

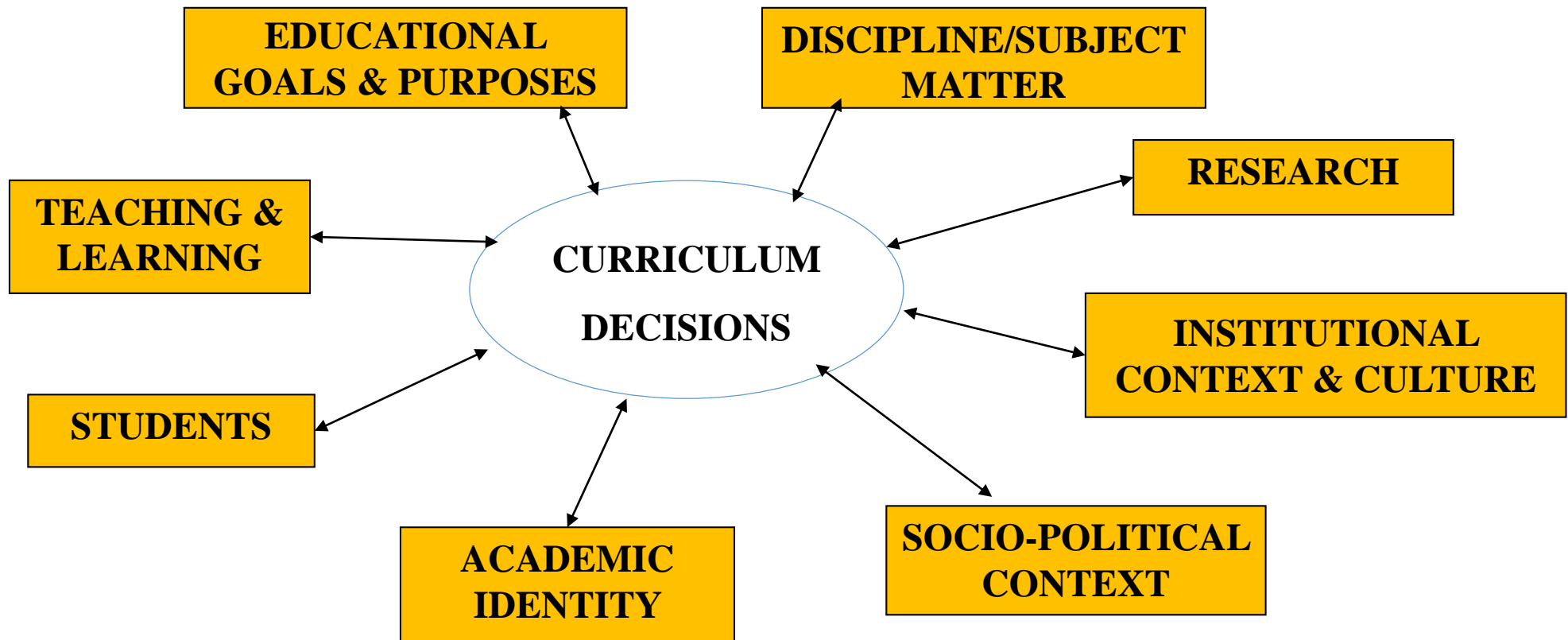
**A conceptual framework for  
understanding influences and  
drivers for curriculum  
transformation**

