

**APGO ACADEMIC SCHOLARS AND LEADERS  
ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSORS OF GYNECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS  
2026-2027**

**Sessions:** Designing Workplace Learning: Applying Cognitive Load Theory

**Instructor:** Pat O’Sullivan, EdD  
University of California, San Francisco

**Date:** Thursday, August 6, 2026; 8: 15 pm – 11:45 pm

**Introduction**

**Pre-assignment:** Please skim these two articles, including the appendices; let us know if you have trouble accessing the articles.

[Young JQ, Van Merriënboer J, Durning S, Ten Cate O. Cognitive load theory: implications for medical education: AMEE Guide No. 86. Medical teacher. 2014 May 1;36\(5\):371-84.](#)

[Sewell JL, Maggio LA, Ten Cate O, van Gog T, Young JQ, O’Sullivan PS. Cognitive load theory for training health professionals in the workplace: A BEME review of studies among diverse professions: BEME Guide No. 53. Medical teacher. 2019 Mar 4;41\(3\):256-70.](#)

**Objectives**

Upon completion of this session, Scholars should be able to:

1. Explain cognitive load theory.
2. Analyze workplace learning through the lens of cognitive load theory
3. Design workplace learning activities applying the principles of cognitive load theory

**Key Words**

cognitive load theory  
intrinsic load  
extraneous load  
germane load  
workplace learning  
design principles  
Peer assessment

## Session Plan

Time	Topic	Activity	Resource
8:15-8:30	Introduction		Slides 1-4 (don't share 3 in advance set)
8:30-9:00-	Cognitive load theory	Didactic	Slides 5-10
9:05-9:10	Reflect on CLT	Pair-Share	Slide 11
9:10-9:25	Addressing CLT in the workplace	Didactic	Slides 12-14
9:25-9:40	Design Framework	Didactic	Slides 15-20
9:40-10:00	Applying Framework	Large group	Slides 21-24
10:00-10:15	Break		
10:15-10:35	Examining an application	Small groups (around 3/group)	Worksheet Activity 1 Slide 25
10:35-10:55	Reflecting on the application	Large group	
11:00-11:20	Designing or re-designing a workplace learning activity	Set up for this activity by sharing some ideas; then work individually or in pairs	Worksheet Activity 2 Slide 26
11:20-11:45	Discussion of Activity 2, leftover issues (e.g. overload) and wrap up	Large group	

### Resources: (Your very own CLT library)

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