## An Influence Pathway: Leadership to Culture to Practice to Outcomes

Lorne Whitehead, UBC May 20, 2011

HEQCO Meeting: Measuring the Value of a Postsecondary Education

### Why measure quality?

- To make sure the customer gets what's fair
- To guide the improvement of quality
- Let's focus on improvement:
  - More respectful
  - Many agree improvement is needed
  - Many believe it is possible with current resources

### Regarding measurement of quality, most people would agree that:

- If we do **not** measure quality, quality will **not** improve.
- Some would say, therefore:
- If we **do** measure quality, quality **will** improve.

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- If we do **not** measure quality, quality will **not** improve.
- Therefore:
- **In order** to improve quality, one thing we **must do** is measure it.
- And it can't hurt, right?
- Wrong!

### Many strong, different opinions because:

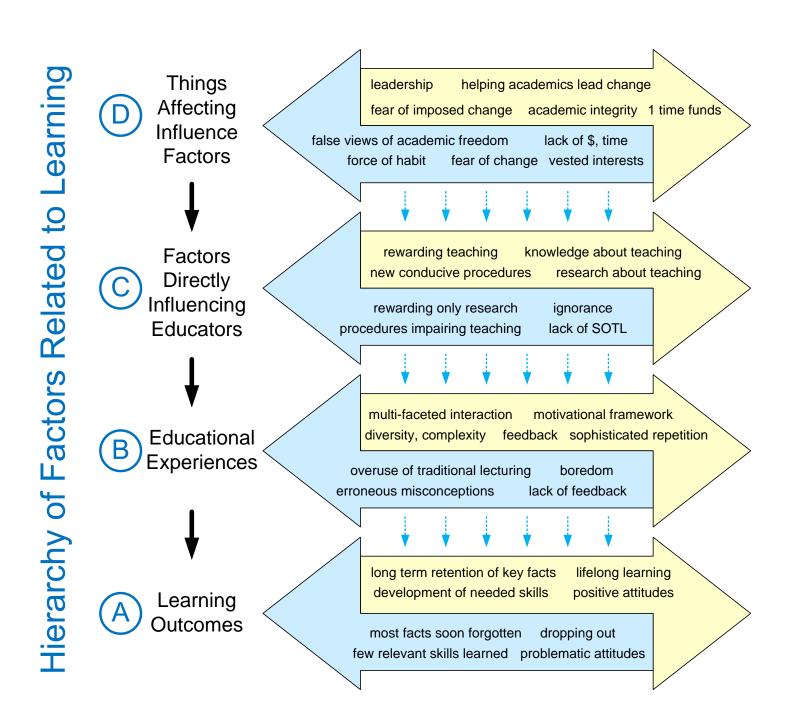
- Human behaviour is complex
- Organizations are complex
- Understanding is complex
- Learning is even more complex
- Conclusion measurement of quality is needed, but so is great care.

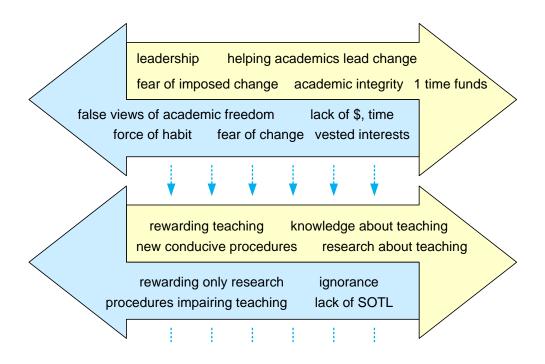
#### In this talk:

- Explore some of this complexity
- Discuss opposing views that have arisen
- Share two possible ways forward
- Mention some upcoming next steps

#### Problems with measurement:

- inaccuracy
- perturbation by measurement
- tendency to emphasize the easily measured
- inadvertently ignoring diversity, complexity
- time delays inherent in measurement process
- cost and effort required
- sometimes, measurement just feels wrong