# My research questions

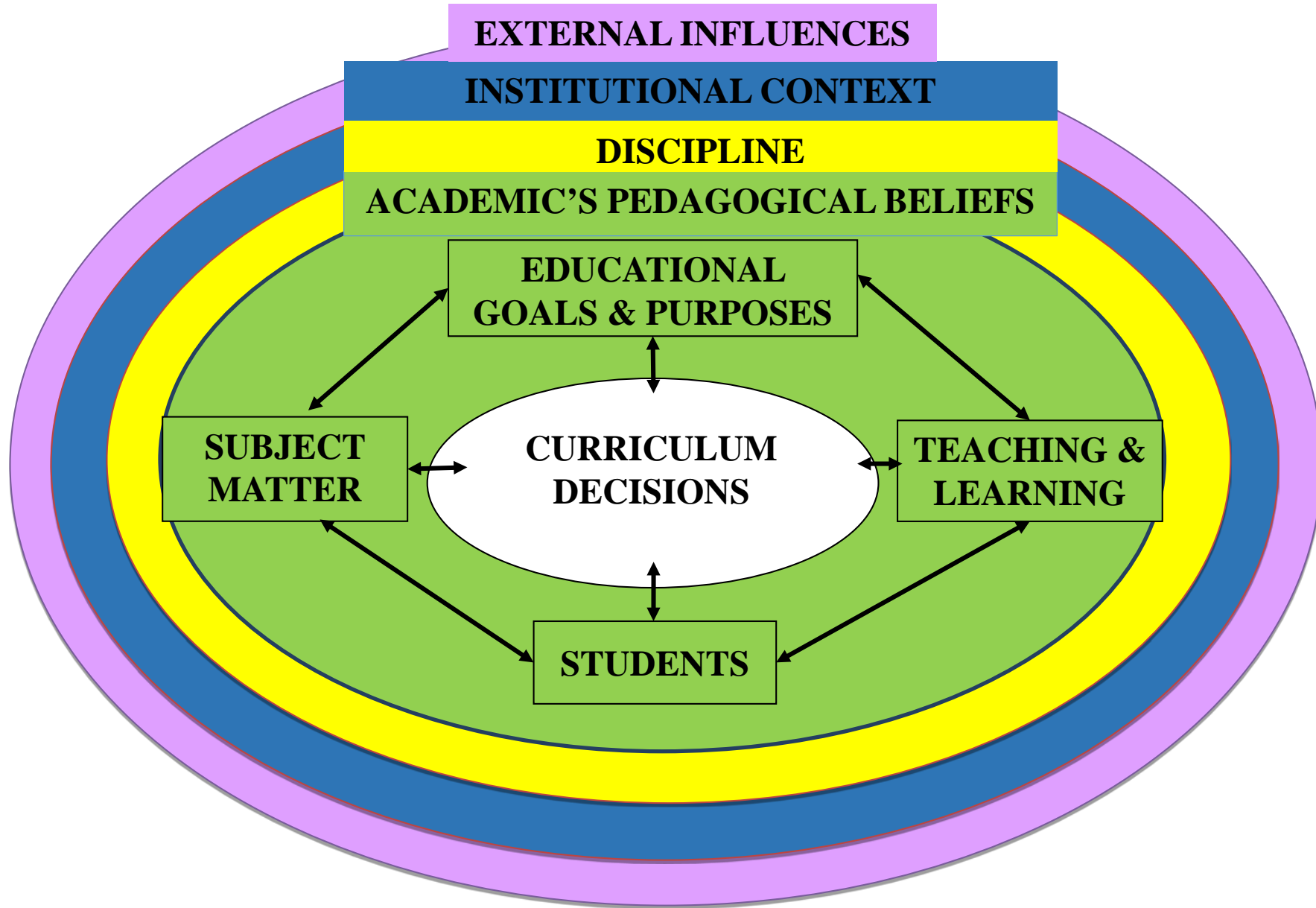
- What are academics' perceptions of the influences on their curriculum decisions?
- What are the drivers that support and inhibit curriculum innovation?
- What does this mean for institutional curriculum change initiatives?

# What does the literature say?

## **THE FIELD OF CURRICULUM INFLUENCES** **Academics' beliefs about what influences their curriculum decisions**



# My findings



# Academics' Pedagogical Beliefs

The most significant influences are beliefs about:

- educational goals and purposes;
- subject matter;
- teaching and learning; and
- students.

