

ZERO TO SIXTY PLUS IN 108 DAYS: LAUNCHING A CENTRAL ELEARNING UNIT AND ITS FIRST FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Monica Orozco, James Fowlkes, Page Jerzak, and Ann Musgrove
Center for eLearning, Florida Atlantic University

ABSTRACT

The Center for eLearning was established at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) as a result of a university-wide task force. A brief overview of the center's start-up activity is followed by a thorough report of the first faculty development program created and implemented. The structure of the program is described, and data are provided showing evidence of faculty improvement and positive ratings for the program. Conclusions about the program and modifications for its second iteration are included.

KEYWORDS

Distance learning administration, online learning, faculty development, certification program, program design

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) is a public university within the Florida State University System. Established in 1964, the university is categorized as a high research activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation. FAU serves approximately 36,000 students and employs approximately 1,500 faculty members. In June of 2010, FAU's sixth President, Dr. Mary Jane Saunders took office. One of Dr. Saunders' first acts as President was to appoint an eLearning task force, which thoroughly studied FAU's existing eLearning initiatives within the broader higher education context. The task force submitted its report with detailed recommendations in September of 2010 [1]. A key recommendation and result of the task force's work was the establishment in April 2011 of a new centralized Center for eLearning [2] (CeL) led by a new Assistant Provost for eLearning. This decision supports Miller's 2006 finding [3] that when quality is the institution's primary concern, eLearning tends to be placed within the scope of the Provost. Although the CeL is charged with serving faculty, existing students, and new students in all aspects of eLearning, this paper focuses on the Center's administrative start-up and its subsequent launch of professional development offerings for faculty.

During the 2010-2011 academic year in which the eLearning task force made its report, FAU offered approximately 8% of its total semester credit hours via eLearning modalities: fully online, mostly online (minimum of 80% of instruction online), videoconference, and video streaming. The overwhelming majority of these credit hours were produced in fully online sections. Approximately 400 distinct courses (950 sections) were taught via these modalities with over 17,000 duplicated enrollment. There were 7872 unduplicated enrollments in fully online sections, which means that approximately 22% of our student population took at least one online course. Prior to the creation of the CeL, eLearning productivity was achieved by pioneering faculty with varying degrees of college and departmental support. Centralized technical support was, and continues to be, provided by the university's information technology unit, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) that supports the university's instructional and administrative technology systems—including the learning management system (LMS). However, eLearning faculty,

OIT, and supportive colleges/departments had been experiencing frustration with the lack of centralized pedagogical support for eLearning course development and delivery. Remedying this situation then, was also a key recommendation from the eLearning Task Force and a priority for the new Center for eLearning.

II. CEL ADMINISTRATIVE START UP

The task force, which included representation from the university budget office, had developed a budget template for the new CeL representing significant university support for a period of 5 years. However, the arrival of the new Assistant Provost for eLearning (AP) coincided with news of significant university budget cuts and so the incumbent began to consider ways in which the new CeL could prove self-sufficient in a much shorter timeframe. The AP was concerned that academic units may come to resent eLearning initiatives if faculty perceived the CeL to be receiving new overhead funding while they were having to make severe cuts. Fortunately, Florida Statute allows an eLearning fee to be charged on courses delivered at least 80% by distance with the caveat that fee revenues must be used to support the development and delivery of distance learning courses. Therefore, it was decided that FAU would assess a new eLearning fee of \$37/credit hour—neither the highest nor the lowest eLearning fee in the state system. This fee, along with tuition revenue generated by new eLearning courses, now constitutes the primary revenue in the CeL's budget model. The task force was retained as the CeL's advisory committee and has proven extremely helpful to the work of the new center.

With the budget model in place, the AP began to consider how to make the most impact at FAU as she continued to develop and staff the CeL. At the time of its inception, the CeL had only three instructional designers. In order to effect maximum impact on eLearning productivity and faculty development with such a small staff, it was decided that a robust eLearning development and delivery certification program would be rolled out. In this way, the small instructional design staff could serve many more faculty members in lockstep as opposed to serving a smaller number on an individual, drop-in basis. Several goals informed the structure of the program. First, the decision was made to focus on high-quality online course production in this inaugural program due to the desire to add student enrollment options without taxing the already limited classroom space on campus. Second, we wanted participating faculty to be committed to taking an intense program that allowed them to experience life as an online student while learning how to best design and deliver their new online courses. Finally, we wanted to have the capacity to accept and train all faculty members over a period of 5 years. In order to do that, we needed to train approximately 70 faculty members per semester including summers. The task force had recommended that faculty be required to undergo training prior to teaching online, but we see this currently as a longer-term goal.