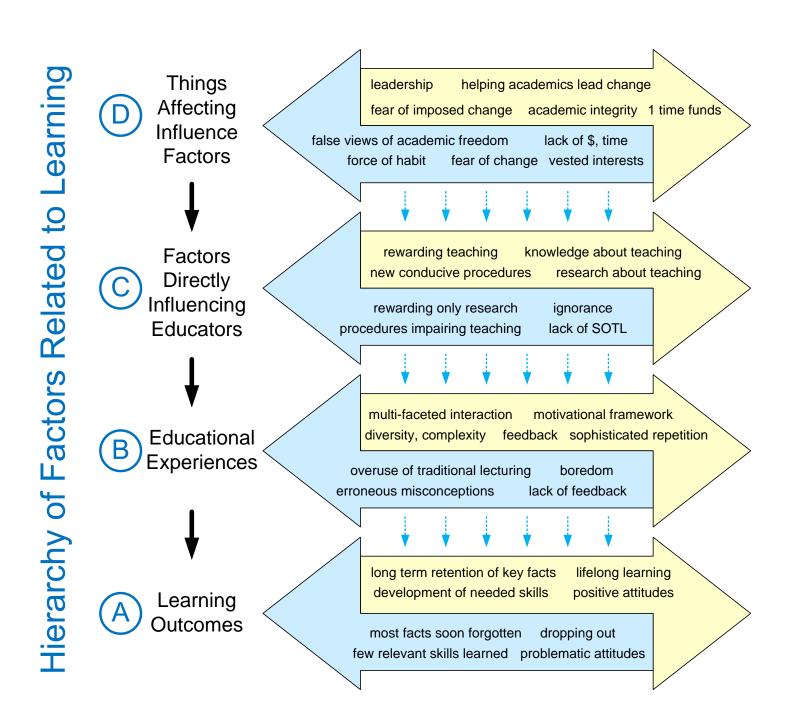


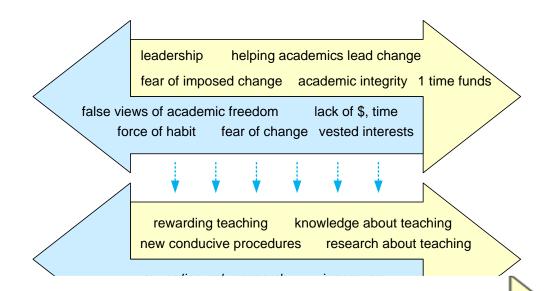


long term retention of key facts development of needed skills

lifelong learning positive attitudes

most facts soon forgotten dropping out few relevant skills learned problematic attitudes

