

# **Learning Theory**

**Sophie M. Sparrow**

University of New Hampshire School of Law

**What makes a highly effective teacher?**

**What is significant learning?**

**What are the implications of the four learning theories (below) for our teaching?**

## How People Learn - Four Learning Theories

### **Adult Learning Theory**

Adult learners:

- Learn best in an environment of mutual respect among students and teachers
- Perform well when working together with others on a team
- Learn by connecting new skills and knowledge to their existing knowledge

### **Cognitive Learning Theory**

- The most critical step in learning is to transfer concepts into long-term memory
- Concepts and skills are more likely to transfer to long-term memory if they are meaningful to students' current or future needs
- The more actively and deeply students process concepts and skills, the more likely they are to acquire them

<b>Constructivist Learning Theory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learning is constructed by students, not transmitted to them</li><li>• Students construct understanding based on experience</li><li>• Learning is collaborative - created through discussion from various perspectives</li></ul>
<b>Sensory-Based Ways of Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students can learn through several modes: digital (read and write), auditory (hear and speak), visual (sight and graphics), kinesthetic (learn by doing) or a combination</li><li>• Multi-modal learning deepens understanding of concepts and skills</li></ul>