Study Process Questionnaire, R-SPQ-2F)

The Revised Study Process Questionnaire (Biggs, Kember & Leung, 2001) is designed around the construct of learning and motivation divided into the deep and surface constructs (Chapter 3). As the name suggests, the Revised Study Process Questionnaire is a revision of the original Study Process Questionnaire from three factors (deep, surface, and achieving) to two, based on factor analysis of items and responses from earlier versions of the questionnaire. Kember and Leung (1998, in Biggs, Kember & Leung, 2001) showed using factor analysis that the SPQ could ‘more conveniently’ be described in terms of deep and surface factors only, with motivation and strategy subscales subsumed on both factors. The scales R-SPQ-2F are named as Deep Approach (DA) and Surface Approach (SA), with four subscales Deep Motive (DM), Deep Strategy (DS), Surface Motive (SM) and Surface Strategy (SS) (See Appendix 2). Below are the items which correspond with each sub-dimension from the version of R-SPQ-2F used in the current study.

Below are the items intended to indicate Surface Motivation (SM):

- My aim is to pass the class and do as little work as possible
- I do not find the course very interesting and do as little work as possible
- I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them.
- I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, all you need is basic knowledge about the topics.
- I see no point in learning material that is not likely to be in the examination

Surface Strategy (SS) approaches are indicated by:

- I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines.
• I learn things by rote, going over and over them until I know them by heart even I do not understand them
• I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra.
• I believe that the college teachers shouldn’t expect students to spend a lot of time studying material everyone knows won’t be examined.
• I find the best way to pass is to try to remember answers to likely questions

Deep Motivation (DM) associated with the task/mastery/learning orientation is indicated by:

• I find at times studying gives me a deep sense of satisfaction.
• I feel that virtually any topic can be interesting once I get into it.
• I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie.
• I work hard at my studies because I find the materials interesting.
• I come to classes with questions about what I am learning. I want to have answers to these questions so I can better understand what I am learning.

Deep Strategy (DS) approaches are indicated by high response on the following:

• I find I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own conclusions before I am satisfied
• I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain extra information about them
• I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.
• I spend a lot of my free time learning more about interesting topics which have been discussed in different classes.
• I make an effort to do some extra reading (by myself) about the topics that teacher lectures on in class.
Marsh, Craven, and Hinkley (2003) refer to the tendency of researchers to use their own labels to refer to constructs without taking adequate note of how these constructs have been referred to in the past leading to what they describe as a conceptual mess. They refer to literature that this can be especially problematic when psychometric instruments use either the same label to refer to different constructs or different labels for the same construct being measured. The question items on R-SPQ-2F appear to show good face validity for the deep and surface construct which it is intended to investigate. As well, the authors of the R-SPQ-2F (Biggs, Kember & Leung, 2001) describe the theoretical underpinnings of the instrument in way which is closely related to the deep and surface construct as discussed in Chapter 3.

b. Reliability and validity of the R-SPQ-2F

In this section, I will discuss how the Revised Study Process Questionnaire has been used in previous research and discuss the issue of the instrument's internal reliability.

As stated, the items on the R-SQP-2F appear to show good face validity towards the constructs of deep and surface orientations in regards to both motivation and learning dimensions. Half the questions on the survey are intended to indicate a student learning orientation which is surface and that does not support competency learning. The other ten questions, on the other hand, are indicative of a student having taken a mastery learning approach.

However, face validity on its own is not sufficient. The instrument must also show internal reliability. The questions intended to indicate either dimension must be shown to actually do so with enough strength and reliability that the instrument as whole can be called reliable.

One way of demonstrating internal consistency is that an instrument or test be run a split-half method which is calculated using the Spearman-Brown formula (Reliability = 2r / 1 + r) where r is the actual correlation between the two halves. This type of reliability assumes that the test can be split into two matched halves. Assessments which are rank ordered in terms of
difficulty or where the assessment measure qualities along differing dimensions (as in the
case of R-SPQ-2F) are not well suited to this type of reliability test (Cohen et al, 2007).

An alternative measure of internal reliability is the Cronbach alpha, or simply the alpha. This
test provides a coefficient of inter-item correlations, that is, the correlation of each item with
the sum of the other relevant items, and is useful for instruments where two or more
dimensions are being investigated. The score arrived at is an average correlation among all
the items for a given dimension (e.g., surface approach) (Cohen et al, 2007). Alternatively, it
can be described as the calculation of all possible split-half reliability coefficients (Bryman,
2008).

Cohen et al (2007) provide the following guidelines for interpreting alpha coefficients:

+ 0.90       very highly reliable
0.80 - 0.90  highly reliable
0.70 - 0.79  reliable
0.60 - 0.69  marginally/minimally reliable
- 0.60       unacceptably low reliability

Richardson (2004) states, according to conventional psychometric criteria, alpha scores below
0.6 are poor.

Statistical analysis of the internal reliability of the R-SPQ-2F in past research has indicated
acceptable levels along the primary dimension of surface versus deep approach. For example,
the developers of the R-SPQ-2F (Biggs et al, 2001) achieved a Cronbach alpha of 0.73 for deep
approach (DA) and 0.64 for surface approach (SA) in their trial of the instrument in a Hong
Kong university. However, results on the subscale factors do not consistently meet acceptable
levels.

Leung and Chan (2001) concluded that the R-SPQ-2 internal reliability results on the primary
approach dimension (deep and surface) are sufficiently good so as to confirm the R-SPQ-2 as a
useful instrument for research and for evaluating the learning processes of students in classrooms.

**Table 3 - Chonbach’s alpha scores obtained from differing studies**

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<td>Gijbels et al 2005</td>
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<td>Leung &amp; Chan 2001</td>
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Justicia et al (2008) found that two primary approach factors (deep and surface) accounted for 69.5 % of the variance which was more than double that of the sub-factors which were at 30.5%. These authors concluded that the latent structure of the R-SPQ-2F would be better represented by the two primary factors rather than the four sub-categories.

Richardson (2004) states that any research instrument should be validated from scratch in each new context in which it is used. One reason for this is that constructs can be interpreted differently across cultures or even between social groups within a given cultural setting. As discussed in Chapter 3, In the case of learning approaches, respondents can vary considerably across cultures in terms of their perceptions about learning. I anticipated based on past studies that the (conducted in varying cultural contexts) primary dimension would yield acceptably high alpha coefficients to allow me to conduct further analysis and interpretation based on the questionnaire results. SPSS software was used to generate the Cronbach’s alpha coefficients from the survey data for each of the primary dimensions (deep and surface) and
for the sub-dimension (motivation and strategy). The results and their implications are discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

c. **Questionnaire preparation**

I analyzed a copy of the R-SPQ-2F item by item for problems in wording. Such problems included wordings which were phrased in nuances subject to possible misinterpretation by non-native speakers of English or which included themes or concepts that might not translate into the local cultural context. Based on my experience with the local culture, I reworded some items so that their intent would be clearer for translation and be more appropriate given the cultural context. For example, I considered the following item problematic since Emiratis do not generally read novels for pleasure.

*I find the studying academic topics can at times be as exciting as a good novel or movie.*

I therefore reworded the question as:

*I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie.*

I changed another item as I judged the phrase *passing acquaintance* to be slightly ambiguous and possibly problematic for translation:

*I find it not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, when all you need is a passing acquaintance with topics.*

I reworded it as:

*I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, all you need is basic knowledge about the topics.*

The revised English version of the questionnaire was translated into Arabic by a professional translation service. The translated version of the questionnaire was then retranslated back into English by one of my Arabic speaking colleagues. Together we discussed the items as to
whether they kept their intended meaning through translation. A few changes to the translated copy of the questionnaire were suggested by the Arabic speaking colleague.

The translated questionnaire was trialed at the end of the 2011-2012 academic year. I asked 20 students from three different classes to report any problems they might be having understanding the instructions or the meaning of items. The participating students did not report problems understanding any particular questions. However, three questionnaires were incomplete. In one case the second page of the questionnaire was not completed. In another case, one question was left blank. In the third case, two different questions were left blank. Although I did not suspect that these incomplete questionnaires suggested a problem with the questionnaire itself, I discussed the three skipped items with a small group of students to ensure that the items were easily comprehensible. Following the questionnaire trial, a second Arab speaking colleague made further modifications in consultation with me such that I had high confidence that the intended meanings were clearly translated.

In the final version of the questionnaire (Appendix 2), items were written in both Arabic and English. This was so instructors would not be suspicious about the meaning and intent of the items. As well, instructors could clarify the meaning items to students when asked. In addition, a few students were likely to have had stronger English than Arabic. These were students who had been educated English speaking countries and/or who came from families where one of the parents was from outside the Arab world.

d. Student Course Questionnaire

In addition to the items from the R-SPQ-2F, the students answered eight items on the course content. The students were asked to indicate which of the two courses subject to this study they were currently enrolled in - Academic Reading and Writing 1 or Academic Spoken Communication. They then completed the eight items about the course (Appendix 3). Approximately half the students completed the questionnaires near the end of the first course - academic reading and writing. The other students were nearing completion of the second course which focused on academic and professional oral skills (Academic Spoken
Communication) and would have completed the first course the previous semester (See Chapter 3, Section 4 for a complete description of the courses).

The eight items are similar to the items in the curriculum questionnaire for faculty (Section 2 of this chapter). As such, they are based on research on how course characteristics can affect student learning approaches (Appendix 3).

Response bias in questionnaires is when the respondent circles the same response over and over across items with little attention paid to the actual meaning of the items (Creswell, 2009). To discourage (and to locate clear cut cases of) response setting, four of the items were worded so that agreement indicated a course characteristic supporting deep learning. Four other items were worded such that agreement indicted a surface learning encouraging characteristic of the course environment. The two types of items were interspaced such that in the first item was worded to correspond with a deep approach supporting characteristic, the second with a shallow approach supporting characteristic, the third deep again and so on.

The items were translated into Arabic with the help of an Arabic speaking colleague. As with Part A of the questionnaire the items were written in both English and Arabic. The items in Part B were trialed once with one class a few weeks prior to the questionnaire being sent out for general administration. Based on student feedback Item 2 was modified so that the word no was emphasized so that students would not misread the question as a positive. The wording of Item 3 in Arabic was adjusted for clarity with the help of a third Arabic speaking colleague (Appendix 3).

e. Implementation

I distributed the questionnaires by email to every instructor in the two subject courses, Academic Reading and Writing 1 and Academic Spoken Communication. These courses represent the English for academic and professional purposes courses in the year one bachelors program representing 32 classes in total. The one class with which I had conducted the recent trial was not included. Students taking academic reading and writing made up slightly over half the total number of students registered in both courses.
In the email accompanying the questionnaires, I asked the course teachers to conduct the survey in class with their students. As participation was voluntary, I asked instructors not to compel students to complete the survey. The teachers were instructed not to suggest answers to the students though clarifying the meaning of items if asked was acceptable. Only those students opting to volunteer for interviews on the final page of the questionnaire were asked to provide identifying information.

Two weeks after sending out the questionnaires, I sent a follow-up email thanking those instructors who had by then returned the questionnaires to me. I then made a second appeal offering to help by making copies of questionnaires.

Five hundred and twenty one students were registered in 32 classes of either Academic Reading and Writing 1 or Academic Spoken Communication. In total, I received completed questionnaire sets for 23 of the 32 classes in either course. The total number of questionnaires returned was 270. Of these, I excluded 18 for various reasons – 12 due to obvious response setting; 2 for being unfinished; 2 for being exact duplications of one another (where the two questionnaires were submitted together suggesting one was copied from the other) and 2 for giving multiple responses on the same item. I entered the response data of the remaining 252 questionnaires into SPSS software for analysis.

4. Data collection: Interviews
   
ah. Participant selection
Interview respondents signalled their willingness to participate by volunteering their names and contact details on the questionnaire form. The interviewees finally selected were chosen for having strong contrasting scores on the either the deep or surface dimension and/or they had strong contrasting scores in at least two of five factors emerging from a factor analysis (described in detail in Chapter 5).

Ten individuals participated in the main interviews along with one pilot interview for a total of 11.
b. Interview format

The interviews were conducted with myself in English. Although students had to achieve a minimum overall band in the IELTS of 5 for program entry, Emirati students tend to perform better in the speaking component of the IELTS than the other components. All but one of the interviewees finally selected spoke at a level of proficiency suggesting a speaking band of 5.5 or higher.

Interviews were conducted in May 2013 at the subject college. Each interview was conducted privately at the college and recorded in MP3 format (with the student’s permission). All participants signed the consent form prior to commencing (see Appendix 7). I completed the interviews in the same order as their rankings (ranking procedure described in Chapter 5). As well, a trial interview was conducted about four weeks prior to the main interviews. The interview context was intended to be minimally threatening and, therefore, conducive to the students giving honest and expansive answers. I emphasized that the interview is in no way an evaluation and that there were no right or wrong answers. The interviews lasted between eleven and twenty two minutes.

An open ended interview format was employed with the questions sequenced in advance. During interviews, participants were asked open ended questions to which they may have answered in any way they wished. This was to facilitate data analysis and comparison between subjects while moving the interview in an appropriate and consistent direction. Although the structure of the question list was adhered to when appropriate follow-up questions were asked. Follow-up questions were asked in order to obtain greater depth of information, focus on a point of interest, or specify or narrow down the meaning of a response. If necessary, questions were rephrased for clarification. This approach is consistent with the open ended format as described by Cohen et al (2007). The main intent of the interviews was to probe the respondents on their motivations and learning strategies especially in relation to the courses in question (see the question sheet in Appendix 6).

A pilot interview was conducted approximately one month prior to the commencement of the main interviews. The pilot interview was used as an opportunity to trial the questions and to
determine if any changes should be made. It was decided after the pilot no changes needed to be made to the question list. One issue arising from the pilot interview was the relative amount of time the interviewer spent speaking compared to the participants. Much of this involved what seemed to be unnecessary question rephrasing and elaboration on points. After the recording of the pilot was reviewed, it was determined that in the subsequent interviews questions should only be rephrased or elaborated on if the interviewee asked for clarification or seemed not to understand the question.

5. Interview data analysis

I employed a qualitative approach to my interview data analysis described by Cohen et al. (2007) as one that makes sense of participants’ definitions of situations and which notes patterns, themes, categories and regularities. One of the purposes can be to amalgamate key issues or themes across individuals, related to a research question. The intent of this approach is to find thematic patterns across the participants on the topics deriving from my research questions (See Figure 1).

Saldana (2013) describes structural coding as a method for producing topic lists or indices of major categories or themes. He describes it as appropriate for investigations using multiple participants and employing semi-structured data-gathering methods to test hypothesis or to conduct exploratory investigations. He describes it as particularly useful for interview transcripts.

The structural coding approach involves the identification of large segments of text based on topics. In the case of the current investigation, these segments are often linked to the interview questions which were, in turn, derived from my research questions. As well, unanticipated topics emerging from discussions with the participants were also coded in this manner. Saldana (2013) states that such topic coded texts segments can form the basis for further qualitative analysis within and across topics.
First cycle of coding involved coding of the individual transcripts one at a time. Concurrent to structural topic coding, I employed process coding. My aim was to identify and better understand the processes UAE students use as they go about learning in the current tertiary context. Process coding involves the application of action words (gerunds – verbs with ‘ing’) to connote action in the data. Saldana (2013) states that that process coding is particularly appropriate in the search for ongoing action/interaction/emotion taken in response to situations, or problems, often with the purpose of reaching a goal or handling a problem.

As I went about coding my data, I employed structural codes to identify topics under discussion. After applying topic codes I used process codes to identify student processes under the topics. Where appropriate sub-process codes were added to the main process codes. As well, additional points of information relevant to the process were added in brackets after the code.

As coding continued and the system of coding evolved, the specific wording of codes were revised so as to be inclusive of new cases of data or to better differentiate codes from one another so as to prevent overlapping code meanings. The intent was to eventually tabulate codes under and between topics to help identify and gauge the relative importance of the topics and the student processes that relate to them.

A potential problem with evaluating responses by categories across participants is that the data can become decontextualized from individual accounts. As such, the interconnectedness of meanings within individual accounts is sacrificed in favour of collective descriptions. Tension, therefore, exists between the holistic and fragmentary/atomistic modes of analysis and the researcher must be mindful of this (Cohen et al 2007).

Cycle two coding involved analysing all the process codes under a given structure code across the transcripts for emergent themes. In the case of the current study, thematic patterns across participants on topics related to my research questions are of greatest relevance to my research questions. However, since the thematic patterns derived across individuals were based on individual meanings, effort was taken to ensure that these meanings were not unduly transformed or reduced during the analysis. Where appropriate, notes were added to
the codes to reflect how the comments related to other statements made by the participant. These notes pertaining to nuanced meanings were used for quotation selection and discussion of interview analysis in the following chapter (Chapter5, Results and Analysis).

6. Ethical issues
Prior to conducting the survey and interviews, permission was obtained from the relevant permission granting office at the college where the survey is to be conducted. As part of this process, I promised not to publish any component of this study where the subject institution is named without first obtaining permission from the relevant office at the institution. Permission came in the form of an email from the quality assurance office granting permission to conduct the research. In addition, permission has been obtained from the University of Exeter Graduate School of Education, research ethics committee (see Appendix 8).

Class instructors conducted the student survey. As participation was voluntary, instructors were asked not to compel students to complete the survey. The purpose of the survey was stated on the questionnaire cover page. It stated that the purpose of the survey was to better understand student attitudes and ways of learning. It continued to state that such information may be useful in developing curriculum for UAE students. No identifying information was collected from survey respondents unless they were volunteering for the interviews. Interview respondents self-selected by signalling their willingness to participate by volunteering their names and contact details on the survey form.