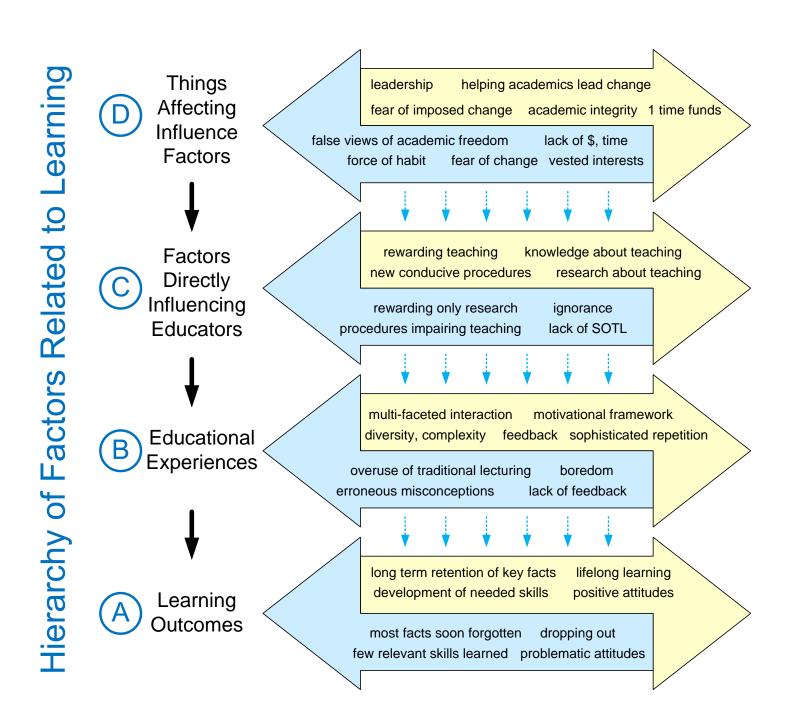




multi-faceted interaction motivational framework diversity, complexity feedback sophisticated repetition

overuse of traditional lecturing boredom erroneous misconceptions lack of feedback

most facts soon forgotten dropping out few relevant skills learned problematic attitudes



leadership helping academics lead change
fear of imposed change academic integrity 1 time funds
false views of academic freedom lack of \$, time

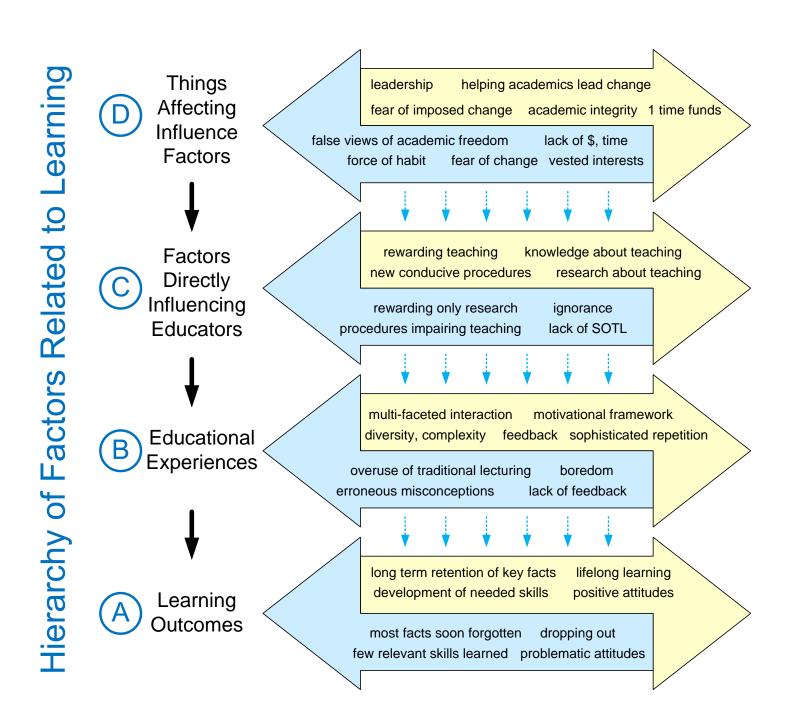
rewarding teaching knowledge about teaching new conducive procedures research about teaching