These beliefs shape distinctive curriculum orientations

# Curriculum orientations

**Five** curriculum orientations representing distinctive and coherent sets of beliefs and practices



**Discipline based orientation:** to induct students into the discipline.

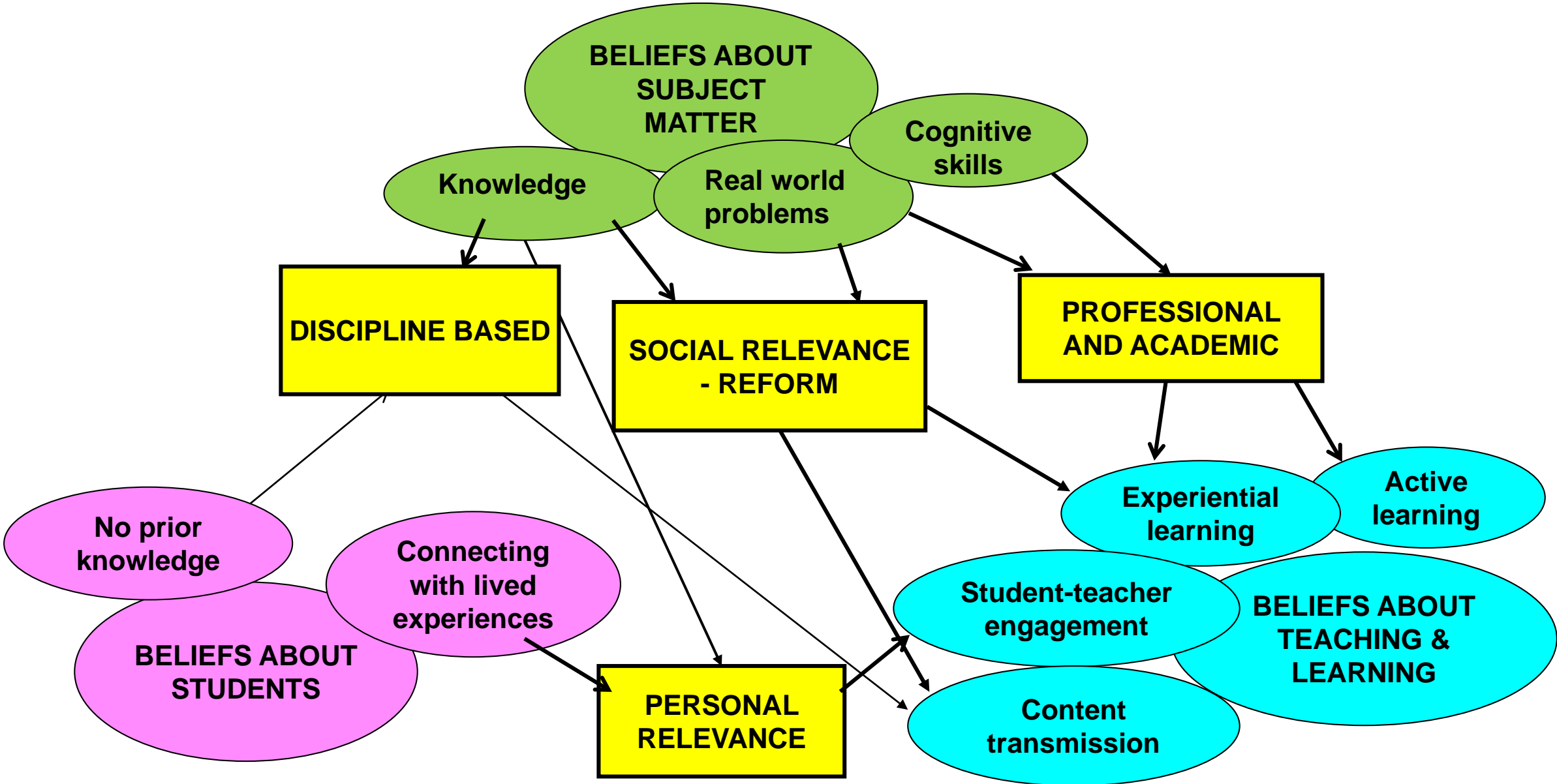
**Professional and academic orientation:** to prepare students for a range of future pathways that include professional practice, research and learning at university.

**Personal relevance orientation:** to help students make sense of their everyday experiences and attain self-understanding and personal growth.

**Social relevance and reform orientation:** to develop students' understanding of social issues and structures, with a view to social reform.

**Systems design orientation:** the purpose of the curriculum is a system for learning that supports students to achieve the learning outcomes.

# Curriculum orientations represent distinctive sets of beliefs and practices



# Findings about influences

## **Disciplines**

- Disciplinary knowledge practices developed during academic formation.  
Also shaped by personal and professional experiences and ideologies.

## **Institutional context**

- Teaching spaces
- Educational policies
- Institutional mission.
- Educational professional development
- Perceptions of reward & recognition for teaching

## **Socio-political context**

- Professional accreditation
- Funding



# Key institutional and governmental initiatives driving change in Higher Education

- enhancing employability and workplace skills
- research-led education
- assuring high-quality teaching and course design
- flexible learning and education technologies
- internationalisation of curricula
- increasing participation and student diversity



# How academics are responding to change

Curriculum orientations shape academics' responses to change and they are more likely to adopt changes that align with their beliefs about educational purposes.

Key challenges include changing curriculum focus from disciplinary knowledge to employability skills or learning to think and learn.

Trend towards active teaching and learning approaches based on changing expectations, awareness of educational theories, professional development in academic formation.

Research-led teaching and learning was associated with benefits that included satisfaction, time and workload efficiencies from capitalising on expertise.

Flexible and online learning require new skills and time for professional development.

# Enablers for change

- Being more educationally informed - professional development, scholarship, reflective practice and collaborative team teaching.
- Academics need to perceive benefits for change – Trowler (1998) calls the profitability of the change: security, prestige, peer approval, professional growth.
- Institutional recognition and reward for good teaching and engaging with professional development: time, promotion, teaching awards.
- Institutional policies and structures that are pedagogically sound and support innovation.