The students participating in the interviews signed a consent form. The form advised the participants that their participation was voluntary and that they could cease their participation at any time; that the information collected would be used by the researcher for his doctoral thesis and perhaps in later publication; that the student had the right to refuse the researcher permission to use any information about him; that all information provided was be treated as confidential and that the researcher would make every effort to preserve
his confidentiality, such that the student was to remain anonymous in relation to the information he or she provided.

Identifying information was not collected from survey respondents unless they were volunteering for the interviews. I maintained identifying information which was on paper under lock and key either in my work station or in my home. Identifying information in soft format was maintained in password protected hard drives. Pseudonyms were used in place of actual names and every effort has been made to ensure that no identifying information is included in the final version of this thesis.

(C) Summary
Figure 1 below is a graphical representation of the research design, methods and procedures discussed in this chapter. Phase 1 of the study involves information collected using quantitative instruments. These are the Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty, the Student Questionnaire including student learning approach section (Part A. R-SPQ-2f) and the course section (Part B). Information on the procedures associated with each instrument is also represented below. The analysis procedures referred to under the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire are discussed in detail in the next chapter. Phase 2 refers to the information collection and analysis procedures for the interviews. Here, as well, the procedures associated with the collection of data are represented within the figure.
**Figure 1 – Research Design, Methods and Procedures**

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<td>For four experienced course teachers completed the questionnaire</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A of Student Questionnaire - learning approach questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Completed by students taking the academic preparation courses reading (Research skills and Communication). 252 returns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability check conducted using Cronbach’s alpha (SPSS software)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary dimensions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary dimensions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive statistics calculated (on SPSS)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean scores</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep dimension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface dimension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represented score distribution on a scatter plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y axis – deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X axis – Surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor analysis conducted (on SPSS)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generated factors (varimax orthogonal rotation)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total variance accounted for by each factor calculated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associated questionnaire items with factors (rotated component matrix)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 factors named</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weighted items associated with each factor (from loadings)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculated weighted factor means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculated weighted factor scores for each respondent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generated histogram frequency charts for each factor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Part B of Student Questionnaire - course questionnaire

- Average scores calculated for each item

### Phase 2 – Qualitative data collection and analysis

#### Student Interviews – ten interviews and one pilot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection</th>
<th>From among those volunteering contact information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 interview candidates shortlisted. Selections based on factor analysis - those having both high and low factor scores</td>
<td>Candidates rank ordered → Preference towards those showing more coherent learning approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducting interviews</td>
<td>Question list made (informed by research questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducted open ended interviews</td>
<td>Signed consent obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recorded in MP3 format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Followed question list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Coded individual transcripts (Cycle 1) → Structural coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thematically coded across participant transcripts (Cycle 2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5 – Results

In this chapter I will discuss the data analysis and results. I describe the results of each of the three questionnaires used in this study including discussions of the statistical procedures used and the implications of the findings. Later, I describe the procedures used in the analysis of the interviews and describe the outcomes. Pertinent participant statements are also referred to and discussed. A full discussion of the implication of the findings to the current learning context is provided in Chapter 6, Discussion.

(A) Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty

Four instructors experienced in the subject courses were asked to provide ratings on how course assignments and their associated learning activities corresponded with six course factors that encourage students to adopt deep learning approaches (see Chapter 4). Likert scale responses were converted into numbers, as shown below, to yield average scores for the questionnaire items out of 5.

A – I completely agree with this statement (5 points)
B – I somewhat agree with this statement (4 points)
C – I neither agree nor disagree with this statement (3 points)
D – I somewhat disagree with this statement (2 points)
E – I completely disagree with this statement (1 point)

The complete results are shown in Appendix 9. Table 4 provides a summary of the mean instructor ratings across the various factors under each assignment. For each instructor the scores for the factors associated with the deep learning were averaged to make a mean score for the assignment for each instructor. These scores were then combined with the average scores for the other instructors to make a mean score for each assignment. The mean scores on the left of the table are the average of the scores for each assignment within the course.
### Table 4 – Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty means per assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Skills (M4.21)</td>
<td>Reading summaries</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual assignment</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final assignment</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication (M 4.56)</td>
<td>In-class interview</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interview reflective report</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting announcement and agenda</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting in-class assignment</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post meeting report</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In-class presentations</td>
<td>4.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post presentation reports</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-course assignments</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M 3.59)</td>
<td>Portfolios</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 contains the mean scores for each factor associated with deep learning across the assignments under each course.
Table 5 - Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty means per items

Item means for the academic reading and writing course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item means for the academic spoken communication course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Item means for cross-course assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own leaning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that the instructors tended to perceive the assignments and their associated activities had characteristics that supported the students adopting deep learning. This is especially the case for the final three factors – encouraging student planning, student centeredness, and appropriate difficulty level. Item scores across factors seem to be slightly higher for the academic spoken communication skills course (M 4.56) than the academic reading and writing skills course (M 4.21). Also of note is that academic reading and writing (and research skills) course scored considerably lower than spoken communication skills course on intrinsic interest represented by item 1. Lower scores were given on the assignments that went across the two courses (M 3.59), especially along the dimensions of interest and career relevancy.

There are two instances where rater differences in ranking warrant remark. The results below are the rater scores for items 1 of the Reading Summaries. We can see that the range goes from a rating of 1 to 5 such that one of the course teachers rated the assignments as having a very a high degree of intrinsic interest for the students where as another saw the assignments as having very little intrinsic interest value.
The Reading Summaries assignments involved the students reading magazine or newspaper articles and summarizing the contents in their own words. The articles to be summarized were chosen with the intention that they would be interesting to the students. Three of the raters later provided comments of how they recollected scoring the item and the reason for their scores. Two raters stated they likely provided the higher scores on the above item. A reason given for this was that articles were chosen to be relevant and meaningful to the students (often dealing with events and situations in the local region) and therefore interesting. In addition, one of the raters stated the articles were selected to be at an appropriate level of difficulty given the reading level of the majority of the students. The third rater indicated that he or she had likely given one of the two lower scores. The reason provided, in this case, was that the students as a group did not fully appreciate and value the importance of developing academic writing skills given that writing was not part of their traditional culture and, as such, was not yet not deeply imbedded within their social framework. For this reason, they likely perceived the tasks as something being imposed upon them by outside agents and which were of little personal meaning.

Item 4 from the vocabulary assignment also stands out in that it shows a division among the four raters.

| 4  | The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning. | 2.50  | (4, 1, 1, 4) |

As with the case above, the discrepancy here may be as a result of what the raters looked at in regards to the assignment. Two of the raters later contacted stated that they believed the task did not cause the students to engage in analysis because the quizzes themselves involved multiple choice answers to cloze formatted questions. As such, they provided little flexibility in how the students went about the actual assignments in order to achieve their grades. One rater stated it was possible for them to continue clicking answers to get a sufficient number correct to move to the next question without even understanding the meaning of the
vocabulary items. The third rater, on the contrary, stated that analysis and planning were needed to achieve high marks on the assignment.

(B) The Student Learning Approach Questionnaire
(The Revised Study Process Questionnaire, R-SPQ-2F)

The purpose of the student learning approach questionnaire was to obtain a picture of student learning orientations for the deep and surface approach dimensions as well as each of their sub-dimensions. Questionnaire responses were entered into the data analysis software (SPSS) for 252 unspoiled questionnaires.

The instrument contained 20 items in total. Respondents indicated the extent to which they thought statements describing learning behaviours and motivations were true for them. This was carried out by circling a number on a Likert scale. Circling number 5 on the scale indicated that the student thought the characteristic being described in the item was very true for the student and 1 indicated that it was not at all true. Each of the two primary dimensions had ten associated items (Appendix 2).

1. Internal consistency of the primary and secondary dimensions
Cronbach’s alpha scores of internal consistency were computed for the two primary dimensions - deep and surface learning approaches. As well, alphas were computed for the sub-dimensions of deep motivation, deep strategy, surface motivations, and surface strategy. This was done because for a questionnaire dimension (and its measurement) to be meaningful it must represent an underlying construct. It follows that the item responses belonging to the construct should show acceptable internal consistency across respondents (SPSS FAQ: What does Cronbach's alpha mean?, 2013). A Cronbach’s alpha .60 is recognized by some researchers as the minimum acceptable score (Cohen et al, 2007). However, other sources state that an alpha of .70 is the minimum acceptable score for social science research.
Poor interrelatedness between items, heterogeneous constructs or having a low number of questions can be reasons for a low alpha (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Table 6 shows the alpha scores obtained in the current study along with scores obtained by other researchers who have used the same instrument (the R-SPQ-2F). The alpha scores obtained for the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire show relatively strong internal consistency on the deep approach dimension (.791) and weaker (though still perhaps marginally acceptable) internal consistency on the surface approach dimension (.604). For the students as a whole, the deep approach dimension is more coherent and consistent.

The surface approach sub-dimensions did not achieve acceptable alphas. As a result, the sub-dimension component of the questionnaire is not subject to any further analysis or discussion.

Table 6 - Cronbach’s Alpha Scores Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Dimension</th>
<th>Secondary Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deep Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biggs et al, 2001</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gijbels et al 2005</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leung &amp; Chan 2001</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current study</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Results along the deep and surface dimensions

The means were computed for both primary dimensions for each respondent. Also, the overall dimension means and standard deviations were computed across the students.
Table 7 – Mean and standard deviation results for the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deep</th>
<th>Surface</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 contains a scatter plot of the distribution of individual averages along the dimensions. The greatest number of respondents scored high on both the deep and surface dimensions (as suggested by the high overall means). The quadrant with the next largest number of individual averages is high deep and low surface approach. Third, with still fewer individuals, are those showing high surface and low deep approaches. Finally, the fewest number of respondents are in the low deep and surface quadrant. As we can see in Table 7, the average mean score is above the midpoint (out of 5) on both the deep and surface dimensions.

As to why the highest number of respondents would score high on both dimensions, Gijbels et al (2005) refers to research indicating that a profile consisting of high (or low) scores on both the deep and surface approaches dimensions is typical of novice students. Other terms referred to by the authors are disintegrated, dissonant or not yet established. These students may not have yet established a specific learning approach orientation and may later establish a more coherent approach either towards deep or surface learning.
An alternative explanation is that the dimensions themselves are problematic. Referring back to the Cronbach’s alpha scores of internal consistency, the surface approach dimension in particular only achieved a minimally acceptable alpha (and then, only acceptable according to some sources). It may be that the surface dimension construct, in particular, does not sufficiently represent the complexity of student learning motivation and strategies in the current context. As well, some of the questionnaire items associated with the surface approach dimension may not have been interpreted by the respondents in the same way as the instrument designers had intended.

In response to the ambiguous results obtained from the deep versus surface approach dimension analysis, the results were subjected to further statistical analysis.
3. Factor analysis

To help assess what besides the deep and surface learning dimensions may have been relevant, a factor analysis was next conducted. First, in order to determine if the sample was sufficiently large (for a factor analysis) the Kaisar-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was calculated. The Kaisar-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .770 indicating sufficient sampling size.

In regards to the actual factor analysis, first, Eigenvalues and extraction sums of squared loadings were calculated. These yielded five factors with Eigenvalues greater than one which together account for 48.943 of total variance (Appendix 10). Next, a varimax orthogonal rotation was conducted. This indicates five factors accounting for 14.465, 10.780, 8.568, 8.069 and 7.060 percent of total variance respectively (Appendix 11). Factor loadings were then computed and are shown on the Rotated Component Matrix in Table 9. Loadings of less than .4 have been eliminated for ease of interpretation. The factors were named based on the wordings of their constituent items (the items with loading scores of more than .4 under the factors as scene on the table). Appendix 12 contains information on each of the factors including their names and constituent items.

The loading scores from Table 9 were used to calculate weighted factor scores for each respondent. These were then averaged into factor means for the population. For example, the following equation was used to compute the individual respondent weighted factor scores for Factor 2:

\[
\text{MEAN}((Q1*.656),(Q2*.679),(Q4*.462),(Q5*.403),(Q9*.435),(Q10*.446))/(\text{MEAN (.656,.679,.462,.403,.435,.446)})
\]

Appendix 12 shows the factor names, their cutoffs (the smallest loading of all the items included in the factor), their weighted average scores, each factor’s constituent items. Table 8 provides the factor names, weighted means, standard deviations and the alignment of the factors to the deep and surface constructs based on the items they share with each construct.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percent of variance</th>
<th>Weighted Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Construct of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1 – Content mastery</td>
<td>14.47</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Deep Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2 – Satisfaction in learning</td>
<td>10.78</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 3 – Learning avoidance</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Surface Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4 – Reduction of involvement towards assignment outcomes</td>
<td>8.07</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 5 – Memorization over understanding</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9 - Factors and component loadings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rotated Component Matrixa (scores of less than .4 removed)</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Studying tends to give me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) I find that I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own opinions and understandings before I am satisfied.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) My aim is to pass the course while doing as little work as possible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines.</td>
<td>.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) I feel that almost any topic can be interesting once I get into it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain more information about them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) I do not find my course very interesting so I keep my work to the minimum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) I learn some things by just memorizing, going over and over them until I know them automatically even if I do not understand them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) I work hard at my studies because I find the materials interesting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) I spend a lot of my free time learning more about interesting topics which have been discussed in different classes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, all you need is basic knowledge about the topics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) I believe that the college teachers shouldn’t expect students to spend a lot of time studying material everyone knows won’t be examined.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) I come to classes with questions about what I am learning. I want to have answers to these questions so I can better understand what I am learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(18) I make an effort to do some extra reading (by myself) about the topics that teacher lectures on in class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19) I see no point in learning material which is not likely to be in the examination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20) I find the best way to pass the examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.
All the items belonging to Factors 1 and 2 are the same as those belonging to the deep construct of the questionnaire. Factor 1 which is titled Content Mastery has seven items associated with it from the table above. These items describe motivational orientations and strategies that are associated with mastery learning.

- I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain more information about them.
- I work hard at my studies because I find the materials interesting.
- I spend a lot of my free time learning more about interesting topics which have been discussed in different classes.
- I come to classes with questions about what I am learning. I want to have answers to these questions so I can better understand what I am learning.
- I make an effort to do some extra reading (by myself) about the topics that teacher lectures on in class.
- I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.

This factor has a mean score slightly above half at 3.17 which would seem to suggest that most students at least aspire to the goal of mastery learning to some degree. As well, it accounts for the highest percent of variance among the factors at 14.47, possibly, in part, due to the large number of items associated with it. Figure 3 contains a histogram of the distribution of scores for Factor1.

Although the mean score suggests a broad concern towards mastery and considering the probable effect or response bias, the population as a whole cannot be said to have had a strong orientation to mastery learning. As the histogram below illustrates, less than 20 percent of the respondents scored above 4 on the factor. A score of 4 or more might be taken to represent a strong orientation on the factor. Therefore, based on self reporting, over 80 percent of students were not strongly motivated towards content mastery, nor were they likely to have consistently engaged in learning strategies that support it.
Factor 2 is titled Satisfaction in Learning. The five items below were selected for inclusion in this factor. The first four in particular seem to share meanings associated satisfaction attainment. The final item at the bottom of the list below seems worded towards the outcome of mastery and, as one might think, it is also one of the items associated with Factor 1 (mastery) above. Its association with the other items below may because some students associate satisfaction with achieving topic comprehension.

- Studying tends to give me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction.
- I find that I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own opinions and understandings before I am satisfied.
- I feel that almost any topic can be interesting once I get into it.
- I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie.
- I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.

This factor has the highest mean score among the weighted factor means at 3.63. This would seem to suggest that a sense of achievement and accomplishment was an important outcome.
for a considerable majority of the students participating in this study. In addition, with the smallest standard deviation (.72) this factor has the greatest degree of agreement among the respondents. The distribution of scores is in Figure 4.

**Figure 4 - Student Weighted Mean Score Frequencies for Factor 2**

The items associated with Factor 3 all speak to student motivation and strategies where mastery and enjoyment of learning play no part. Together the items suggest an approach which favors superficial outcomes and where meaningful learning does not occur. Thus, Factor 3 is title Learning Avoidance. The items below are similar to what is described in relation to the concept of performance avoidance under Goal Theory discussed in Chapter 3.

- My aim is to pass the course while doing as little work as possible.
- I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines.
- I believe that the college teachers shouldn’t expect students to spend a lot of time studying material everyone knows won’t be examined.
I find the best way to pass the examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions.

This factor has a mean slightly above the half way score of 3 similar to the mastery factor. This seems to suggest that while for some students learning for mastery was an important outcome, for just as many, getting by doing as little as possible was primary. With a mean roughly equivalent to that of Factor 1 (mastery), the tendency in the population to engage in learning avoidance was just as strong as for mastery learning. This factor can be associated with the construct of performance-avoidance within Goal Theory. Performance-avoidance goals are associated with superficial processing and inefficient study processes which were, in turn, are linked to subsequent decreases in academic performance (Covington, 2000).

Figure 5 - Student Weighted Mean Score Frequencies for Factor 3
Factor 4 is made up of three items which suggest student efforts to maximize efficiency towards course outcomes (i.e. grades) but which exclude any learning beyond. The Factor is titled, Reduction of involvement towards assessment outcomes. The items are suggestive of the concept of performance approach under Goal Theory (See Chapter 3). That these three items emerged as an independent factor within the surface approach dimension perhaps points the separateness of an achievement focused dimension. This proposition is bolstered by the borderline alpha of the surface domain.