Recruiting for the program was done via a call for proposals. A stipend of \$3000 was offered for faculty willing to complete the training, develop a new online or mostly online course, and teach the new course at least once on overload within the three semesters immediately following program completion. The CeL funds both the stipend and the overload payment. The requirement to teach the course at least once on overload is important in that it assures that enrollments represent new revenue rather than merely shifting enrollments from traditional courses to the online environment. For this reason, the CeL encourages and funds continued overload teaching of these newly generated courses. As we were unsure how many proposals we would receive, we stated that proposals would be prioritized on the basis of course enrollment demand and program planning criteria. In order to assure that participating faculty and proposed courses were in alignment with academic unit goals, we required signature approval from the appropriate department chairs and deans on proposal submissions. The CeL grants final acceptance of proposals, but to date we have been able to accept all proposals approved by the college deans and department chairs.

III. PROGRAM DESIGN

The program design includes eight learning units—LMS Training; Instructional Design; Assessment; Testing, Scoring, and Course Organization; Hands-on Assessment and Cool Tools; Communication and Collaboration; Active Learning; and Showcase and Graduation Celebration. Given a 16-week semester, the eight units would be each completed within a two-week timeframe. This schedule allows two cohorts, of up to 36 participants each, to complete the program by staggering their start time by one week. The course is delivered online with four strategically placed face-to-face sessions (8 hours each) —LMS Training, Instructional Design, Hands-on Assessment and Cool Tools, and Showcase and Graduation Celebration. In addition to the formal training provided, participants have access to one-on-one consulting as well as open lab time with the instructional designers as they complete their course building assignments. The estimated time commitment for faculty participants is 128 hours over the course of the semester.

The instructional designers researched several existing similar programs (University of Central Florida, University of South Florida, and Blackboard), recognized instructional design models (ADDIE, ARCS [4], ASSURE [5], Backward Design [6], Conditions of Learning [7], Criterion Referenced Instruction [8], Dick and Carey [9], Instructional Systems Design, Iterative Design [10], and Kemp Design [11]), and learning theories (Bloom’s Taxonomy [12], Andragogy [13], Constructivist Theory [14, 15], Genetic Epistemology [15], Social Development, and Ecological System Theory [16]) to identify the program goals and components desired. The course and module objectives were written to coincide with the selected criteria (see Table 1). After each course objective, a brief description of supportive activities and assessments are listed. The course had four face-to-face sessions that covered one or more course objectives (these sessions are listed more than four times in Table 1). Instead of introducing the many instructional design models individually, the designers settled on using the backward design introduced by Wiggins and McTighe [6] in *Understanding by Design* as a base model. This model was selected for its simplicity and open framework that allows for important elements from other models to be added as appropriate. Learning theories were addressed using the same method, in that their components were introduced as their relevance naturally surfaced within the course design process.

Table 1 – Program Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the program, the participants will be able to:

1. Manage the various LMS tools and functions.
 - 1.1. Access, navigate, manage and maintain the LMS and course homepages.
 - 1.2. Make a course available to students.
 - 1.3. Upload and manage course content.
 - 1.4. Identify the basic tools and functions in the Control Panel.
 - 1.5. Manage Announcements, Send Email, and Messages.
 - 1.6. Customize LMS and course homepages and menus.
 - 1.7. Create and manage grade columns.
 - 1.8. Run grade reports.
 - 1.9. Work offline with grades.
 - 1.10. Identify icons in the Grade Center and what they mean.
 - 1.11. Grade assessments using the Grade Center.
 - 1.12. Explain the differences between tests, surveys, and pools.
 - 1.13. Create a test in the LMS.
 - 1.14. Manage question pools.
 - 1.15. Deploy and manage a test.

- 1.16. Create assignments and SafeAssignments (plagiarism detection program).
- 1.17. Interpret a SafeAssignment report.
- 1.18. Download and grade an assignment.
- 1.19. Set up and manage each type of communication tools.
- 1.20. Grade each type of communication tools.
- 1.21. Create and manage groups in a course.
- 1.22. Setup the various functions within a group.

Activities: Face-to-face session for LMS training plus online modules that include LMS tutorials and quizzes for each major LMS function.

Assessments: Faculty members complete the LMS Mastery Exam and create a learning module template in their courses.

2. Explain the basics of instructional design.

- 2.1. Define the elearning classifications used at FAU.
- 2.2. Identify and explain advantages and disadvantages of elearning and provide ways to address them.
- 2.3. Recognize student needs and characteristics related to learning.
- 2.4. Explain the four questions that drive instructional design.
- 2.5. Select and implement relevant best practices for a course.
- 2.6. Explain the various requirements of the course evaluation rubrics.

