

Super Courses Accessible Listening Guide

General Information

Podcast: Tea for Teaching

Episode: [Super Courses](#) (Episode 186)

Guests: [Ken Bain](#), Professor Emeritus of History, Former Provost

Major Ideas of the Episode

- **At 2:30**, Bain references the [promising or invitational syllabus](#) that focuses on big and intriguing questions that motivate students to be part of the class.
- **At 4:50**, Bain defines the natural critical learning environment as organized by intriguing questions, fosters deep learning, and prompts students to learn by doing.
- **At 8:00**, Bain frames intriguing questions as big and multidisciplinary and appeal to altruism. Provides examples from different courses.
- **At 15:30**, to increase students' intrinsic motivation, three needs must be fulfilled: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (this is self-determination theory).
- **At 27:00**, Bain defines the differences between strategic learners, surface learners, and deep learners.
- **At 28:30**, Bain states the social aspects of learning and the use of storytelling are two approaches that can make learning more memorable for students.

You can stop at 45:10 minutes, if you want.

Reflection Questions

1. Around 4:50, Bain discusses the natural critical learning environment. How would you describe the learning environment of your courses? What do you explicitly do to shape that environment?
2. Around 15:30, Bain talks about self-determination theory, which posits that to be intrinsically motivated, our needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness must be fulfilled. In what ways does your course design address students' needs

for autonomy, ways to build competence, and opportunities for them to interact and learn from and with their peers?

3. Around 21 minutes, Bain discusses the importance of “productive failure” for motivation and how it can be embraced in early assignments if the assignments are intriguing or exciting. Do you set students up for productive failure in your assignments?