- I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra.
- I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, all you need is basic knowledge about the topics.
- I see no point in learning material which is not likely to be in the examination.

With an overall mean score 3.02, and with widely varying results on the factor (SD 1.04) the tendency of these students to focus effort strategically towards prescribed outcomes shows no particular favored orientation among the students in general. In fact, Factor 3 with its mean of 3.25 suggests there was a stronger tendency among the students, as a whole, to learning avoidance than outcome achieving. However, the three items belonging to Factor 4 are also items belonging to the surface learning approach domain within the questionnaire. They are not items which indicate what might be more proactive elements of an achieving approach such as time allotment strategies.
Finally Factor 5 is composed of two items which pertain to the strategy of rote memorization without comprehension. This Factor is titled Memorization over Understanding.

- I learn some things by just memorizing, going over and over them until I know them automatically even if I do not understand them.
- I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them.

Memorization over understanding is the only factor where the average is below the halfway score (2.85). This suggests that rote memorization is not such an important strategy with most of the students.
Figure 7 - Student Weighted Mean Score Frequencies for Factor 5

Note that there were two questionnaire items which had loading scores above .4 for two factors at the same time. The first was item 10: *I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely* (under factors 1 and 2). The other is item 4: *I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines* (under factors 2 and 3). Item 10 was used in the mean calculations for both Factor 1 and 2 as it seemed to me a conceptual fit with each. Item 4 seems to be a conceptual fit with the Factor 3 but not Factor 2 and it is, therefore, used only with factor 3 in computing the factor mean.

One might speculate that item 4 having a loading of .462 under Factor 2 (satisfaction from learning) may be related to some students desiring to obtain satisfaction through good grades and not wanting to be distracted from this outcome. Despite this, because the item does not seem to clearly belong under the factor, this led me not to use it in the factor’s mean computation.
As stated, Factors 3, 4, and 5 between them share the 10 items associated with the shallow approach construct. With Factors 3 and 4 there may be two related but different approaches to learning under the construct. Factor 3 represents an approach which aims towards minimal involvement with course content with the likely outcome of minimal success. As mentioned, this approach is described by Goal Theory’s performance avoidance concept. Factor 4 pertains to an approach to maximize outcomes relative to effort – performance approach. Factor 5 which pertains to rote memorization has possible application under both of the approaches just described. Perhaps it emerges as its own factor for this reason though it seems to be a strategy not popular with most students.

The two factors associated with deep approach construct are divided between the mastery goal and pursuit of satisfaction from learning. The satisfaction attainment factor represents the only factor where the vast majority of the respondents score high as indicated the histogram in Figure 4. This factor in particular seems to be the most important single factor for the students. Only Factor 2 yielded a result well above the mean. This factor seems to pertain to positive emotional outcomes related to learning. It would seem that the current population of learners can, therefore, be characterized as having a relatively strong sentiment based orientation in relation to their learning.

Item 7, *I do not find my course very interesting so I keep my work to the minimum*, did not correlate with any factor. Therefore, it was not used in the factor analysis.

(C) The Student Course Questionnaire

In addition to the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire, the students completed an additional section where they responded to eight items about the course they were enrolled in. Approximately half the students completed the questionnaires near the end of the first course which was the academic research skills course. The other students were nearing completion of the second course which focused on academic and professional oral skills, the communication course. These students would have completed the first course the previous semester (See Chapter 3 for a complete description of the courses).
The items were ranked from 1 ‘I completely disagree with this statement’ to 5 ‘I completely agree with this statement.’ To discourage (and to locate clear cut cases of) response setting, four of the items were worded so that agreement indicated a course characteristic supporting deep learning. Four other items were worded such that agreement would indicate course characteristics that encourage surface learning. The two types of items were interspersed. In Table 10 items shaded in green are those which are worded in such a way that agreement is indicative of the course supporting deep learning. Items highlighted in yellow are those worded such that agreement suggests characteristics encouraging the shallow approach (See Chapter 4 for a discussion of how the items pertain to student learning approaches).

### Table 10 - Student Course Questionnaire results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I find the learning activities that go with the course assignments interesting and enjoyable.</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>There is no connection between this course and my future career success.</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The assignment activities in this course encourage me to think ahead and plan.</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The most important thing to do well in this course is to follow exactly what the teacher says.</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignments activities in this course encourage me to try new techniques and approaches.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Memorizing is more important than understanding for success in this class.</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge me but are not too difficult for me to succeed.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>In this course, my only aim is to get the best grade I can.</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item 8 (\textit{In this course, my only aim is to get the best grade I can.}) has been left unshaded. This is because although the item was originally intended to represent a course characteristic, upon reflection, it seems at least in equal measure to represent a student characteristic. Therefore, it is not used in the calculation of the surface support average.
The average of the deep approach support items (green) is 3.65. The average for the surface support items (yellow) 2.85. The results, as a whole, point to the courses encouraging deep approaches more than the surface approaches. However, the evidence coming from the student survey was not as strong as was the case with the instructor questionnaire.

Item 4 (*The most important thing to do well in this course is to follow exactly what the teacher says.*) is a surface support approach item with a high relative average - 3.98 (the second highest). The high result here may point to an existing student tendency to be highly dependent on teachers. However, it may also point to conditions in the course where attention to specific details in relation to mandated outcomes was also important for success.

As stated above, the results for item 8 may point to an interaction of course and student characteristics rather than mainly the course itself. It is, therefore, not part of the tabulation for the surface average above. However, the high average for this item (4.28) along with item 4 may suggest an additional dimension to learning in the current context which is not sufficiently represented by the deep and surface learning approach construct. This point is taken up in the next chapter.

Finally, item 2 may under represent the extent to which the respondents perceive courses being related to career success because the item is worded as a negative. Some students may have interpreted the item in a reverse manner where a high response number was seen as meaning the course *does* connect to their career success (rather than the reverse).

(D) Interviews

1. Participant selection procedures

The SPSS data sheet for the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire (Part A) contains columns showing the deep and surface dimension average scores for each respondent. In addition, columns show the weighted average scores for the items associated with the five factors from the factor analysis for each respondent. Respondent data rows on the SPSS sheet
were matched to the questionnaire sheets (with a student’s contact information) by matching identification numbers.

From among the 122 respondents who had provided contact information on their interview sheets, twenty students were selected as potential candidates for the ten planned interviews. Selection was based on a student’s weighted scores from the factor analysis as discussed above in the factor analysis section. Table 11 provides the rank of each selected candidate on the left column. The individual’s score along the deep and surface dimensions and his weighted factor scores are shown next. A pseudonym is provided on the column on the right of the table.

As shown in the table, all the interview candidates have at least one factor for which there is a score that is above four out of five. This suggests the student has a strong orientation towards the approach to learning associated with the factor. At the same time, each candidate scored below two on at least one of the other factors obtained from the factor analysis. Those selected tended to show the most coherent patterns. For example, the number one ranked individual scores high on the mastery and satisfaction factors but low on the factors - avoidance, test focused and memorization. In addition, this individual scored high on the deep approach dimension and low on the surface approach dimension. Together, this indicates the individual has a highly coherent approach towards deep or mastery learning. The second ranked individual shows a somewhat coherent learning style but in a reverse direction. This individual scores low on mastery and high on avoidance and memorization. Also, he scored high on the surface dimension and low on the deep dimension.

Individuals with both high and low factor scores were selected as interview candidates because they are likely to have taken the questionnaire seriously and not have engaged in response setting. Secondly, such respondents may have more to say about what causes them to be oriented towards one approach over another. In addition, they may have more to tell about how their approaches relate to the academic skills courses under investigation. An attempt was made to select individuals with apparently contrasting learning approaches.
Table 11 - Interview selection rankings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Deep</th>
<th>Surface</th>
<th>F1</th>
<th>F2</th>
<th>F3</th>
<th>F4</th>
<th>F5</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Mohamed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>Faris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Hamad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Saeed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>refused to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>Ali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Ibrahim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Saleh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>Abdulla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>Hassan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>unavailable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>Mubarak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Ahmed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Factors:
F1 – Content Mastery
F2 – Satisfaction from learning
F3 – Learning avoidance
F4 – Reduction of involvement to towards assessment outcomes
F5 – Memorization over understanding

Factors 1 and 2 are associated with the deep learning approach whereas factors 3, 4, 5 are associated with the surface approach. Underlined scores are those which associate with a surface approach. Bold typed factor scores are associated with a deep approach.

Of the individuals who were finally interviewed, more have factor scores associated with deep learning. From the questionnaire returns, fewer individuals with factor scores associated with surface learning provided contact information to be interviewed (as well, there are fewer strong surface response sets from the questionnaires altogether). The pilot interview is also included in the analysis. This individual fit the criteria for selection and was ranked at 15.

Upon reviewing the transcripts it was determined that the questions asked during the pilot
were substantially the same as during the main interviews. As well, the structural codes emerging with the pilot were a good fit with the structural codes emerging from the main set of transcripts. Finally, it was decided the data gathered from the pilot would be likely to contribute to the interview analysis as a whole.

2. Coding and transcription procedures

The eleven recorded interviews were transcribed into a word processor and then transferred to Microsoft OneNote for analysis.

First cycle of coding involved coding of the individual transcripts one at a time. Structural codes were employed to identify topics and process codes were used to identify student processes with the topics (Chapter 4, Section 5). Where appropriate sub-process codes were added to the main process codes, as with the example below:

- Developing English reading and writing skills for professional purposes
  - Developing focused reading skills
  - Developing summarizing and reporting skills

On OneNote both types of codes were added to the margins of the transcripts (See Figure 8). For a given section of text, first a structural code was given and then process codes were added underneath. To assist in the interpretation process, the two different types of codes were colour coded – structural codes were typed in red print and process codes in blue print. Additional notes pertaining to statements made in the transcripts were added in purple. Transcript passages pertaining to codes were also highlighted in red or blue. During cycle one coding, structural codes in particular, underwent ongoing revision to include new cases of data or to better differentiate codes from one another so as to prevent overlapping code meanings (see Chapter 4, Section 5).

In preparation for cycle two coding, the codes were reviewed and revised across the transcripts for inclusiveness and differentiation. For each interview transcript, the codes were
placed on a separate OneNote page, such that each structural code was shown once with all the process codes occurring with it. From here, each structural code of a certain type (for example, learning strategies) and its corresponding process codes were placed together (on yet another OneNote page) with all the other occurrences of the same structural code and the corresponding process codes from all the other interview transcripts. At this point cycle two coding actually commenced.

Figure 8 - Sample section of interview transcript with coding and colour highlighting.

Cycle two coding involved analysing all the process codes under a given structure code across the transcripts for emergent themes. When a theme was identified, all the process codes belonging to the theme were copied and placed together. The collection of process codes was then given a title intended to represent the theme.
**Figure 9 - The Interview Transcript Analysis Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview transcript analysis</th>
<th>Coded individual transcripts (Cycle 1)</th>
<th>Structural coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>→</td>
<td>Process coding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process codes thematically coded across participant transcripts (Cycle 2)</td>
<td>All process codes occurring with structure code ‘Learning Strategies’ combined across transcripts ↓</td>
<td>Themes are derived from the process codes under structure code ‘Learning Strategies’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>Codes sharing a common theme are grouped and named ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repeat process with another structural code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On occasion, one process code was used to inform more than one theme. In the case below, the code *Employing skills developed in the course* was used to develop both themes on the right:

**Process Code:**

*Employing skills developed in the course*

**Sub-codes:**

- *Using course skills 'in the future'*
- *Using course skills in other courses*
  - Employing research skills
  - Employing presentation skills

**First theme**

*developing independent learning skills*

**Second theme**

*developing presentation skills*
This was done because the two sub-codes (*Employing research skills* and *Employing presentation skills*) contributed to one or the other of the themes.

Where the appropriateness of a code for a given theme was not sufficiently clear the original transcript was referred to and in some cases the wording of the code was adjusted.

Appendix 13 contains the final list of structure codes. Appendix 14 contains the structure codes, the theme codes, and the process codes that were used in creating each cross-participant process theme.

### 3. Analysis results

This analysis represents a summation of what the participants said (as represented by the process code themes) in regards to the various topics discussed (as represented by the structural codes). I have arranged this analysis so that the topics more often discussed during the interviews are discussed earlier on. Those topics which were less commonly mentioned are discussed later. In addition, I describe themes as prominent when more of the participants contributed to them. The reason for this is that if more of the interview participants made comments which supported a theme the more likely it may have been that the perception represented by the theme was commonly held among the student population as a whole. This is not to suggest any kind of a proportional relationship in a quantifiable sense. When a theme is described as prominent I only intend to suggest that it was apparently important to a substantial proportion of the interview participants. From here one might consider the possibility that a good number of other students in the population that the interviewees were drawn from would have shared the sentiments or concepts represented by the theme.

#### a. Learning strategies and motivation

Almost all the participants provided evidence under the two structural codes (or topics) of learning strategies and motivation. Thematic coding under these topics was separated into
two groups that emerged from the factor analysis - the eight deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners and the three surface/avoidance low mastery learners.

Learning strategies (11 students)
Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (8)
Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)

Motivation (10 students)
Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (7)
Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)

The separate coding analysis between learning style groups was done to facilitate cross orientation comparison. It was expected that under the learning strategies and motivation topics in particular, differing themes would likely emerge between to two groups. The reason for this was if the participants had broadly different learning orientations they might be expected to say different things of the topic of motivation and strategies. Since there were more participants who showed factor scores more indicative of deep learning than surface learning (8 to 3), it seemed appropriate to analyze the groups separately so as not to under represent the perspectives of the surface oriented learners.

For the mastery and satisfaction oriented learners the following three process themes were the strongest under the learning strategies topic: practicing (7), attending to the teacher (5) and understanding concepts (4). The minor themes under this topic were: practical learning, group learning and taking notes (2 each). For the surface-avoidance, low mastery learners there are three themes, these being: learning avoidance (3), practical learning (2), and attending to the teacher (2). Across the participants, then, attending to the teacher is an important theme for each group.

Mohamed from the deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners group said attending to the teacher was an important part of the student’s overall approach along with practicing:

First of all focusing on the teacher. And writing notes. And attend the classes without any absence. Then I should practice at home. Without practicing I am going to forget everything.
The same student below describes how practicing is part of his approach towards mastering the content:

Very important homeworks because if you take the information in the class and you didn’t practice it you gonna forget it. But if you practice with doing the homework extra stuff that you didn’t do that make the information stick in your mind.

However, Faris from the surface oriented group describes attending to the teacher in a way which suggests an approach which is far more context dependent:

Well the first one because - you know - in classroom - what you study in classroom is everything - is pretty much the material and you know... how can I say this .. What you study in the classroom is what you learn and you should take that seriously because you know - your tests are going to be based on that, your projects - in fact your career might be based on that and that’s why you take it seriously and that’s why I gave it a five.

Practical learning is a relatively important theme for the surface, avoidance-low mastery learners whereas it is a proportionately minor theme for the mastery-satisfaction learners. In the deep oriented group, understanding and practice are prominent themes but they do not seem to be important for the surface-avoidance, low mastery group of learners. This comment is indicative of the limited, practical and context based orientation of the surface oriented learners:

*Let's talk about how you like to learn. How do you like to learn the content in your classes?*

By pretty much doing them I mean - I'm not a fan of reading, I don't read as much. I just you know if there is something that grabs my interest I'll just do it.

Finally, the most prominent theme, for the second group, is the theme which speaks to the group’s name – learning avoidance. The following comment by Ibrahim are suggestive of this:

I do what teacher ask to do. I don’t like to do extra things. Because sometimes I don’t have time.
Under the topic of what motivates the students, for the eight deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners, the most prominent theme is intrinsic interest in learning with seven students contributing process codes under the theme. Next, is the career related theme with four participants contributing to this. The following comment from Hamad represents a combination of these two motivational themes:

Well that's just the thing about me - If I understand a topic completely, like I said that something is practical, I just find it interesting. It’s just the way is. For example, I am a businessman to be honest. I have my own business and accounting goes so hard for me until I became account my own business. Well I mean after I just worked on it - just became easier, became more interesting after I know how to do it

Saeed’s statement below suggests strong intrinsic interest towards his major course content:

First of all, the personal satisfaction is like for achieving. Whenever you achieve something, you have some satisfaction. So for me when I learn something and if I learn it very quick and like I master it, so for me I feel like I did something new, I achieved something. So this would help me in my future life. For example, like when we learn about interviews or like communications, these help me a lot. And about the interesting once I get into it, of course, everything new for me is interesting. It’s a whole big world, everything there is new to me. Because, you know, I came from a public school there is no such thing as technology and so on. It’s barely started like before two years when I finished. So everything I leaned in college was new to me- it's new to me. So like I learn it I get in to it because I want to learn something new in it. For example, the security, I want to learn how to hack. I want to learn how to protect myself from hacking so on

Achieving academic success is third with three participants and attaining grades is a relatively minor theme for the mastery and satisfaction learners with only two participants contributing to this theme.

For the avoidance low mastery learners two themes are apparent with two participants contributing codes to each. These are externalized outcomes and avoidance.
b. Supported strategies and motivational factors for the subject courses

In this section I will discuss the themes that emerged under following four structure codes:

Supported strategies for courses
   Reading, writing and research skills (5)
   Oral communication skills (5)

Motivational factors for courses
   Reading, writing and research skills (5)
   Oral communication skills (5)

In regards to course supported learning strategies, five themes emerged in total for the academic reading and writing skills course (RW). With four participants contributing codes, the dominant theme was that of *moving from guided to more independent learning*. The following three themes each had three participants contributing codes – *attending to prescribed outcomes*, working towards *mastering content*, and *developing writing skills*. Using the teacher as a resource (*teacher resourcing*) emerged at a minor theme with two participants. The following comments from the interview with Mohamed are indicative of some of these themes:

To do well in the course do you think it was more important to follow the instructions of the teacher or teachers so that they can work by themselves?