Activities: Face-to-face session for instructional design training with additional online modules and discussions.

Assessments: Faculty members participate in introductory and best practices discussions and complete the instructional design quiz and the orientation quiz.

3. Apply policies and procedures appropriately.

- 3.1. Identify and incorporate university/college/program/department/individual policies and procedures.
- 3.2. Develop an academic integrity policy regarding cheating and plagiarism.
- 3.3. Manage copyright and intellectual property issues for a course.
- 3.4. Refer students to relevant academic support services.
- 3.5. Develop a course in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- 3.6. Identify the functions for the Center for Teaching and Learning.
- 3.7. Determine when an educational research initiative requires review by the Institutional Review Board.

Activities: Online module and discussions within the instructional design unit.

Assessments: Faculty members participate in discussions reflecting on the policies and academic support units relevant to their courses.

4. Create learning objectives.

- 4.1. Develop course learning objectives relating to content and processes.
- 4.2. Create learning objectives for each course module.

Activities: Face-to-face session for instructional design training.

Assessments: Faculty members submit all of their course objectives, which may be predetermined, and at least three module objectives for their courses.

5. Create, manage, and maintain assessments.
 - 5.1. Define the different types of assessments.
 - 5.2. Describe the processes of diagnostic, formative, summative, self, and peer assessments; and create examples of each for a course.
 - 5.3. Describe how assessment of learning can happen.
 - 5.4. Develop assessments relevant to objectives for each course module.
 - 5.5. Align assessments with learning objectives at all course levels.
 - 5.6. Develop an overall assessment plan for a course.

Activities: Online unit with three discussions.

Assessments: Faculty members complete three assignments describing their use of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments and three discussions reflecting on self and peer, authentic, and general assessment strategies used in their courses.

6. Maintain standards and organization.
 - 6.1. Demonstrate techniques that foster academic integrity.
 - 6.2. Clarify expectations for students in the areas of acceptable work and behavior.
 - 6.3. Develop a testing policy for a course.
 - 6.4. Define expectations for participation/communication throughout a course.
 - 6.5. Create an interactive syllabus based on the FAU's syllabus guidelines.
 - 6.6. Create a grading rubric for an assessment.
 - 6.7. Choose an appropriate organizational design for a course.

Activities: Online unit with a wiki and a discussion.

Assessments: Faculty members submit a syllabus, create a course outline wiki entry and reply to their interdisciplinary group, and participate in an online discussion about academic integrity.

7. Manage course content and delivery.
 - 7.1. Apply appropriate content delivery methods to support selected learning topics.
 - 7.2. Collect and create innovative and useful content for a course.

Activities: Online unit and use of their course shell.

Assessments: Faculty members create an orientation module in their course shell.

8. Create, manage, and maintain learning activities and assessments.
 - 8.1. Create and evaluate functional assessment activities.
 - 8.2. Create learning activities that support the objectives and assessments.
 - 8.3. Incorporate delivery option that supports the objectives and assessments.
 - 8.4. Appraise, select, and implement technologies relevant to a course design that are available in the LMS and other external resources.

Activities: Face-to-face session for technology training and online discussion.

Assessments: Faculty members participate in a discussion about technology selection and submit an assessment matrix for their courses.

9. Create, manage, and maintain communication.

- 9.1. Appraise, select, and implement appropriate course interaction and feedback to foster learning.
- 9.2. Select the proper communication tools based on intended use.
- 9.3. Facilitate course communication.
- 9.4. Develop an assessment plan for course communication.

Activities: Online unit and blogging assignment.

Assessments: Faculty members create an original blog entry about technology tools.

10. Plan and facilitate active learning within a course when appropriate.

- 10.1. Select learning activities and assessments appropriate to active learning.
- 10.2. Appraise, select, and implement appropriate active learning tools that are available in the LMS and other external resources.
- 10.3. Facilitate active learning.
- 10.4. Develop an active learning plan.

Activities: Online unit with one discussion.

Assessments: Faculty members participate in a discussion on active learning strategies for their courses.

11. Evaluate an eLearning course based on a designated course evaluation rubric.

- 11.1. Apply the course evaluation rubric to a course and its individual modules.
- 11.2. Develop potential solutions to identified weaknesses.
- 11.3. Present a constructive course critique to an instructional design partner.

Activities: Face-to-face session for showcase.

Assessments: Faculty members review their interdisciplinary team's courses and provide constructive feedback using a course evaluation rubric.

