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Classroom Structure as an Environmental Effect on Creative Production in College Students

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**CLASSROOM STRUCTURE AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT ON
CREATIVE PRODUCTION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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Research on creativity has been underrepresented in the field of psychology. A few previous studies suggest that instructional style affects the degree to which students express creativity. Past research indicates that less formal environments are related to increases in creativity as compared to formal environments. For example, formal (lecture) environments may inhibit the expression of creativity because there is no interaction between peers, creative ideas are rejected because they are not seen as the 'norm', and creative ideas are subjectively evaluated in a negative light and therefore, not allowed to develop. Informal (discussion) environments may foster creativity because individuals can interact, all ideas are accepted regardless of norms, and every idea is evaluated in a positive way, so nothing is seen as 'wrong'. Intermediate (lecture and discussion) environments are suggested to promote the most creative expression since students are given basic knowledge of the topic, yet are still able to tap into their creative resources because they are not yet limited by constraints of the area. This study set out to apply the three environments (formal, intermediate, and informal) in a university setting in order to expand the increasing research on creativity and enhance the educational system to further promote creativity. A total of 90 participants were given Sternberg & Lubart's (1995) creativity assessments before and after the session. The responses to the assessments were rated on the following criteria: novelty, appropriateness of topic choice, integration of diverse elements, technical goodness, aesthetic value, and effort- to determine overall creativity, the dependent variable, which was then examined across the three environments.