You can say that if the student get the knowledge from the teacher - he really improve himself so they can depend on themselves then

- *teacher resourcing*

What kind of skills does the course give to the students so that they can work by themselves?

Actually I benefit from my spelling, I benefit my grammar also. So right now my grammar and my spelling … much better than before so I can rely on myself

- *moving from guided to more independent learning; mastering content*

How did it help you in that way to encourage you to improve your spelling and your grammar?

The teacher give me the concepts… how the grammar is … he explain the grammar for me. Than it is my point to understand what he says
The following statements from Mubarak speak to the importance of content and skill mastery in completing assignments and the guided approach to developing student independence:

I think understanding because it’s about academic reading, nothing to memorize. No there is nothing to memorize. It is all about understanding. And know how to write information, how to get information from an article or something like that, there is no book that we must memorize or something, just all the things we have to memorize is how to take information about the article. That’s the only thing there is. Nothing else we must memorize.

Ya, ya..like you said, it help the student to be independent and the way the doctor ..... give us study and teach us was I think it’s a good way because he give us the way to do it and he just sit and let us do our thing. When we finish we show them. Then he called the students one by one and show him his mistakes, show him how to do it well, how to do in a good way, that’s way I think help us make them independent

For the academic spoken communication course (SC), three themes emerged. As with the other course, moving from guided to independent learning was one of the dominant themes under this course with four of five participants contributing codes under the theme. The theme, mastering content was equally prominent (4). Also somewhat prominent was attending to prescribed outcomes (3). These comments by Faris refer to attending to outcomes under the course:

you get the headlines from the teacher and you do it your way... like the teacher tells you ok I want this and that - I want a presentation about this .. with this layout - I want it to be laid out in this way and you do it your way - like the laying out

Across the two courses, the theme- moving from guided to independent learning emerges as the dominant theme (8). The theme of content mastery is the second most prominent with a total of seven participants contributing codes under this theme. Attending to prescribed outcomes is also a theme across both the courses (6)
Themes were also created under the topic of motivational factors for both courses. For RW course two process themes emerged. The first is *valuing course skills relevant to educational goals* (2) and the other is *valuing course skills relevant to career goals* (2). For the other course (SC), one theme was apparent – *valuing skills for career goals*. Across the courses the link to career outcomes seems to be an important motivational factor. However, the link to academic outcomes only seems to be a motivational factor for the academic reading, writing and research skills course. This statement by Ali speaks to the perceived importance of the course towards career goals:

> When we graduate from the college, we will need to do a presentation like we work in any company they usually have the presentation, have the meeting, it’s very important

**c. Course outcomes**

Students described what they perceived as the outcomes of the two subject course. Five interviewees provided information on outcomes of the RW course and six interviewees discussed outcomes of the OC course. For the research skills course *developing independent learning skills* was the major theme with four students providing information under this theme. Next is *developing academic reading and writing skills* (3). Finally, *developing analytical skills* is a more minor theme under the topic (2).

For the oral communication course, *developing career related skills* emerged as the major theme (4). Developing *presentation skills* comes next (3) and developing *independent learning skills* is relatively minor theme for the students who had taken the OC course with two of six interviewees providing information under this theme.

Across the two courses for student outcomes, *developing independent learning skills* is the only theme appearing under both courses. However, it is considerably more prominent under the WR course than the SCs course. However, it is also interesting to note that the majority of students discussing oral communication linked the course to career skills where this was not the case for the other course (WR) which was intern more closely linked to academic outcomes (developing independent learning).
This comment from Abdulla is representative of the theme of developing independent learning skills for academic reading, writing and research skills course:

Ya, they can do since they are doing a lot of things - the writing. There is no.. like.. all the time it were individual, so they will depend on themselves to do it. I saw few students who I never thought they can do good in a subject or anything. I saw them succeeded. They did something by their own.

The following interaction with Hamad is indicative of the perceived importance of career related skill development in regards to the oral communications class:

..best thing about the course. I would say the project that we had, the meetings, the business meetings- I mean they were more practical, they make you understand and listen more just reading papers or something so I mean just practicality

You say they're practical - in what way are they practical?

Well. Let’s say for example, the business meeting. I mean we pretend to group of five and we had to sit down, and just talk like pretend that we are at a work place and just ... I mean evolve our skills- just business skills

d. Other student learning strategies

This topic represents interviewee perceptions on the learning strategies of other students. Only one theme emerged from the three students who provided information on the topic, this being teacher focused learning (3). The informants see other students as being influenced by and somewhat dependent on the instructional approaches of their teachers. The following excerpt of the interview with Ali is indicative of a perceived need for a more structured and teacher driven approach:

How do you think most students at this college like to learn?

Most students, as what I see, at the college, they follow back the teacher also. It’s not like the big universities when the teachers come and give us the points and you have to follow from materials and understand it. I think what we do in this college is better than other universities.

Alright, you think there is more interaction between the teachers and students in this college?

Yes
Why do you think that helps the students in this college?

Because, you know, students especially about the first or second year they need like some push ups, some...err.. teachers should be near from them to give him the subject, it's the good idea.

Hassan comments also point to a student teacher focused learning orientation:

Most of the students at the college, they do what the teacher told them. You do this, you do this, then you will have this, and you will pass, and it’s ok. Most of the students they do like this, because they want to pass this class, and they want to go to the next class.

e. Other student motivation

This topic represents interviewees’ perceptions of what motivates other students. Three themes emerged under the topic. The strongest theme representing information provided by four informants is social interaction at the class level (4). Codes under the theme suggest that the informants believe that other students at the college tend to become motivated towards a course when there is a positive, informal and highly interactive social situation in the class. A minor theme under the topic is making the course material practical (2) for the students to encourage students to be motivated towards class material. Finally, two participants mentioned other students as being motivated only to pass the course. The following comment from Mubarak speaks to first two of these themes:

Ah..in my view, the college is it’s already motivate us like give some exhibition some practice we must do it, things like that. It motivate the student. Even the doctors in the class they like sometimes when teaching make a time for say funny things, and to talk about like match, talk about what's happening, like your problems, something outside the topic, like just a discussion.

As does this one from Saeed:

To me, you need to concentrate on their interests. Most students don’t like to study. Most students don’t like the teacher to talk so much from the board, give us paper, give us homework and so on. Give them their interest, make your class more interactive even if it’s like English, math and so on. Make them work like put it in a real life event - a real life situation. This way they will interact with you.
f. Respondent valued teaching approaches

The final structural code for which process code themes emerged was the type of teaching that the interviewees valued. One theme emerged under the topic representing all five of the informants providing information under the topic - *providing structured, manageable and outcome focused content*. This theme may also be interpreted as the students valuing a scaffolded instructional approach heavy on teaching towards prescribed goals. Under such an approach the instructor can be seen as driving the learning rather than the students. This comment from Hassan shows his desire that the teacher teach to outcomes rather than moving off into broader topics or areas of ambiguity:

No, no. it is good if you know from where it get this , it get this , it get this , the basic it is good but if the teacher go to outside the lesson, you will be confusing. If he say like maybe Einstein he said like this, but Volt, he said this, now we don’t know Einstein is right or what like this, you know, you get confusing.

(E) Summary

This chapter was organized in terms of data collection methods. The first part of the chapter looked into the questionnaire data whereas the second part discussed the interview data. However, in terms of the meaning of the data, there are two broad concerns coming from my research questions. The first relates to what the data says about student approaches to learning. The second is whether the English for academic purposes courses supported the students in adopting the deep learning approach.

In terms of the first question, the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F) did not show an overall student orientation towards either the deep or surface approach dimension. However, the factor analysis did suggest a student orientation towards attainment of satisfaction from learning. The marginal internal reliability (Cronbach’s alpha) of the surface dimension and the emergence of Factor 4 (Reduction of involvement towards assessment outcomes) suggests a possible third dimension.
The evidence from the interviews indicates that the students were highly disposed towards practical learning outcomes, especially when these were linked to career skills. Interview evidence also points to the role of positive class interactions amongst the students and with teachers as important learning factors. In addition, attending to the teacher emerged as an important facet of learning in the current context. Finally, the interview analysis suggests the importance of affective factors also.

Turning to the question of whether the courses support of deep learning, the Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty and the Student Course Questionnaire indicated that the courses supported the students in adopting deep learning. However, the evidence from the student questionnaire was not as strong as from the faculty questionnaire. Evidence from the interviews also suggests that the courses supported the deep learning approach. This support is evidenced by the themes emerging in relation to the topics of course supported strategies and course outcomes which were moving from guided to independent learning; working towards mastering content and developing independent learning skills. The theoretical and professional practice implications of the findings are discussed in Chapter 6.
Chapter 6 – Discussion

In this chapter I discuss my research findings. I consider what the data indicates about the motivational orientations and learning strategies of the students participating in this study. I next discuss the findings in terms of the major theories of learning from Chapter 3. From here, I look at learning constructs and consider the suitability of a two dimension questionnaire for investigating student learning approaches in the current context. In the second half of the chapter I consider the influence of the two academic preparation courses towards student learning, especially in relation to deep learning approach dimensions. I subsequently discuss the implications of the findings to English for academic purposes instruction in the Arabian Gulf Context. Next, issues pertaining to the research methods used in the current study are addressed. The chapter concludes with an overview of the findings in terms of their contribution to knowledge.

(A) The Learning Approaches of the Students

My first research question is how the Emirati students participating in this study can be characterized in terms of their learning approaches. The results of the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire did not indicate a clear overall preference to either the deep and surface learning approach. The factor analysis of the questionnaire also indicates that the students were equally inclined to engage in mastery and avoidance approaches. However, the factor analysis suggests the importance of the affective component to learning (Factor2). The evidence from the interviews indicates the importance of social strategies, teacher resourcing and motivation linked to practical outcomes.

In Sections 1 and 2, I consider what the data indicates about student motivation and strategies as the two major sub-components of student learning approaches. In section 3, the case for the existence of an additional achieving or performance domain is considered.
1. **Motivation**

The evidence indicates that the students were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated together. In addition, intrinsic motivation or enjoyment of learning was often associated with learning which was either practical or career related.

Factor 2 of the factor analysis (Satisfaction in Learning) contained items from the learning approach questionnaire which together were indicative of a student orientation towards gaining satisfaction from learning. As discussed in the previous chapter, this was the only factor from the factor analysis where a clear preference was indicated on the part of the respondents as a whole (M 3.62 of 5). This suggests that the students as a group tended to have a relatively strong affective orientation in their learning.

Three of the questionnaire items belonging to Factor 2 relate to the affective outcomes of learning whereas two other items in the factor pertain to the need for the students to feel sense of personal competency in relation to the topic being studied. This seems to suggest that the emotional component of learning was tied to mastery achievement.

The following comments from Saeed are illustrative of the link between satisfaction in learning and mastery strategies:

> For me I love using the computers very much, so whenever I am sitting with the computer, I feel like, you know, like having a baby or something like that. I feel a lot of joy and so on. So every time I love to do things, I will do it in a special way so I can memorize it exactly the way I did it. Like, for example, when I put a code, I use my own short cuts. I use my own synonyms and so on. So in my may, like, I use my way to memorize it to make it easier, from not how he explains it and so on

Despite the evidence for intrinsic motivation and mastery goals as indicated by statements like the one above, an apparently contradictory finding comes from the Item 8 of the Student Course Questionnaire. The item, worded – ‘In this course, my only aim is to get the best grade I can’, had an average score of 4.28 out of 5. Many students who scored high on the Factor 2 also gave scores of three or more on this item. This suggests that while intrinsic motivation
was an important aspect of motivation for many students, extrinsic motivation was, at the
same time, playing an important role in overall student motivation.

Evidence from the interviews also indicates that motivation was linked to academic
attainment and grades. The theme of grades emerges as prominent for the surface, avoidance
and low mastery learning group. The following comments from Ibrahim are indicative of this:

Ibrahim:
I see no point learning material which is not likely to be on the examination’ .. I have
to study sometimes.

Interviewer:
Why do you think it is important to get a good mark on the examination, then?

Ibrahim:
I just want to get a good mark

These themes can be seen across the two learning style groups, though the theme was less
prominent for the deep and mastery oriented group of interview participants. Given the very
high result for Item 8, discussed above, one might have expected grades would have emerged
as a more prominent interview theme even for the deep approach oriented learners. Perhaps
these learners saw the issue of grade attainment as important to the extent they also saw it
as linked to their career goals. However, they may not have seen the achievement of high
grades as an end in and of itself.

*Intrinsic interest in learning and career and professionally related learning* emerged as
prominent interview analysis themes for the deep approach oriented group of participants. As
well, these participants often discussed their experiences with intrinsic motivation in relation
to course content linked to practical or career outcomes. For example, Saeed’s comments
above, which are strongly suggestive of intrinsic motivation, pertained to a computer
applications course. Such a course would have been relevant to his career goals as a student
who was majoring in information technology. The comments from Hamad below about his
accounting course also suggest a link between intrinsic motivation, practical learning and external outcomes (marks):

Well that's just the thing about me - if I understand a topic completely, like I said that something is practical, I just find it interesting. It's just the way is. For example, I am a businessman to be honest. I have my own business and accounting goes so hard for me until I became account my own business. Well I mean after I just worked on it - just became easier, became more interesting after I know how to do it.

Just after making the comments above, Hamad made this comment which indicates his concern for grades:

Well, basically, cause all the marks for me. I mean I understand that in the future ... you’re going to use some of the subjects you learn in college... basically all they need for now is just marks. So, I mean, tests are only going to be on subjects you’re going to get given in class. So, I don’t see why I should study something else.

Hamad was concerned about getting good grades while at the same time he described intrinsic interest which was apparently linked to his career needs.

In this apparent orientation to practical learning and external outcomes, there may be a connection to the vocational context of the college. Although instruction in the college sometimes involved theory, the college’s primary mission was vocational rather than academic (Chapter 2). Most of the students were attending for the purpose of upgrading their qualifications with the intent of obtaining employment or enhancing their status within the government or semi-government sector. Thus, the students were likely to value those skills and skill sets which they could link to their current or future employment situations.

The evidence of the current study indicates that the students experienced satisfaction from learning while at the same time being motivated towards high grade attainment and learning related to career goals. Amabile et al (1994) present evidence that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are additive. They refer to survey and experimental studies which indicate that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, rather than being mutually exclusive, coexist and that this coexistence can support learning and complex problem solving skills.
Furthermore, Lepper and Henderlong (2000) state that although some research suggests detrimental effects to intrinsic motivation coming from extrinsic rewards, detrimental effects come only under very limited conditions (usually induced during experiments) and that these conditions are not the sorts of conditions that normally occur in the real world.

Also, Elliot and Church (1997) discussing research under Goal Theory report experimental research that link goal orientations to intrinsic motivation. They report results which indicate that performance-avoidance goals (goals where the purpose is to avoid failure or humiliation) undermine intrinsic motivation compared with either mastery or performance-approach goals (goal where the purpose is to maximize external outcomes). It is interesting to note that they found that those with both mastery and performance-approach goal orientations manifested equivalent levels of intrinsic motivation although performance-avoidance goals undermined intrinsic motivation.

The findings of the current study seem to support the position that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation often occur together. However, the way the students chose to focus their learning was probably strongly guided by external outcomes. These comments below from Mohamed (a student scoring high on the deep dimension, and the mastery and satisfaction factors) are also indicative of a pragmatic approach where mastery goals occur along with concern for external outcomes:

Because to improve myself. Because I want to make sure that I understand ... well... manageable about this stuff so I test myself in the class and outside the class.

I'm just focusing on my bachelors degree - get it with a great GPA, then I will see what is in the future what the abilities will be able here in my country to do the masters

Self-determination Theory provides an explanation as to why intrinsic and extrinsic motivation coexist and can be mutually supportive. The theory postulates that there are three basic human needs - autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Activities that satisfy these needs foster intrinsic motivation. Development of these needs and skills is promoted by activities that provide the following: optimal challenges, autonomy support, competence feedback, and a secure 'relational base.' The fulfillment of these needs leads an individual to
experience choice and freedom in activities, to interpret the environment as informational, and to seek out opportunities for autonomy. In short, activities that meet these needs have an autonomy orientation. An autonomy orientation, in turn, predisposes an individual to be more intrinsically motivated, and, therefore, more likely to experience positive sensations associated with intrinsic motivation (Moneta, 2004).

Internalization is the transformation of external factors into internal processes. In self-determination theory, internalization is viewed as a natural process through which people are predisposed to internalize and integrate activities that are not inherently motivating to them but which are useful for effective functioning in the social world. Secondly, the theory sees the extent to which the process of internalization and integration occurs as a function of the social context (Deci et al., 1991). A central proposition of SDT is that social contexts that are supportive of competency, relatedness, and autonomy promote self-determined action which is in turn linked to intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 1991).

The findings of the current study seem to support the position that learning focuses which are tied to individual identity and which are socially adaptive are more likely to be experienced as intrinsically motivating. Hamad’s comments above on his accounting course are representative of this. Whereas the student initially found the topic of accounting onerous when he applied his learning to his own business he began to find it easier and more interesting.