rewarding only research procedures impairing teaching ignorance lack of SOTL

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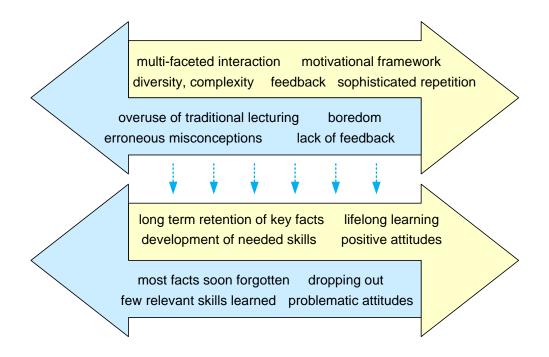
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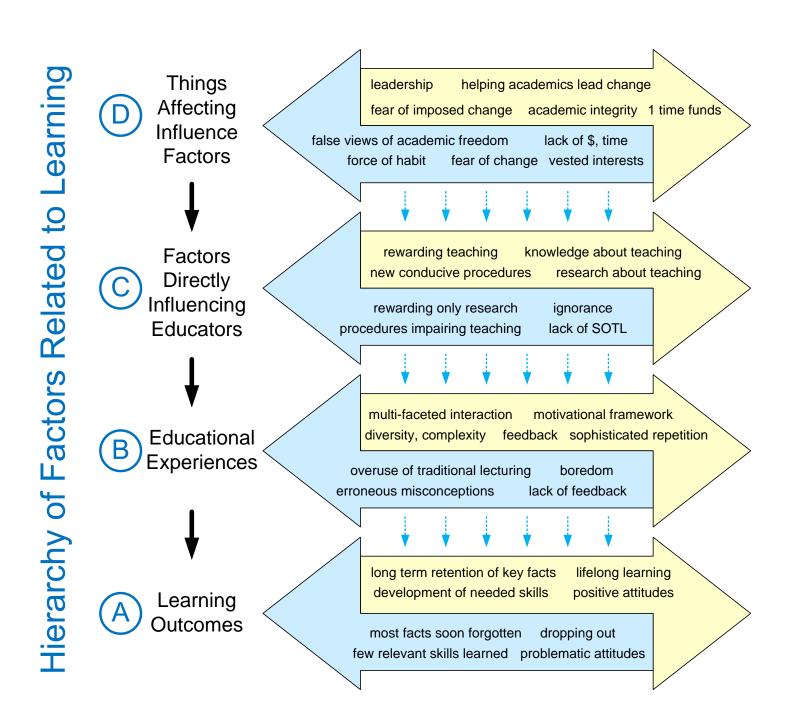
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leadership helping academics lead change fear of imposed change academic integrity 1 time funds

false views of academic freedom lack of \$, time force of habit fear of change vested interests







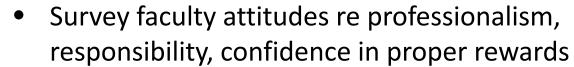
- Review high level goals; communication
- Review terms of engagement of key committees
- Survey members of key committees



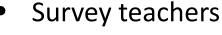
Factors
Directly
Influencing
Educators



B Educational Experiences



- Review of policies and procedures
- Review of their actual implementation



- Survey students
- Peer review of teaching



- A Learning Outcomes
- Measure long term knowledge, skills, attitudes
- Surveys of students and employers
- Measures of students during learning process

### All this complexity can cause misunderstandings and disagreement:

- Two "cultural extremes" seem to have emerged
- On the "left" those who view experimental approaches as simplistic and potentially harmful
- On the "right" those who view such criticism as vague excuses for avoiding accountability
- A big problem is that such polarization depletes the valuable middle ground:
- Balanced, whole-minded, objective inquiry

#### Two preliminary suggested solutions:

- Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative
  - At University of British Columbia and University of Colorado Boulder, with other sites under discussion
- Carnegie Foundation Networked Improvement Communities
  - Led from Carnegie Foundation in Palo Alto
  - Involves institutions mainly in US and Canada

### A generalized description of the Carl Wieman Science Education Initiative:

- Identify people in organization who are leaders of quality
- Explain temporary new resources will be awarded competitively
- Make the award match the culture
- Leaders brainstorm on what "customers" really need and how to measure. The quality leaders "do this to themselves."
- Under direction of these leaders, new work starts on this basis.
- Leaders get the credit for early wins; work expands.
- When temporary new sources end, these new habits persist.

## Carnegie Foundation: Building quality through Networked Improvement Communities:

- A fleet of coordinated inquiries
- Practical measurement and design
- Analyzing variability: What works, for whom, under what set of conditions?
- A dynamic accumulating evidence strategy learning together, improving together

#### Latest effort – a synthesis of both...

#### **N**etwork for

**Evidence-informed** cooperative investigation of scalable methods for the

Enhancement of the sustainable adoption, in organizations of higher education, of

**Education** community processes that are beneficial for all stakeholders.

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