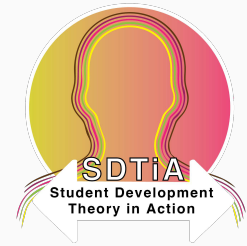


SDT Concept Chart



Pedagogical Rationale

This recurring concept chart activity is designed to support students' developing fluency with student development theory by emphasizing both conceptual clarity and theory-to-practice translation. Educators often struggle to distinguish among closely related theories or to move beyond descriptive summaries toward applied understanding. This teaching method directly addresses those challenges by creating a structured, collaborative space for students to repeatedly engage with core theoretical concepts across the semester.

Grounded in collaborative learning and scaffolded instruction, the concept chart reinforces content from the previous week while helping students build a cumulative, integrated understanding of theory rather than treating each framework as discrete or siloed. By revisiting a common set of analytic categories (e.g., definition, components, application) each week, students develop a shared language for discussing theory and greater confidence in applying it to classroom and practice contexts.

Implementation Strategy

The concept chart is used in most weeks of the course and typically occupies 20–25 minutes of class time. Prior to each activity, the instructor pre-populates the chart with the Concept and Related Authors for the theory introduced in the previous class session. Students are then placed into assigned pairs or triads that change weekly to encourage interaction with a range of peers and perspectives. Working collaboratively in a shared spreadsheet (e.g., Microsoft365 Excel or Google Sheets), students complete the remaining columns: Definition/Description, Major Components of the Theory, and Application Examples. See the example below.

During the activity, the instructor circulates and monitors progress, then facilitates a whole-class review of the completed chart. This review allows the instructor to clarify misconceptions, highlight especially strong applications, and offer amendments or refinements where needed. The activity concludes by explicitly pivoting from the completed chart to the current week's content, inviting students to consider connections, contrasts, or points of continuity across theories. The chart is not graded and functions as a formative learning tool; students retain access to the document throughout the semester and beyond.

Belonging	Vaccaro & Newman (2022)	The degree to which students feel they are safe, respected, comfortable, and fit in within a given space	<p>Environment, Relationships, and Involvement all go in to people's sense of belonging.</p> <p>Environment = campus environment Involvement = in academic and extracurricular activities Relationships = with peers and educators</p> <p>The experiences that define belonging appear differently for minoritized and privileged students as belonging is heavily related to our social identities.</p> <p>Belonging is a basic human need</p>	<p>Academic/social clubs, friend groups, campus messaging, marginalized identities.</p> <p>A person in a position of authority like an advisor who creates an authentic relationship with a student and genuinely cares about the students experience and success.</p>
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Instructional Value

This activity serves as a living, cumulative artifact that supports both immediate learning and longer-term knowledge transfer. Students regularly report increased confidence in discussing theory and demonstrate stronger, more precise application of theoretical concepts in major course assignments. Because the chart is co-constructed and revisited over time, it reinforces conceptual distinctions among theories while also modeling how theory can inform professional decision-making in practice. The collaborative structure surfaces multiple interpretations and applied examples, enriching students' understanding beyond what individual note-taking might allow. By the end of the semester, the concept chart functions as a synthesized reference tool that students can carry forward into future coursework and professional contexts, reinforcing the enduring value of theory in student affairs and higher education practice.