2. **Student strategies**

This section is informed mainly by evidence from the interviews. The data suggests that students were inclined to see their teachers as an important learning resource. As well, studying in groups was also reported as an important strategy for learning. Evidence also points to the use of meta-cognitive strategies in some students.
Across the two learning orientations groups, *attending to the teacher* is an important theme. In addition, it was the only theme to emerge as students were characterizing the learning approaches of their peers.

One reason for the prominence of the *attending to the teacher* theme may be linked to the educational background of the participants. Most of the participants had come from a public secondary school system which is characterized in the literature as being highly teacher centered (Chapter 2). Classroom activities are described as predominately involving copying from the blackboard and listening to teachers. Group work, creative thinking and proactive learning are described as rare (Shah and Baporikar, 2011). One outcome of such an instructional approach is that students might be expected to develop a strong orientation to their teachers as sources of information in preparation for assessments or assignments. In addition, without strong independent learning skills having been fostered prior to arrival in the college, the students within the college might be expected to be more teacher centred in their learning approach than would be the case in most Western tertiary contexts. Their tendency (across learning orientations) to refer to teacher focused learning may, in part, be a manifestation of the students’ educational backgrounds.

There is evidence that the tendency to look to a dominant individual as the centre point of their learning approach also extended to other students. For example, Hamad describes his peers in the following way:

> Um..if you want to know, nobody studies alone in the college - they always study in groups. There is a leader and there's the followers. The leader is the one who understands and teaches other students. The other students who cannot understand.. lets say the lesson themselves, have to go to the leader and he is the one teaches them the subject and they are the ones who memorize the subject. So there are like basically two parts.

Below he continues along the same lines in response to a question about the effectiveness of the courses in developing independent learning strategies in the students:

> Um..still not the case as now. There is still leader and followers... Well I will say about it encouraged around, say, out of 20 people, around 4 or 5 people, that’s it. The rest are just followers.
So they follow the leader in the class?

Yes

As well, Abdulla made this comment about group activities in class:

There is like a work that should be in a group. Some people or some students they will depend on the other students to do it. I faced this problem, so they will stop, the others do something, but they can’t do by their own, they depend on others to do it.

That many students seem to have looked to their teachers and peers for learning guidance may point to social strategies being favored in some, or most, students over strategies associated with independent learning (i.e., reading on the topic in their own time).

This apparent tendency on the part of many students to favor social strategies may be linked to the oral and community based traditions of the Emeriti people. As described in Chapter 2, academic traditions and literacy are not deeply rooted in the UAE. In 1962, the collection of states which is now the UAE had no high schools, colleges or universities of any kind. Prior to independence in 1972, only 20 percent of the population was literate (Godwin, 2006; Clark, 2006). As well, before the recent upsurge in economic growth at the national level, most Emiratis lived in communities where people would have worked collectively in their economic activities (see Chapter 2). The evidenced tendency for the students to have engaged in learning activities collectively may be, in part, an outcome of this heritage. Also to the extent that a society’s academic traditions are rooted in the society’s larger social framework, it is possible that in Emirati society, the values and conceptualizations related to the Western academic tradition (i.e., learning for the most part independently from written texts) have not been completely adopted. This would also likely be the case with other indigenous people in the Gulf States.

Fields (2011) discusses qualitative research into the English study habits of Emirati tertiary students in the UAE. The author describes meta-cognitive strategies as almost entirely absent. On the other hand, social-affective strategies were described as most developed among the
participants. Fields also found that although Emirati students were poor at managing their own learning, they were effective at overcoming emotional hurdles and working with others towards learning. Fields’ contention on the importance of social-affective strategies among Emirati students is supported by the findings of this study (the Factor 2 results, student testimony indicating enjoyment of learning and the described tendency for group learning). In contrast to Field’s (2011) findings, however, the interview evidence of the current study also points to students using meta-cognitive or self-regulatory strategies to varying degrees.

Meta-cognition is a term used to describe self management of mental processes related to learning activities. According to Sungar (2007) meta-cognition is the deliberate, conscious control over one’s cognitive processes. It enables students to plan, sequence, and monitor their learning in a way that directly enhances their performance (not necessarily learning). Biggs (1987) describes meta-cognition as knowledge of one’s own cognitive processes and products and involves active monitoring and regulation of these processes. It also involves the way in which the individual interprets his own motives and motivational state. He links meta-cognition to each of the deep, surface and achieving learning domains. An individual may use meta-cognitive skills which lead to a deep approach where the situation and motivational factors call for integrated (deep) learning. Meta-cognition is also relevant for achieving in that it allows the individual to prioritize outcomes and manage resources to attain the desired outcomes. It is even relevant for the surface domain to the extent that the individual prioritizes and self-manages to surface outcomes (memorized ‘facts’ which are not well integrated to the individual’s larger system of understandings). How and why the learner moves from one approach to the other can be affected by the learning context.

The following comments by Mubarak speak to a meta-cognitive capacity:

[interviewer] OK. I am just gonna ask you some questions about your study style. So, how do you like to learn content of material that is taught in the class?

[Mubarak] Ah.. depend on the teacher who are giving the class of the course is how he give the information I like to be organize my time and organize my stuff and what I have to do and I’d like to do things in time so I don’t get confused or something like that
[interviewer] So what do you think is the best way then to learn material that is taught in these classes?

[Mubarak] I think the best way is to revise everything after the class - after classes I revise everything and I mean daily - day after day, not we study only the week or the five days for one day only study all the time, I think this is the best time

Practicing and understanding concepts were the major themes in relation to learning strategies from the interviews participants categorized as deeply oriented learners (based on factor analysis scores). The understanding concepts theme corresponds to deep learning strategies - paraphrasing, identifying important points, making analogies and generalizations, making connections, and expanding on the material that has been presented. The theme of Practicing may correspond to either approach. Practicing to remember content corresponds to the surface approach if it is simply rote memorization. However, more elaborate procedures for memorization (making analogies) would correspond to the deep approach. Practicing procedures which involve activities to understand content (paraphrasing, identifying important points, making analogies and generalizations, making connections) also correspond to the deep approach (Lyke and Kelaher Young, 2006). The relevant process codes in Appendix 14 indicate mostly the deep approach.

Despite the evidence for deep learning strategies in the deeply oriented interview group, the majority of students did not strongly indicate an orientation to mastery learning approaches, as indicated by the mixed results on Factor 1 (mastery learning). However, at the same time, meta-cognitive regulation and deep learning approaches were not absent altogether. As indicated by statements such as the Mubarak’s above in some of the students they were likely to have been highly developed.

3. The deep and surface approach construct: Implications for regional research

In this section I discuss the suitability of the R-SPQ-2F (The Student Learning Approach Questionnaire) to the Gulf context and perhaps more widely. The implications of the questionnaire findings for learning approach questionnaire development are also considered.
Learning approach questionnaires through their development attempt to isolate the types of learning that students engage in. Through their application to teaching contexts they should indicate the effectiveness of current teaching practices. Entwistle and McCune (2004) discuss the historical development of learning approach inventories including the precursor to the instrument used in the current study – The Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ). The other inventories discussed were the Approach to Studying Inventory (ASI), the Inventory of Learning Processes (ILP) and the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI). They state that the common elements found in all four instruments are two distinctive types of learning processes. On one side there is the deep/reflective/elaborative approach. On the other side there is the surface/serial reiterative/rehearsal approach. In addition, all these instruments named a third aspect of studying. This is the approach which emphasizes methodical and well organized studying (not necessarily learning) and which is linked to effort and achievement motivation. In the SPQ this dimension is referred to as the achieving approach.

Biggs et al (2001) state that the aim of good teaching is to encourage students to use deep learning approaches and to discourage them using surface approaches. If one accepts this position, the extent to which students score high on the deep approach and low on the surface approach would also suggest success in bringing about meaningful learning. However, the deep approach does not necessarily equate to better classroom performance. Deep approach learners may not perform better when assessment favors the surface approach. As well, those who score high on the deep approach do not necessarily put more effort into their study (Entwistle and McCune, 2004).

A student's strategic orientation and motivation towards performance also contribute to academic success. In the original SPQ the achieving domain was represented by the sub-domains of effective time use (strategy) and achieving motivation (Biggs et al, 2001). Entwistle and McCune (2004) state that, in the current ASI, the strategy sub-dimension within the achieving domain has been replaced by organized studying (including time management) and effort management (including concentration).
In the above descriptions of the achieving dimension there is a relationship to the concepts of self-regulation as described under Social Cognitive Theory and performance-approach under Goal Theory (see Chapter 3). Self-regulation (in Social Cognitive Theory) is described as a process where students regulate themselves in a 'pro-active' way. Self-regulation refers to the thoughts, feelings and behaviors that contribute to the student’s goals. Self-regulated learners set goals and task-related strategies guided by their awareness of their own strengths and limitations (Zimmerman, 2002). On the motivational side of the achieving domain, there is an apparent overlap with the performance-approach construct of Goal Theory. Performance-approach goals aim at performance for competency gaining reasons but based on the need to perform well for an audience or in relation to others (Elliot and Church, 1997). The achieving dimension is thus associated with and supported by two major theories of motivation and learning.

In 2001, Biggs et al introduced the instrument used in this study, the Revised Study Process Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F). This is a revision of the original SPQ from three dimensions down to two (deep and surface without the achievement dimension). The number of questions in the instrument was also reduced from 42 to 20. The main justification for the revision was that a shortened version would enhance utility for diverse teaching environments. However, Richardson (2004) suggests an additional reason for the achievement factor having been removed was that it was less statistically robust.

While the new R-SPQ-2F may be easier to apply than its predecessor it may not sufficiently represent the complexity of student learning. Students who study in higher learning contexts need to be able to prioritize their goals, focus their effort and manage their time. One could make the case that the development of self-management and strategic skills is an important part of the hidden curriculum of tertiary education. Students also compete for official forms of recognition (grades, scholarships, work placement) which enhance their prospects. To state that this element of learning is not sufficiently important or statistically robust to be included now seems to be misconceived. Also, the exclusion of the achievement dimension from the R-SPQ-2F may represent a case where validity was sacrificed in the interests of reliability.
The ILS has a fourth approach domain. This approach centers on the vocational orientation and concrete processing perhaps distinguishing the practical from the theoretical. This dimension may point to a valuable way of describing differences in study strategies in professional courses of higher education. Vermunt and Vermetten (2004) state that application directed learning is found as a strong separate dimension among adult students. Students tend to become more application directed in their learning when in strongly application-oriented environments, such as vocational and teacher education. Given the current study was conducted within a technical college the vocational focus may have been quite relevant to many of the students participating in this study.

The R-SPQ-2F which is intended to measure learning approaches on only two dimensions (deep and surface learning) now appears to be the outcome of an over simplified conceptualization of what is important in learning in vocational tertiary settings. The factor analysis of the questionnaire results may point to features of student learning in the current context which might guide the development of learning approach questionnaires more suited the Arabian Gulf context. Such an instrument would possibly set out to measure: positive learning affect in students (Factor 2 which is probably associated with both mastery and achievement motivation); the extent students make use of mastery strategies (Factor 1); the extent they employ strategies for achievement (Factor 4) and the extent they engage in problematic learning avoidance (Factor 3).

**(B) The Academic Preparation Program**

In the first section below, I consider whether the courses subject to this investigation supported the students adopting a deep approach to learning based on the interview and questionnaire data. In the next section, I discuss the interaction between task design and structuring and student approaches to learning, in various contexts including the context of this study. In the third section, I discuss the implications of the current study’s findings to course design and instructional approaches in the Arabian Gulf tertiary context.
1. Evidence for program support of learning approaches

In this section I address my second research question which is whether and how the two courses investigated in this study supported the students in adopting a deep approach to learning. In the previous section of this chapter I questioned whether the deep versus surface approach construct is sufficiently complex to represent all that happens with student learning at the tertiary level. Although the deep and surface dimensions alone may not sufficiently represent the complexity of student learning in tertiary contexts, the factors of intrinsic motivation and mastery learning contained within the deep approach dimension are nevertheless important to effective student learning.

As described in the previous chapter, the results of the faculty Content Analysis Survey indicate that the instructors tended to see the two courses in question as possessing characteristics that supported the students in taking on a deep learning approach with overall averages of more than 4 (out of 5) for both courses.

Scores for the intrinsic interest and career relevancy items were higher across assignments for the academic spoken communication (SC) course (4.25 and 4.36 respectively) than the academic reading and writing (and research skills) courses (RW) course (3.33 and 3.75). Here, contextual factors may have played a role in the instructor ratings. The students were part of a cultural tradition in which spoken communication was the primary communicative form prior to the relatively recent drive towards modernization. Social prestige and rank is often associated with public speaking in UAE culture. Given the cultural predilection for spoken communication, it is not surprising that a course aimed at enhancing the students’ spoken communication abilities would have been seen by the instructors as having high intrinsic interest for the students. As well, meetings and presentations are often conducted in English within public service agencies in the UAE. In the case of career relevancy, the instructors likely foresaw that the students would have the opportunity to use the spoken communication skills taught in the course at some point during their careers.

The evidence from the Student Course Questionnaire is that the courses as a whole supported the students in adopting deep learning to some extent as well. The average of the deep
approach support items was 3.65 (out of 5) whereas the average for the surface support items was 2.85. The results therefore point to the courses having encouraged deep more than surface learning approaches. However, the evidence coming from the student survey is not as strong as it is with the instructor questionnaire.

Besides the questionnaires, the interview evidence also shows that the courses supported deep learning. Table 12 shows the themes to emerge from the interview data analysis under the topics of ‘course supported learning strategies’ and ‘course outcomes’ for both courses investigated in this study. The highlighted themes occur for both courses. The themes moving from guided to independent learning, working towards mastering content and developing independent learning skills are indicative of deep learning support.

To the extent that the courses encouraged mastery learning and learner independence (as indicated by the themes above) they also supported the deep learning approach. Research under Goal Theory suggests mastery focused individuals tend to be more self-regulating. Self-regulated learning involves self-monitoring so that the student is aware when s/he knows something well enough to meet task demands. At the same time, students with mastery goals are likely to believe that sustained effort is needed for success. They are also likely to believe that incidences of failure imply ineffective learning strategies rather than incompetence (Covington, 2000). Covington states that the adoption of mastery learning goals is positively associated with pride and satisfaction in success.

The theme of attending to prescribed outcomes alternatively seems to suggest the courses also supported the students in engaging in achievement strategies. This is when the aim is to achieve an outcome external to the learning itself (i.e., high grades). Attending to prescribed outcomes is an achievement strategy rather than a surface strategy as long as the student engages in analysis and planning towards the desired outcome rather than mechanical action or reproduction (Section A3 this chapter).
Table 12 – Interview themes for course supported learning strategies and outcomes

Academic Reading and Writing (RW)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course supported strategies</th>
<th>Course outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• moving from guided to independent learning</td>
<td>• developing independent learning skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• working towards mastering content</td>
<td>• developing academic reading and writing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attending to prescribed outcomes</td>
<td>• developing writing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• developing writing skills</td>
<td>• developing analytical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• teacher resourcing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Spoken Communication (SC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course supported strategies</th>
<th>Course outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• moving from guided to independent learning</td>
<td>• developing career related skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• working towards mastering content</td>
<td>• developing presentation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• attending to prescribed outcomes</td>
<td>• developing independent learning skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regards to how the two courses related to student motivation in the interviews, for the RW course, two minor interview themes emerged. The first was valuing course skills relevant to educational goals and the other was valuing course skills relevant to career goals. For the SC course the only theme under motivation was valuing skills relevant for career goals (See Appendix 14, Motivation Factors for Courses). The linking of the courses to career outcomes is thus the only motivational factor to emerge across the courses. As discussed earlier in the chapter, the motivational connection between career aspirations and course content may be interpreted contextually. The students were attending the college for the primary purpose of career preparation and enhancement.

As noted in Section A1 of this chapter, intrinsic motivation is sometimes enhanced when learning is associated with valued outcomes. The students’ valuing of the courses’ content in
terms of educational and career goals is theoretically consistent with a situation supporting deep learning. As discussed under Self Determination Theory, learning for outcomes which are socially adaptive and which are linked to the learner’s self-concept is associated with integrated learning. As well, under Goal Theory, learning for achievement goals is linked to intrinsic motivation (Section A1). To the extent the courses were seen as providing career related learning they may also have supported deep learning. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, learning associated with career outcomes has been linked to the deep approach in East Asian students. The students investigated in this study likely share with East Asian students the attributes of collectivity and a strong concern for face maintenance (Chapter 3, Section I).

Entwistle (1991) discusses the relationship between student learning and educational context. He states that a program’s teaching and assessment approach is likely to have considerable effect on the way students learn. He discusses his own research which indicates the deep approach is more common when students also rate the quality of the teaching they receive as high and when they are allowed freedom in learning. Students describe good teaching in terms of appropriate level, pace, structure, explanations, enthusiasm and empathy. Freedom of learning may refer to fairly basic things such as a reasonable choice of essay topics but may extend to more innovative teaching methods which encourage greater independence and self-reliance. In contrast, where students perceive course workload demands as heavy, or where assessment procedures emphasize the accurate reproduction of detailed information a surface approach to learning and studying is likely.

According to Entwistle evidence indicates that syllabus overloading, particularly in the applied sciences, leads to student coping strategies that inhibit high quality learning. In addition whereas essay-type examinations usually demand deep approaches, short answer and multiple-choice questions seem to encourage surface approaches to learning. However, even essay type questions which encourage students to reproduce content rather than engage with the ideas of the learning material will encourage a surface approach to learning (Entwistle, 1991).
In many ways, the two courses which are the subject of this study hold with the above description of educational practices which support deep learning approaches. Most assignments had some choice built into them in terms of topics and content. The students needed to process and structure information in order to accomplish the projects successfully. None of the assignments involved the reproduction of ‘facts’ (with the possible exception of the vocabulary quizzes). In addition, the courses had evolved over a number of years in response to the students. The level of difficulty, pacing and arrangement of course content was intended to be manageable for almost all students.

