



UCD School of Mathematics and Statistics Colloquium Seminar

Title: Shifting Student Learning Preferences: Personal Reflections and Strategies to Address Them

Speaker: Prof. Alidad Amirfazli, Department of Mechanical Engineering, York University, Toronto, Canada

Date: Wed 24th June 2026 at 12:00PM

Location: N0.20 - Science North

Abstract: In this presentation, I will reflect on three connected issues shaping university teaching today.

First, students' learning practices and expectations are changing. Many students now encounter information through digital, visual, interactive, and increasingly AI-mediated formats. This does not mean that lectures, blackboard work, or carefully structured explanations have lost their value. Rather, it suggests that instructors may need to complement traditional approaches with more visually engaging, interactive, and purposeful modes of delivery or assessment.

Second, many university instructors in engineering, science, and mathematics develop their teaching practice through experience, disciplinary apprenticeship, and models inherited from their own education. These traditions are valuable, but they can be

strengthened through collaboration with educational developers and instructional designers. I will discuss how such partnerships can be made practical, collegial, and productive, especially when both sides begin with a clear conversation about disciplinary goals, student needs, and possible barriers to change.

Third, I will consider the opportunities and responsibilities created by artificial intelligence. AI tools are already influencing how students study, generate ideas, solve problems, and seek explanations. Rather than treating AI only as a challenge to assessment, I will discuss how instructors can use it thoughtfully to support engagement, feedback, visualization, student learning, or even create new courses.

Weaved into my discussions above is how we can also write papers based on our changes in teaching and assessment of students. The talk will draw on personal reflections, examples from teaching practice, and concrete strategies that can be adapted across disciplines. The session will be interactive: attendees will be invited to respond to questions and consider teaching scenarios.

The goal is to encourage a practical discussion on how faculty can preserve the strengths of traditional disciplinary teaching while adapting to the learning culture of today's students.

Please advertise this event to your networks. A flyer for the event is attached.

We look forward to seeing you all there.

Lunch to follow in N3.20/N3.21 Science Centre North. If you plan to attend, please complete this brief form.