As discussed, the questionnaire evidence also points to the courses having being designed in such a way as to encourage deep learning. The high average scores for the following items from the program Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty provide evidence that the courses were designed and structured to support deep learning:

- The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignments as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background (4.28 of 5).
- The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning (4.22).
- The assignments are likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher (4.55).
- The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge students but are not set above the capacity of most to succeed (4.86).

As well, there were these item results from the Student Course Questionnaire:

- The assignment activities in this course encourage me to think ahead and plan (3.69).
- The assignments activities in this course encourage me to try new techniques and approaches (3.85).
- The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge me but are not too difficult for me to succeed (3.50).
- Memorizing is more important than understanding for success in this class (2.19).
The evidence from the study as a whole indicates that the courses supported the students in adopting deep learning. This was likely achieved by providing materials and assignment outcomes which required analysis and production rather than reproduction. At the same time, the content was sufficiently relevant to the students’ self-perceived needs and interests to encourage a degree of intrinsic motivation. Finally, the material was kept sufficiently manageable for the students that they would not have, in most cases, resorted to surface strategies for coping.

2. The role of task structuring

I will now return to the discussion under Social Cognitive Theories (in Chapter 3) of the implications of content structuring to learning. Well structured tasks (WSTs) usually involve a linear and hierarchical format that comes with needed resources and useful information or sub-goals. These might include worksheets or reports on a clearly defined topic with detailed requirements provided. They are more likely to have precise grading criteria such as rubrics indicating how the product is going to be assessed (Lodewyka, Winne and Jamieson Noel, 2009). The WST model seems to characterize well the approach taken in the two courses of this study.

In contrast, ill structured tasks (ISTs) involve more ambiguous problems in which the learner must connect or synthesize information, apply knowledge to an authentic context, seek out additional resources and information independently, consider various perspectives and work with less precisely defined requirements embedded in the assignment description. As well, assessment criteria which might aid the learner in self-determining success or progress are less clearly spelled out (Lodewyka, Winne and Jamieson Noel, 2009). This seems to describe the traditional academic approach of Western universities. Although some assignments in the two courses did require a degree of independence (locating, analyzing and compiling information into demonstration reports), the above description implies a degree of student autonomy considerably beyond what was expected here. The use of grading rubrics in the
two courses for instance specified outcomes for the students. Tasks were generally scaffolded to provide support to the students as they worked to achieve the prescribed outcomes.

According to Lodewyka, Winne and Jamieson Noel (2009) ISTs are perceived by students to be considerably more complex than WSTs. This is because they lack clear procedures, have numerous possible answers and processes, and do not provide the same sorts of scaffolds to guide the learners towards the best outcomes. ISTs require more information, knowledge, problem-solving strategies and, in short, critical thinking skills to compete successfully. Students are more likely to experience self-efficacy while working in WSTs and will tend to perform better on WSTs since they are embedded with more supports than more ambiguous tasks. However, academically challenging tasks that require students to engage in more complex processing and which require a degree of creative problem solving, such as constructing arguments from multiple sources, promote deeper understanding of the learning material. Students are forced to set their own sub-goals rather than having sub-goals clearly labeled for them. Although many students perform better on WSTs, they might not optimally challenge them to process information and to monitor and control their own learning. Thus, they may not do as much to develop student cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities. WSTs, instead, focus students on competing procedures and submitting a neat product that meets stated requirements rather than on understanding and explaining the material to be learned in its complexity. This may lead students to become procedure dependent while dampening self-regulation and the ability to transfer learning to other contexts. Not so surprisingly, moderate academic achievers experience the most difficulty with ISTs (Lodewyka, Winne and Jamieson Noel, 2009). Therefore, the approach of providing high structure to achieve outcomes provides a supportive framework for learning. However, supportive structuring may inhibit the development of deep learning in more capable students.

The scaffolded, outcome and grade driven approach of the two courses in question seem to correspond to WST as discussed above. The implication here is that although the courses allowed the moderate achievers in the program to be successful (and perhaps encouraged them to use more and deeper strategies than might otherwise have been the case) the course
content may not have been sufficiently challenging to the stronger achievers in the population of students. The following comments from Mohamed are indicative of a stronger student not being sufficiently challenged:

[Interviewer] Was there anything you didn't like about the course?

[Mohamed] Too long

[Interviewer] Can you explain that a little bit more?

[Mohamed] Each class is for two hours - approximately 2 hours and depends on the student's skill - someone he can finish the writing within 20 minutes and someone... may take more than 2 hours so he can do it at home so difference about the skills - according to myself I can finish it within 20 minutes - approximately 1 hour so I get bored for the next hour. That's why I say it's too long.

It seems now important to discuss factors at the college that would likely have prevented an IST based approach from being implemented successfully.

One such factor was the vocational focus of the college. The college ethos was that the students ought to be given the knowledge and skills needed for employment. This ethos manifested itself in an outcome based approach to course design and instruction (Chapter 2).

Another factor at play may have been the students’ ability to engage in complex analysis while, at the same time, working in English. Students were allowed to enter the program with an overall minimum IELTS band of 5 (with nothing less than 4.5). Students with this level of proficiency were probably being linguistically challenged to such an extent that they would not have had the capacity to engage with content with a high degree of complexity. However, other students with higher levels of English could have engaged with content in a more complex way and perhaps this is another reason for the tendency for students to study in groups.

As also discussed above, students arrived at the college from a secondary education system which in many cases did not promote deep learning. Time and gradual development may be needed to move the students in the direction of deep approach strategies.
An additional factor was the motivational orientation of the students, who tended to be outcome and career focused. It was a practical necessity to satisfy student (as well institutional) demands for instructional content to be focused towards outcomes. The evidence provided from the interviews suggests that even the students with deep approach orientations valued what they learned in relation to long range goals or in terms of their applicability to other facets of their lives. They wanted to know what they were learning and how it would be useful to them.

As indicated by Factor 2 from the factor analysis (satisfaction from learning), the students seemed to exhibit a fairly strong affective orientation to their learning. This is well supported by interview comments as discussed earlier. At the same time, the students did not as a group show that they were strongly predisposed towards mastery learning (Factor 1, content mastery and Factor 3, avoidance learning – both with score near the half-way point). As well, there is not a great deal of evidence that they were highly strategic (Factor 4, reduction of involvement towards assessment outcomes). Given the sorts of student characteristics discussed, the WST design of the courses might to a large extent be seen as an evolved response to the students themselves.

3. Implications for course design in Arabian Gulf region

As discussed above, the WST approach to course design in the context of the current study likely came about as an evolved response to the various factors at the institutional setting. An important question is what are implications of this study to other tertiary institution in the Arabian Gulf region and perhaps other locations outside the Western context?

To the extent that other contexts have student populations sharing characteristics with the population of the current study (homo-geniality, collectivity, a strong orientation towards face, and early educational backgrounds which are not optimally supportive of the students developing independent learning skills) the findings of the current study may inform course design in these other contexts.
Tertiary institutions in the Arabian Gulf tend to be of three types. One type is branches of primarily Western based universities. Another type is private colleges and universities locally setup. These are generally open to all with sufficient academic standings and are primarily funded through student tuition rather than with government support. The third type is government funded institutions primarily set aside for nationals (Swan, 2013). This last type represents the context of the current study. Other publically funded institutions in the region are likely to share many of the same characteristics as the college investigated here – a homogeneous Arab student population similar in cultural and education backgrounds to the students found here, mostly foreign faculty, and English as the language of instruction.

In such contexts a WST approach to course design is likely to be needed. A WST approach is more likely to provide the students with sufficient opportunities for success while their meta-cognitive/independent learning skills are developing towards a level where they can engage in less structured learning assignments. This is perhaps especially the case in light of the need to preserve face which might be an important factor in student motivation here (Chapter 3, Section I). As well, providing good opportunities for success is also important in light of the evidence of the student orientation towards satisfaction attainment from learning achievement.

Kember (2000) reports his own investigation of the relationship between curriculum and learning approaches in East Asian students. The author importantly noted that movement from didactic to more student centred approaches requires sufficient time and support for students to adapt more independent learning approaches (Kember, 2000). In this point we can see an important parallel with the findings of the current study.

In contexts where the majority of students have not yet developed sufficient independent learning skills to effectively cope with IST designs, a WST approach with a certain amount of built in flexibility and opportunities for creativity is probably the optimal approach to course design and instruction – encouraging the adoption of deep learning approaches while providing sufficient support.
Chapter 7 – Conclusion

(A) The Historical Context

This study investigated the interaction between student learning approaches and course design in an English for academic purposes program in the UAE. A central feature of this investigation was how students in the current context can be characterized in terms of their approaches to learning along the deep and surface dimensions. The study also sought to assess whether the EAP courses investigated had characteristics which supported the students adopting the deep approach to learning. In this section, I put into historical context the current investigation by describing the development of learning approach constructs and the instruments designed to investigate them.

The distinction between deep and surface learning approaches was introduced in 1976 by Marton and Saljo. This construct was then used by other learning approach researchers such as Biggs and Entwistle. The achieving domain construct, which is discussed in fifth and sixth chapter of this study, as a possible emergent domain, was described by Biggs in the 1970s using the term Utilizing. Related concepts such as the distinction between rote learning and meaningful learning were explored in the 1960s (Entwistle and McCune, 2004).

Various research instruments have been developed, based on these constructs, to quantify learning approaches in populations of students. The Approaches to Study Inventory (ASI) (Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983) broke student learning into the dimensions of Meaning Orientation, Reproducing Orientation, and Achieving Orientation. These dimensions were congruent to the Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ) (Biggs, 1987) with the dimensions – Deep Approach, Surface Approach and Achieving Approach. Other instruments such as Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich et al., 1991) and the Inventory of Learning Processes (ILP) (Schmeck et al., 1977) also investigate student learning in terms of
the deep, surface and achieving approach domains but using differing terms and with differing subcomponents (Entwistle and McCune, 2004).

The instrument used in the current study, The Revised Study Process Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F; Biggs, Kember and Leung, 2001) was introduced as a revision of SPQ from the original three approach dimensions (deep, surface, achieving) into two (deep and surface).

(B) Implications to theory and practice

1. Learning approaches and motivation in the tertiary context

As stated in the section above, the R-SPQ-2F which was used in this study represents a revision of the original SPQ from three dimensions into two. The main justification for the revision was that a shortened version would enhance utility for diverse teaching environments (Biggs et al, 2001). Despite this justification, the findings of this study suggest the R-SPQ-2F may not sufficiently represent the complexity of student learning within higher education contexts.

The ambiguous results along the deep and surface dimensions of the R-SPQ-2F (both dimensions scoring above the halfway point) and the emergence of Factor 4 (Reduction of involvement to towards assessment outcomes) suggest a more complex approach is required than that of the two dimension model. This position is bolstered by the interview data in which some students discuss enjoyment of learning and then also discuss their desire for achieving outcomes.

In tertiary settings students need to be able to prioritize their goals, focus their effort and manage their time. It is also possible to argue that one of the functions of tertiary education is to encourage students to develop self-management and strategic skills. The achieving domain may be particularly relevant in tertiary contexts which have a vocational focus and which are located within cultural contexts that are highly collective.
In terms of learning motivation theory, the evidence of this study supports the position put forward by other researchers that enjoyment of learning often coincides with learning which is engaged for the purpose of yielding outcomes (Amabile et al, 1994; Lepper and Henderlong, 2000). As well, it supports Goal Theory research that links achievement goals with intrinsic motivation (Elliot and Church, 1997).

Evidence for the coexistence of outcome directed learning and intrinsic motivation in the current study comes from interview testimony in which students described their positive emotional experiences during learning along with their desire to achieve outcomes. Quantitative evidence comes from the relatively high average score for Factor 2 (Satisfaction from Learning) existing alongside the striking high result of item 8 of the Student Course Questionnaire (In this course, my only aim is to get the best grade I can).

A theoretical proposition as to why outcome directed learning would coincide with intrinsic motivation is provided by Self Determination Theory. The position posits that activities which help to satisfy the basic human needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness tend to be experienced as inherently motivating. Furthermore, since human beings are motivated towards adaptive outcomes they tend to internalize, as self-determined, socially adaptive activities which are not initially perceived as intrinsically motivating (Moneta, 2004).

Future research within the current context may look at the role of achievement directed learning along with other the factors emerging from the factor analysis (Factor 1- mastery learning, Factor 2 -positive affect/intrinsic motivation, and Factor 3 - learning avoidance). The 2X2 achievement goal framework set forward by Elliot and McGregor (2001) represents a potential avenue for research in the current context. This model divides student leaning orientation on the mastery and performance (achieving) domains according to valance. In this model positive and negative valance are measured for both mastery and performance directed learning. Given the apparent significance of positive affect (Factor 2) to the Emirati students in this study, it may prove interesting to assess the relative influence of affect (as represented by valance) in the mastery or performance domains.
2. English for academic purposes instruction in the Gulf states

In regards to practice, the findings of the study indicate the need for a highly structured approach to English for academic purposes instruction in government supported tertiary institutions in the region. The questionnaire data and the thematic evidence from the interviews suggest that the courses investigated supported the students in adopting the deep learning approach. The data indicates that the courses supported the deep approach to learning in that they contained content the students perceived as relevant to their goals; which required a certain amount of planning and analysis; permitted a certain amount choice (student centeredness); and that did not encourage them to engage in content reproduction.

This was likely achieved through the use of a Well Structured Task (WST) approach to course design (Lodewyka, Winne and Jamieson Noel, 2009). The WST approach is probably necessary for successful learning in contexts where students require additional support as they transition to more self-directed learning.

(C) Issues and Limitations

Richardson (2004) describes issues with learning approach inventories when applied to diverse contexts. He points out that these instruments were first developed in the 1970s for tertiary populations which were much more homogeneous (in the Western context) than is the case today. Their validity is threatened to the extent that social milieus have changed or, as in the case of the current study, when they are used in different cultural contexts altogether. In particular, how items in questionnaires are understood can change with the context. Indeed, there are important differences between the current Emirati context to that of Australia and Hong Kong where R-SPQ-2F and its predecessor were developed.

Richardson (2004) states that because of the possible effects of context on instrument validity any research instrument should be validated from scratch in each new situation it is used in. For this study, item wordings were changed where deemed appropriate for clarity and cultural appropriateness (see Chapter 4). In addition, Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability
checks were conducted. Although the alpha on the deep dimension was reasonably strong (.79) the surface dimension result was borderline (.60).

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the mean scores for both the deep and surface dimensions of the Student Learning Approach Questionnaire were over half on both dimensions (3.39 and 3.07 out of 5). As mentioned, one explanation for students scoring high on both dimensions is that the instrument itself does not sufficiently represent the complexity of student learning within its two primary dimensions. An alternative explanation is the students are exhibiting novice learning characteristics. These students have not yet established one particular approach to learning but may do so later (Gijbels et al, 2005). A third possibility is that the wording of the items in relation to the scales is problematic.

In terms of the item wordings, effort was taken to ensure the items were understood as intended. This included presenting the items in both English and Arabic; adjusting two items for cultural appropriateness and then trialing the questionnaire for comprehensibility (Chapter 4). As to whether the ambiguous dimension scores were more because of non-established student learning approaches or the instrument itself, I think the latter more likely. The borderline alpha on the surface domain (.6) suggests a problem with the internal coherence of the surface dimension in particular. It seems that the combination of items within the surface approach dimension of the R-SPQ-2F pertaining to reproductions strategies (Factor 5); learning avoidance (Factor 3); and outcome focused learning (Factor 4) over extended the construct and made it problematic.

In addition to issues relating to the learning approach instrument, this study is limited in its scope. Richardson (2004) states there is suggestive evidence that students’ scores on a learning approach questionnaire can vary with the students’ previous academic qualifications, their subject of study and their level of study. The current study was conducted on students attending the first year English for academic purposes courses within the Bachelor of Applied Science program. Each course comprised 4 hours of 16 to 20 hours of class time each week per student. A more extensive study might have investigated the influence of other courses,
outside the EAP program, and considered whether they, as well, supported the students adopting the deep approach to learning.

Because the study investigates only students attending first year EAP courses it is also limited from a longitudinal perspective. A larger scale study might have investigated students attending EAP courses in their second and third years to assess the possible cumulative influence of the extended EAP program. In addition, a study involving older and more experienced students might have shed light on whether the ambiguous results (on deep and surface domains) was due to problems with the two dimensionality of the R-SPQ-2F or if it was because the students had not settled on a given approach.

As discussed in Chapter 2, English language study at the college had recently shifted from an IELTS preparation to an EAP focus. As such, higher level courses within the EAP program had not yet fully been implemented. A future study could investigate the possible cumulative influence of program involvement to student learning approaches in the current context.
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Appendix 1 – Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty

Program Content Analysis Survey (LSC 1103 and 1503)
For Ed D Thesis of James McLaughlin

Instructions:
This questionnaire deals with the assessments/assignments in LSC 1103 and LSC 1503. For each assignment indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement below. Consider both the graded assessment and the learning materials associated with it. Circle the letter which best represents how much you agree.

A – I completely agree with this statement
B – I somewhat agree with this statement
C – I neither agree nor disagree with this statement
D – I somewhat disagree with this statement
E – I completely disagree with this statement

Course: LSC 1103
Reading Summaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with these assignments intrinsically interesting.</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignments as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignments as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignments are likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge students but are not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
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**Individual assignment**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
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</table>

**Final assessment**

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
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**Course: LSC 1503**

**Interview – In-class interview**

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<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>A B C D E</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Interview – Reflective report

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### Meeting Activity – Announcement and itinerary

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**Presentations – In-class formal and semi-formal presentations**

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**Presentations – Post meeting reports for formal and semi-formal presentation**

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### Continuing across LSC 1103 and 1503

**Vocabulary**

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Appendix 2 - Student Learning Approach Questionnaire

Learning Approach Questionnaire

Part A - Revised Study Process Questionnaire

This questionnaire is part of a doctoral thesis and is designed so that faculty can have a better understanding of student attitudes and ways of studying. Such information may be useful in developing curriculum for UAE students.

There is no wrong way of studying. It depends on your own style and the course you are studying. It is therefore important that you answer each question as honestly as you can. If you think your answer to a question depends on the subject you are studying, give the answer that would apply to the subject(s) most important to you.

Please circle the appropriate letter beside each statement in the ‘Response Items’. The letters stand for the following responses:

1 - this item is never or only rarely true for me
2 - this item is sometimes true for me
3 - this item is true for me about half the time
4 - this item is frequently true for me
5 - this item is always or almost always true for me

Please choose the one most appropriate response to each question. Circle the letter on the sheet that best fits your immediate reaction. Do not spend a long time on each item; your first reaction is probably the best one. Please answer each item.

Do not worry about projecting a good image. Your answers are CONFIDENTIAL.

Participation in this study is voluntary.

Thank you for your cooperation.
استبيان حول طرق التعلم (نسخة محدثة)

هذا الاستبيان هو جزء من رسالة الدكتوراه. قد تم تصميمه بهدف تمكين أعضاء هيئة التدريس من فهم أفضل أساليب الطلاب وطرق الدراسة التي يتبناها. قد تكون هذه المعلومات مفيدة في تطوير المناهج الدراسية لطلاب الإمارات العربية المتحدة.

لا توجد طريقة خاطئة للدراسة، فالآمر أن يركز على الأسئلة الخاصة وعلى المادة التي تدرسها. لا يفوت أحد أن يجب على كل معلم أن يقرأ بما يتسق. إذا كنت تعتقد أن الإجابة على الأسئلة تنطوي على الموضوع الذي تدرسه، أعط الجواب الذي ينطبق على الموضوع الأكثر أهمية بالنسبة لك.

يرجى وضع دائرة حول الرقم المناسب وتجنب كل شرارة في "يذهب الإجابة". تذكر الأرقام إلى الإجابة التالية:

1. هذا البند هو أيضًا أو فقط نقداً، ما يكون صحيحًا بالنسبة لي.
2. هذا البند هو بعض الأفكار صحيح بالنسبة لي.
3. هذا البند هو صحيح بالنسبة لي تقريبًا.
4. هذا البند هو صحيح بالنسبة لي في كثير من الأحيان.
5. هذا البند هو دائمًا، أو تقريبًا دائمًا صحيح بالنسبة لي.

يرجى اختيار الرد المناسب عن كل سؤال. قد توضع دائرة حول الحرف الذي يتسبب بشكل أفضل مع ردة فعلك المباشر.

لا تنسى إعطاء إجابة صورة جيدة عند كل بند. قد تكون الإجابات الأولى هي على الأرجح الجواب الأفضل. يرجى الإجابة على كل بند.

لا تتغاضى إعطاء إجابة صورة جيدة عند كل بند.

إجاباتك ستبقى سرية.

أين المشاركة في هذه الدراسة طريبة.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A – Learning Style Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Studying tends to give me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. الدراسة تمنحني شعوراً بالارتياب الشخصي العميق.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> I find that I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own opinions and understandings before I am satisfied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. أجد أنه يجب علي الاشتغال في كل حتى أستطيع أن أكون أراني ومفاهيمي الخاصة قبل أن أكون راضياً.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> My aim is to pass the course while doing as little work as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. هدفي هو اجتياز المادة بنجاح من خلال القيام بأقل جهد ممكن.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. أدرس بشكل جدي فقط لما يتم إعطاؤه في الصف أو من خلال التركيز على الخطوط العريضة للمادة.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> I feel that almost any topic can be interesting once I get into it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. أشعر أن أي موضوع تقريباً من الممكن أن يكون مثيراً للاهتمام حالماأندمج فيه.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain more information about them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. أجد معظم المواضيع الجديدة مثيرة للاهتمام وغالباً ما أقضي وقتي إضافياً محاولاً الحصول على المزيد من المعلومات عنها.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong> I do not find my course very interesting so I keep my work to the minimum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. لا أجد مادتي مثيرة جداً للاهتمام ولذا فإني أبذل الحد الأدنى من العمل.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong> I learn some things by just memorizing, going over and over them until I know them automatically even if I do not understand them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. أتعلم بعض الأشياء عن طريق الحفظ عن ظهر قلب وبمراجعةها مرارا ونكراراً حتى أتعرف عليها بشكل تلقائي وإن لم أكن أفهمها.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong> I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. أجد أن دراسة المواضيع الأكاديمية يمكن أن تكون أحياناً مثيرة للاهتمام تماماً مثل الاستماع إلى قصة جيدة أو مشاهدة فيلم جيد.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong> I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. أختبري نفسني حول المواضيع الهامة حتى أفهمهم تماماً.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses to items are scored as follows:

A=1, B=2, C=3, D=4, E=5

To obtain main scale scores add the items as follows:

DA = 1 + 2 + 5 + 6 + 9 + 10 + 13 + 14 + 17 + 18
SA = 3 + 4 + 7 + 8 + 11 + 12 + 15 + 16 + 19 + 20

Subscale scores can be calculated as follows:

DM = 1 + 5 + 9 + 13 + 17
DS = 2 + 6 + 10 + 14 + 18
SM = 3 + 7 + 11 + 15 + 19
SS = 4 + 8 + 12 + 16 + 20

Codes:
DA – Deep Approach
SA – Surface Approach
DM – Deep Motivation
DS – Deep Strategy
SM – Surface Motivation
SS – Surface Strategy
Appendix 3 – Student Course questionnaire

Questionnaire Part B - Course Items

Which course you are in now

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSC 1503</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC 1103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

انت في أي برنامج منخرط الآن؟

This part of questionnaire deals with your opinion about this course. Circle the letter which best represents how much you agree.

يختص هذا الجزء من الاستبيان بإبداء رأيك في هذه المادة الدراسية. يرجى وضع دائرة حول الحرف الذي يتناسب بشكل أفضل مع رأيك.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I completely disagree with this statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I somewhat disagree with this statement</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I neither agree nor disagree with this statement</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I somewhat agree with this statement</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>5. I completely agree with this statement</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I find the learning activities that go with the course assignments interesting and enjoyable.
أجد الأنشطة التعليمية التي تتوافق مع المواد الدراسية هامة ويميلة.

2. There is no connection between this course and my future career success.
ليس هناك أي علاقة بين هذه المادة ونجاحي في مستقبل المهني.

3. The assignment activities in this course encourage me to think ahead and plan.
الأنشطة التعليمية في هذه المادة تشجعني على التفكير وعلى التخطيط المسبق.

4. The most important thing to do well in this course is to follow exactly what the teacher says.
لتحقيق نتائج جيدة في هذه المادة يجب اتباع تعليمات المدرس بحذافيرها.

5. The assignments activities in this course encourage me to try new techniques and approaches.
الأنشطة التعليمية في هذه المادة تشجعني على استعمال أساليب وتقنيات جديدة.

6. Memorizing is more important than understanding for success in this class.
الحفظ أهم للنجاح في الصف من الفهم.

7. The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge me but are not too difficult for me to succeed.
الأنشطة التعليمية على مستوى جيد ومناسب من الصعوبة (تحتاج للجهد) ولكنها لا تشكلي في أي عائق أمام نجاحي.

8. In this course, my only aim is to get the best grade I can.
هدفي الوحيد من هذه المادة هو حصولي على أفضل النتائج.
Appendix 4 – Student questionnaire respondent information for interviews

Gender: male female

Age: __________

Major area: business IT engineering media aviation medical

If you would be willing to take part in an interview about your approaches to study and this course please provide your contact information:

إذا كنت على استعداد للمشاركة في مقابلة حول الأساليب التي تتبعها في الدراسة، يرجى تزويدي بيانات الاتصال بك:

Name: _____________________________

ID: ________________________________

Mobile: ____________________________
Appendix 5 – Original copy of the Revised Study Process Questionnaire (R-SPQ-2F)
**Appendix 6 – Interview Questions**

**Opening**

- How long have you been a student at the college?
- Could you tell your major subject?
- Last semester did you take LSC 1103 or LSC 1503?

Let’s talk about how you like to learn

- How do you like to learn the content from your classes?
- What do you think is the best way to learn the sorts of things taught in your classes at the college?
- Do you mind if we talk about your answers on the questionnaire about the course?
  - You give very (a) high (low) scores for the item(s) … . Can you tell me why?
  - In this (these) other item(s) you scores are somewhat different? Why do you think that is?
- How do most students in this college like to learn?

Let’s talk about your experience with the academic reading and writing / spoken communication (LSC 1103/1503) course.

- What was the best thing about the course?
- Was there anything you didn’t like about it?
- Do you feel the course will be helpful to you in the future? How so?
- To do well in the course what was most important?
  - What was more important about this course remembering things or understanding things? Why?
  - To do well in the course, what was more important following the instructions or thinking of the best way to do things on your own?
- Would you say the course encourages student independence (so that they can learn things by themselves)? In what ways? (why not?)
- What would you change about the course to make it better?
- What’s the best way to motivate students at this college
Appendix 7 – Student Interview Consent Form (copy)

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

The information you provide during this interview will be used as part of a study on learning styles in the UAE and what their implications are for curriculum design. The study is being conducted as part the researcher's doctoral thesis.

I understand that:

I am not required to participate in this research project and that I may cease my participation at any time.

I have the right to refuse the researcher permission to use any information about me either as part of the researcher's doctoral thesis or in any publication.

Information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.

Information I give will be treated as confidential.

The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

(Signature of participant)                                                (Date)

(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.

Contact phone number of researcher, James McLaughlin at 971 56 374 7211.

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Philip Dumans (Exeter University)
P.L. Dumans@exeter.ac.uk

OR

Heather Friel (Exeter College)

Data Protection Act. The University of Exeter is a data controller and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do so under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be held for research purposes and will be processed in association with the University's regulations and current data protection legislation. Data will be transmitted to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any other person without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in aggregate form.
CONSENT FORM

The information you provide during this interview will be used as part of a study on learning styles in the UAE and what their implications are for curriculum design. The study is being conducted as part the researcher’s doctoral thesis.

I understand that:

that I am not required to participate in this research project and that I may cease my participation at any time

I have the right to refuse the researcher permission to use of any information about me either as part of the researcher’s doctoral thesis or in any publication

any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.................................................. ........................................
(Signature of participant) (Date)

........................................
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher

Contact phone number of researcher, James McLaughlin at: 971 56 374 7211

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Philip Durrant (Exeter University)

P.L.Durrant@exeter.ac.uk

OR
Appendix 8 – University of Exeter certificate of ethical research approval form

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH DISSERTATION/THESIS

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guidelines/ and view the School’s statement on the GSE student access on-line documents.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND

Your name: James McLaughlin
Your student no: 590080633
Return address for this certificate: PO Box 25035, Abu Dhabi Men’s College, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Degree/Programme of Study: Doctor of Education
Project Supervisor(s): Philip Durrant,
Your email address: jamesinabudhabi@hotmail.com
Tel: 971-50-906-5472

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my thesis to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed: _______________________________ date: ________________

NB For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must not be included in your work. It can be kept for your records.
Certificate of ethical research approval
DISSERTATION/THESIS

Your student no: 590060633

Title of your project:
Student learning and motivational orientations in the United Arab Emirates tertiary context:
Implications for instruction and course design

Brief description of your research project:
This research project intends to investigate how bachelor students in a UAE tertiary program can be
described in terms of their motivational and learning style characteristics. It will also address if the
current approach to curriculum in the required English for academic and professional purposes
courses is appropriate given the students motivational and learning style characteristics.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):
The students to participate in this study are enrolled in a bachelor program at Abu Dhabi Men’s
College in the United Arab Emirates. The students will be predominantly male, although a few female
students enrolled in selected programs at the college will also participate. The students will range in
age from 18 to those in their early 30s. However, the majority the participants will be in the 19 to 25
age range. Almost all of the participants will be citizens of the UAE. Any non-Emirati participants will
be from other Gulf Arab nations, on sponsorship, and will share cultural attributes very similar to
Emiratis.

Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:

a) informed consent: Where children in schools are involved this includes both
headteachers and parents. Copy(ies) of your consent form(s) you will be using must
accompany this document. A blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-
line documents:

No children will participate in the study.

Students will be informed that their participation is the survey is voluntary. This will be stated on the
survey along with a generalized description of the purpose of the survey.

Survey respondents willing to participate in the interview will indicate their willingness by writing
their names and contact numbers on the survey form prior to selection. Prior to interviews
commencing the participants will sign the ‘consent form’.

b) anonymity and confidentiality

All information provided by respondents will be treated with total confidentiality. Identifying
information will not be collected from survey respondents unless they are volunteering for the
interviews. Interview informants will also remain anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used in place of

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2011
actual names and every effort will be made to ensure that no identifying information makes it into
the final version of the thesis.

**Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would
ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:**

I will, first, employ a translated Arabic version of the Revised Study Process Questionnaire 2 (Biggs et
al 2001) to obtain a broad quantitative picture of student motivation and learning orientation
characteristics. The instrument provides information on student motivational and learning approach
characteristics along the two primary dimensions - deep and surface. The survey contains 20 items.

The authors of RSPQ-2 manual report internal reliability tests on the instrument show that they state
meet the basic standards of a good psychometric instrument. However, other researchers have
reported their reservations regarding the internal reliability of the instrument along the secondary
dimension of motivation versus strategy. Good reliability results have been consistently obtained for
the primary dimension of deep versus surface approach. I will conduct my own statistical analysis
(Cronbach alpha) of the results to ensure acceptable reliability levels on the dimensions investigated.

The instrument will be translated into Arabic. It will then be retranslated back into English for
comparison. Prior to translation, the English version of the survey will be analysed item by item for
possible problems in item wording. Items whose wordings could cause the intent of the item to be
misconstrued by translators and respondents will be reworded so that intent of the item is clearer.

As the survey only has 20 items it should be minimally intrusive in terms of class time. As
participation is voluntary, instructors distributing the survey will be asked not to compel students to
complete the survey but only to inform students that the survey may be useful in developing better
course curriculum. Instructor participation will also be voluntary. Where instructors do not complete
the surveys with their classes, I will offer to come to their class and do it instead.

As stated, identifying information will not be collected from survey respondents unless they are
volunteering for the interviews.

Prior to conducting the survey, I will obtain permission from the relevant permission granting office
at Abu Dhabi Men’s College where the survey is to be conducted. In addition, I will make no effort to
publish results where refer to the subject institution without first obtaining permission from the
relevant office at the institution.

The second phase of data collection will be qualitative. I will likely use the survey results to select
students representing both deep and surface orientations for the interviews. I will interview students
to gain insights on how they go about learning. I will ask them to elaborate on their learning
approaches and motivational orientations in relation to the curriculum.

The interview format I intend to employ is described by Cohen et al (2007, p. 353) as standard open-
ended. The topics and their sequence of discussion will be determined in advance. The informants
provide open ended answers to the questions asked by the interviewer. This will facilitate data
analysis and comparison between subjects while helping to keep responses related to the research
question. The intention of the interviews is to probe the respondents’ perceptions and experiences
on course content in their current learning context.

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee
updated: April 2011
As stated, interview respondents will be self-selecting in that they will have already signalled their willingness to participate. All information provided by respondents will be treated with total confidentiality. Identifying information will not be collected from survey respondents unless they are volunteering for the interviews. Interview informants will also remain anonymous. Pseudonyms will be used in place of actual names and every effort will be made to ensure that no identifying information makes it into the final version of the thesis.

**Give details of any ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):**

Survey responses will not contain identifying information unless the respondent is volunteering to be interviewed. Upon receipt of surveys they will be kept in a secure location under lock and key. Interviews will be recorded, copies of the recording will be kept on an encrypted computer hard drive that will also be kept in a secure location.

**Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):**

The results of the survey and interviews could potentially be embarrassing to the college system in which the students are enrolled. Therefore, the identity of the college will not be divulged unless permission is gained from College authorities.

---

This should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School’s Research Support Office for the Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

**N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor**

---

**This project has been approved for the period:** May 2012 **until:** September 2014

**By (above mentioned supervisor’s signature):** [Signature] **date:** 15/5/12

**N.B. To Supervisor:** Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.

---

**GSE unique approval reference:** [Signature] **date:** 18/05/2012

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee

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This form is available from: [http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/](http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/)

Chair of the School’s Ethics Committee

updated: April 2011
Appendix 9 – Results of Curriculum Questionnaire for Faculty (Academic Reading and Writing and Spoken Communication courses)

The average score for each item is shown beside the item itself. Individual scores provided by the four respondents are placed in the bracket beside the averages. The average score for each entire assignment component is provided at the top of each individual assignment table beside the name of the assignment.

Course: Research Skills (M 4.21)

Reading Summaries (M 3.92)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
<th>Individual Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with these assignments intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>(5, 1, 2, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignments as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>(4, 2, 4, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignments as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 5, 2, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>(4, 4, 4, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignments are likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 5, 2, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge students but are not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individual assignment (M 4.33)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
<th>Individual Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>(4, 2, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 3, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>(4, 5, 3, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(4, 5, 4, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(5, 5, 4, 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Final assignment (M 4.375)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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<th>Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>(4, 2, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 3, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>(4, 5, 3, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(5, 5, 4, 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course: Communication (M 4.56)**

**Interview – In-class interview (M 4.67)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(5, 5, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(5, 5, 3, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(5, 5, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
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### Interview – Reflective report (M 4.21)

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Rating Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>4, 4, 5, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>4, 4, 4, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>4, 4, 4, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5, 4, 3, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5, 5, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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### Meeting Activity – Announcement and itinerary (M 4.58)

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Rating Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5, 5, 4, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>5, 5, 5, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4, 5, 3, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5, 5, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>5, 5, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5, 5, 5, 5</td>
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### Meeting Activity – In-class assignment (M 4.75)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Rating Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4, 5, 5, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4, 5, 5, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>3, 5, 5, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5, 5, 5, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>5, 5, 5, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4, 5, 5, 5</td>
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### Meeting Activity – Post meeting report (M 4.54)

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<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with this assignment intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 4, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignment as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignment as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>(4, 5, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignment encourages the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignment is likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignment is at an appropriate level of difficulty. It challenges students but is not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>(5, 5, 4, 5)</td>
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### Presentations – In-class formal and semi-formal presentations (M 4.75)

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with these assignments intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignments as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignments as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>(4, 5, 5, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The assignments are likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge students but are not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>(5, 5, 5, 5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Presentations – Post meeting reports for formal and semi-formal presentation (M 4.42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The students are likely to find the learning activities associated with these assignments intrinsically interesting.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>(4, 4, 4, 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the learning outcomes of the assignments as relevant to their future career success.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The students are likely to perceive the content and activities associated with the assignments as appropriate, given their educational experiences and cultural background.</td>
<td>4.00</td>
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<td>The assignments encourage the students to develop their own learning strategies by requiring them to engage in analysis and planning.</td>
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<td>The assignments are likely to encourage a student-centered approach to instruction on the part of the teacher.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The assignments are at an appropriate level of difficulty. They challenge students but are not set above the capacity of most to succeed.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
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Continuing across both courses (M 3.59)

### Vocabulary (M 3.42)

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### Portfolios (M 3.75)

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Appendix 10 – Initial Eigenvalues and Extraction of Sums of Squared Loadings

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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
## Appendix 11 – Variance explained with Varimax Rotation

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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Appendix 12 – Factor analysis results summary

Factor 1 – Content mastery

Percent of variance accounted for: 14.5

Cutoff point: .533

Variables included:

- I find most new topics interesting and often spend extra time trying to obtain more information about them. (.566) (Item 6)
- I work hard at my studies because I find the materials interesting. (.553) (Item 13)
- I spend a lot of my free time learning more about interesting topics which have been discussed in different classes. (.744) (Item 14)
- I come to classes with questions about what I am learning. I want to have answers to these questions so I can better understand what I am learning. (.666) (Item 17)
- I make an effort to do some extra reading (by myself) about the topics that teacher lectures on in class. (.742) (Item 18)
- I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely. (.445)

Weighted Descriptive Statistics

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Factor 2 – Satisfaction in learning

Percent of variance accounted for: 10.8

Cutoff point: .403

Variables included:

- Studying tends to give me a feeling of deep personal satisfaction. (.656) (Item 1)
- I find that I have to do enough work on a topic so that I can form my own opinions and understandings before I am satisfied. (.679) (Item 2)
- I feel that almost any topic can be interesting once I get into it. (.403) (Item 5)
- I find that studying academic topics can sometimes be as exciting as a listening to a good story or a seeing a good movie. (.435) (Item 9)
- I test myself on important topics until I understand them completely. (.446) (Item 10)

Weighted Descriptive Statistics

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232
Factor 3 – Learning avoidance

Percent of variance accounted for: 8.6

Cutoff point: .423

Variables included:

- My aim is to pass the course while doing as little work as possible. (.608) (Item 3)
- I only study seriously what is given out in class or is in the course outlines. (.423) (Item 4)
- I believe that the college teachers shouldn’t expect students to spend a lot of time studying material everyone knows won’t be examined. (.487) (Item 16)
- I find the best way to pass the examinations is to try to remember answers to likely questions. (.664) (Item 20)

Weighted Descriptive Statistics

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<td>3.2524</td>
<td>.77970</td>
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</table>

Factor 4 – Reduction of involvement towards assessment outcomes

Percent of variance accounted for: 8.1

Cutoff point: .716

Variables included:

- I generally restrict my study to what is specifically set as I think it is unnecessary to do anything extra. (.429) (Item 12)
- I find it is not helpful to study topics in depth. It confuses and wastes time, all you need is basic knowledge about the topics. (.727) (Item 15)
- I see no point in learning material which is not likely to be in the examination. (.716) (Item 19)

Weighted Descriptive Statistics

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Factor 5 – Memorization over understanding

Percent of variance accounted for: 7.1

Cut off point: .519

Variables included:

- I learn some things by just memorizing, going over and over them until I know them automatically even if I do not understand them. (.519) (Item 8)
- I find I can get by in most assessments by memorizing key sections rather than trying to understand them. (.729) (Item 11)

Weighted Descriptive Statistics

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Appendix 13 – Structural codes

The structural codes (in red) below represent topics that are emerged during the interview analysis process. Thematic analysis of process codes are organized under these topic codes. In addition, process coding under Learning strategies and Motivation topics was divided between the deep/mastery oriented learners surface/avoidance to facilitate cross orientation comparison. The numbers in brackets represent the number of interviewees providing responses.

Learning strategies (11)
   Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (8)
   Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)

Motivation (10)
   Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (7)
   Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)

Supported strategies for courses
   Academic Reading and Writing (5)
   Academic Spoken Communication (5)

Motivational factors for courses
   Academic Reading and Writing (5)
   Academic Spoken Communication (5)

Course outcomes
   Academic Reading and Writing (5)
   Academic Spoken Communication (6)

Course improvement (both courses) (5)

Other student learning strategies (3)

Other student motivation (9)

Respondent valued teaching approaches (5)
Appendix 14 – Structural and process thematic codes

This table is organized according to the organizational layout shown in Appendix 10. Along with the structural topic codes (red) process codes are displayed (blue) under their thematic labels. In addition, process coding under Learning strategies and Motivation topics was divided between the deep/mastery oriented learners surface/avoidance; low mastery to facilitate cross orientation comparison. The numbers in brackets represent the number of interviewees providing responses. All theme codes involve process codes from at least two participants. Theme codes are arranged from those with more to those with fewer contributors. Notes related to the process themes are shown in purple.

Learning strategies (11)

Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (8)

Practicing (7)
- Practicing to remember content (at the college and at home)
- Practicing to understand content
  - Using self testing to master course content
  - Developing understanding of the topic by completing various tasks and activities in class
- Practicing
  - Daily revising of class content
  - Revising to aid retention of content
- Self testing for mastery
- Combining (cycling) memorization and practice
- Practicing (for understanding, remembering)

Attending to the teacher (5)
- Attending to the teacher
  - Attending to concepts (as explained by the teacher)
  - Taking notes
- Asking questions
- Taking notes from the teacher
- Discussing learning materials with the teacher (after reading before class)
- Asking questions to the teacher
- Attending to the teacher in class (over independent reading)
- Learning in the first place from the teacher
  - following up lessons with individual work
- Following instructions
- Getting correct information

Understanding concepts (4)
- Mastering content (to remember content and retain skills)
- Understanding concepts (to achieve good grades and retain skills)
The student traces his mastery learning approach to a period of study in the U.S. where 'a girl' he met recognized he had 'a problem with just memorizing' and gave him a book on learning strategies which taught him to 'connect what you’re studying with real world'

- Reading more on a topic discussed in class (to clarify meaning)
- Trying to think from the perspective others
- Understanding content (over memorizing)
- Engaging with content by doing things with it
- Searching
- Recording in writing
- Understanding the elements of problems (to find solutions)

Practical learning (2)
- Learning through practical (career related) activities
- Memorizing through practical activity
- Connecting what is learned to practical 'real life' situations

The student comments that around 70 to 80 percent of the content at the college allows the student use a connecting strategy over a memorization approach.

Group learning (2)
- Learning in groups
- Doing group work (on projects)

Taking Notes (2)

**Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)**

Learning avoidance (3)
- Limiting to the basics to achieve desired outcomes
- Memorizing content without understanding for theory courses
- Memorizing to compensate for not understanding content
- Minimizing learning involvement (in course content to prescribed outcomes)
- Focusing on achievement specific lesson outcomes
  - Not wanting to be distracted information not specifically pertaining to outcomes
  - Not wanting to be distracted by varying and sometimes contradictory perspectives on the topic

Practical learning (2)
- Learning by doing (what interests him)
- Learning for understanding for practical courses (courses where students must demonstrate practical skill competency)
- Engaging in practical learning

Attending to the teacher (2)
- Following instructions
Attending to teacher explanations of content
Getting feedback (from the teacher before the deadline)

Ibrahim, despite providing evidence above of the value of analysis and understanding for success in the LSC 1503 course, the student holds to an attitude that following instructions is primary for him. The orientation towards following over proactive engagement with the topic seems deeply rooted in the student's attitude to learning.

Motivation (11)

Deep/mastery/satisfaction oriented learners (8)

Intrinsic Interest in learning (7)
- Focusing on what is interesting in the content
- Becoming interested
  - By understanding the topic completely
  - By applying the content to his real life (his business)
- Gaining intrinsic satisfaction from learning the computer
- Gaining intrinsic enjoyment from learning new things
- Gaining interest from being exposed to novel course content
- Focusing on interesting subjects
- Gaining satisfaction through achievement
  - Gaining a sense of achievement through learning something new
  - Understanding that the learned thing will be helpful in the future
- Setting challenges
- Overcoming challenges (self testing)
- Experiencing flow
  - Feeling excitement engaging in discovery learning

Career and professionally related (4)
- Engaging in practical activities (business meeting)
- Applying skills to current real world situations (business meetings)
- Gaining satisfaction from learning novel skills (related to computer technology)
- Associating learning content with career needs
- Associating current learning with future success
- Associating English skill development with career success

Academic success related (3)
- Mastering content (banking skills and knowledge for future outcomes in the same/other courses - banking skills)
- Attaining an academic credential - 'bachelor or our degree whatever it is'
- Associating English skill development with major course success

Attaining Grades (2)
- Achieving good grade
- Attaining high grades (for potential access to higher educational opportunities)
Mastering content (banking skills and knowledge for future outcomes in the same/other courses - banking skills)

Prioritizing mark attainment over longer term learning outcomes

**Surface/avoidance; low mastery learners (3)**

Externalized outcomes (2)
- Wanting just a good mark
- Just wanting to progress towards next level in the college system

Avoidance (2)
- Orienting away from reading and memorization
- Avoiding difficulty and fatigue
  - Accepting that this is not realistic

**Supported strategies for courses – Academic Reading and Writing (5)**

Moving from guided to more independent learning (4)
- Combining teacher instruction/feedback with student thinking on the topic
- Planning
- Applying rules according to the task requirements
  - Adapting rules according to emergent outcomes (while completing tasks)
- Combining prescribed outcomes with novel approaches
  - Referring to the teacher for feedback (playing it safe as well)
- Combining following instructions with creativity (for better grade results)

Attending to prescribed outcomes (3)
- Attending to details (in developing research reports)
- Attending to details in task completion
- Attending to structural components (when writing to achieve the prescribed IELTS band)
- Following instructions (for safe results; especially for students with limited English)

Mastering content (3)
- Understanding the course content (over memorization) (the student comments that understanding is retained more usefully and accurately than memorization)
- Understanding and analysing reading material (for summarization tasks)
- Analyzing (for understanding)
  - Reading for key information
  - Writing key information in reports
- Succeeding (in the class)
  - Developing requisite skills
    - by completing multiple assignments
    - by receiving teacher feedback
- Understanding (for success in assessments)
Developing writing skills (3)
- Developing writing process techniques (peer editing)
- Transferring to the reader's perspective (when writing reports)
- Improving English writing
  - by completing multiple assignments
  - by the teaching proof reading skills

Teacher resourcing (2)
- Paying attention to lecture content
- Paying attention to teacher corrections in English
- Following teacher instructions
- Conferring with the teacher for clarification (either in person or by email)

Supported strategies for courses – Academic Spoken Communication (5)

Moving from guided to more independent learning (4)
- Balancing exercising autonomy with following instructions
- Building on experiences to develop skills
  - Conducting multiple practices with presentations
- Developing planning skills
- Developing novel approaches (for task success)
  'Some sections must be followed, some sections you can make your own, you know, like instead of doing it ‘teacher why don’t I do it my way’ and when it’s my way, it might be the better way. '

Mastering content (4)
- Encouraging content understanding
  - By employing practical communication (to achieve task outcomes)
- Supporting mastery learning
  - by doing project (which involved understanding over memorization)
  The student comments the course is unlikely to change an existing student tendency towards memorization over understanding. As well, students generally exhibit a tendency towards following the minority of leaders in group work situation - this is unlikely to change because of the current course.
- Interactive problem solving
  - Engaging with simulated managerial situations
- Analysing and understanding (task requirements)

Attending to prescribed outcomes (3)
- reading the requirements, outcomes and associated materials (for the presentation tasks)
- Attending to prescribed assessment outcomes
- Assimilating /learning the prescribed form of action for performance (in presentations)
- Following teacher instructions
Motivational factors for courses – Academic Reading and Writing (5)

Valuing course skills relevant for educational goals (2)
- developing long term skills (the student describes the writing skills developed in the course as relevant to his future post graduate educational goals)
- Relating the content of the research task with the student’s major subject

Valuing course skills relevant for career goals (2)
- Associating report writing skills with work performance
- Orientating towards reading subject content which are major or career related

Motivational factors for courses – Academic Spoken Communication (5)

Valuing course skills relevant for career goals (3)
- Engaging in practical activities (business meeting)
- Applying skills to current real world situations (business meetings)
- Valuing the work relatedness of the course
- Associating course content with work related skills

Course outcomes – Academic Reading and Writing (5)

Developing independent learning skills (4)
- developing independent learning skills (emphasizing the role of the teacher)
  - by developing English writing skills
- Fostering student independence
- developing learning skills

Developing academic reading and writing skills (3)
- Learning report writing skills
- Developing English reading and writing skills for professional purposes
  - Developing focused reading skills
  - Developing summarizing and reporting skills
- utilizing reading and writing skills (for engineering)

Developing analytical skills (2)
- stimulating thinking (through summarization tasks which require the student to analyze written content and develop note taking skills)
- synthesizing information (into writing) (for better grade results)
Course outcomes – Academic Spoken Communication (6)

Developing career related skills (4)
- Evolving practical skills (business skills)
- Learning skills for practical real life situations (business meeting skills)
- Developing interview skills (for getting a job)
- The student reiterates that learning through understanding and doing is the best way to learn, the LSC 1503 course included
- Learning the specifics work related skills (conducting presentations and meetings)
  - Retaining content by students
  - Enjoying the course
- Developing meeting skills

Developing presentation skills (3)
- Gaining the skills to do presentations
- Gaining the confidence to do presentations
- Employing skills developed in the course
  - Using course skills ‘in the future’
  - Using course skills in other courses
    - Employing research skills
    - Employing presentation skills
- Developing oral skills for presenting and discussing

Developing independent learning skills (2)
- Developing independent learning skills
  - Moving from supported learning to more independent learning
- Employing skills developed in the course
  - Using course skills ‘in the future’
  - Using course skills in other courses
    - Employing research skills
    - Employing presentation skills

Course improvement (both courses) (5)

Course practicality (2)
- Making the course more practical for the students (even though it already somewhat practical)
- Making the course more major related
Other student learning strategies (3)

Teacher focused learning (3)

- Following what the teacher says (over engaging in individual work)
  The student states that students in the first and second year at the college need 'some push ups' from the teachers, hence the need for student teacher interactions.
- Attending to teacher instructions (in a step by step approach)
- Responding to the instructional approach

Other student motivation (9)

Social interaction at the class level (4)

- Teachers interacting in a casual way with students
  - Making jokes
  - Making small talk
- Varying discussion away from the topic
  - Preventing boredom
  - Keeping students 'refreshed'
- Engaging the students in oral interaction
- Making the class interactive

Making course material practical (2)

- Making the content corresponding to real life situations
- Making content related to their future careers
  - Making content beneficial to them

Passing the course (2)

- Focusing on passing
- To pass the course
  - To proceed to the next level in the program
  The student describes other students at ADMC as motivated only to pass so as to avoid retaking the course - no motivation for content mastery - no motivation for high grade performance - oriented course towards high content avoidance behaviour (poor attendance)
Respondent valued teaching approaches (5)

Providing structured, manageable and outcome focused content (5)

- Making content simple (not complicated)
- Teaching in an easy way
- Teaching with examples
  - Explaining solutions
  - Providing practice to students
  - Progressing as students succeed with practice
- Providing immediate feedback to students
- Teaching to outcomes only
  The student comments that he does not enjoy asides that do not pertain to outcomes even if relevant to the topic. For example, he describes the lecturer giving information on historical events and personalities in the area of engineering along with differing perspectives on natural phenomena. He describes this as confusing and distracting.

- Providing progressive feedback on student performance
- Teaching for outcome attainment
  - Teaching what and how
  - Providing feedback to students