12. Present to colleagues the key components of their completed course.

- 12.1. Identify unique solutions within a course for showcasing.
- 12.2. Present a completed course or module to instructional design colleagues.
- 12.3. Setup a completed course or module for the showcase.
- 12.4. Respond appropriately to questions from showcase participants.

Activities: Face-to-face session for showcase.

Assessments: Faculty members present aspects of their courses to the entire class and respond to any questions.

In addition to the design model and objectives, the program used four primary themes for its development—mastery learning [12], peer-to-peer collaboration [17], modeling, and continuous improvement. The first theme identified mastery as 80% for all assessments within the program. Faculty submissions were scored and feedback provided. For any participants who did not meet the 80% or

greater threshold, they were allowed to resubmit attempts until this level of mastery was met. To assure clear expectations and feedback, detailed rubrics were developed for assessments as appropriate.

Though the course included a total of 29 assessments, the assessments in three units played a significant role in participants' course development. In Unit 3, faculty members completed three assignments focused on diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Each assignment asked questions about assessment strategies for their courses. Sample questions included prerequisite and preferred knowledge and skills for the diagnostic aspects of their courses, feedback preferences and formative evaluation of student learning, and past experiences with and planning for summative assessments. In Unit 4, faculty members created their student orientation unit. The assignment required a clear starting point for students, a faculty introduction, a student introduction discussion, netiquette rules, a student orientation quiz, and a link to student LMS tutorials. In Unit 5, faculty members participated in a discussion about selecting appropriate technology. Additionally, an assessment matrix was completed that clearly demonstrated the links between their objectives, the assessments types used, the planned assessments, and the technologies required. These assessments provided a framework for their developing courses.

To support the second theme of peer-to-peer collaboration, five design components were integrated. First, each unit would give participants ample opportunities through online discussions, wikis, or blogs to share their knowledge, expertise, and thoughts. Second, a discipline-specific peer group led by an instructional designer was created. The assigned instructional designer could focus on the unique needs of their designated disciplines—giving the participants specialized instruction in open labs and one-on-one consultations. The eight open labs were offered each week the program did not have a scheduled face-to-face session. Each lab was broken down into three 2-hour intervals allowing participants to select any or all time periods that their schedules allowed. The consultations were scheduled at the participants' convenience to address specific needs. Third, smaller interdisciplinary peer groups were formed to encourage participants to “get out of their comfort zones.” The goal was to give participants an opportunity to see how other disciplines approach learning and gain new insight into previously unexplored pedagogic techniques. The interaction for these groups was centered on providing feedback to members on their developing course using one of the established course evaluation rubrics—Blackboard Exemplary Course Program and Quality Matters. Fourth, a showcase was scheduled on the last day of the program to give participants an opportunity to share their most unique and innovative components of their newly developed course. The showcase provided participants a chance to explore the approaches and ideas from colleagues not included in either of the smaller peer-to-peer groups (discipline-specific and interdisciplinary). Finally, eLearning experts from across campus were used to introduce instructional technologies that had proven to be pedagogically effective. These experts were given the title of “ePros.” They would serve as mentors and presenters during the program. At the end of the program, new ePros would be recruited from the recent graduates to serve in future faculty development opportunities.

The third theme related to modeling of quality instructional design principles. Each principle introduced in the program was modeled within the program. Whenever a principle was modeled, it was noted and any supportive templates were provided to the participants for use in their course design. The result was a training program that not only provided instruction to the faculty but also served as an exemplary model that they could strive to emulate.

The fourth theme was evaluation and continuous improvement. This theme was integrated into the program in multiple ways. First, the instructional designers who built the course shared all materials with each other and built the units collaboratively. This process allowed for multiple viewpoints and expertise to be focused on all program materials, and multiple revisions occurred before faculty even became involved in the program. Second, the instructional designers built into the program multiple assessment points in order to gain feedback from faculty. Participants were asked at the end of each unit to complete a short assessment in order to evaluate the unit in terms of objective clarity, assessment alignment, relevance of materials, facilitator effectiveness, time spent working, and interaction quality and quantity with the facilitators and their peers. Participants were given the opportunity to answer additional open-ended questions about elements to add or remove from the unit as well as make other suggested changes.

These anonymous surveys were read immediately after a unit closed in order to see what (if any) changes faculty wanted or any issues that needed to be addressed. Participants were also asked at the end of the course to complete an overall course evaluation and evaluation forms for each of the instructional designers. These evaluations were reviewed at the end of the program in order to improve the course and make any needed changes before the next cohorts began their training. Third, faculty members were encouraged to provide program feedback using communication mechanisms in the course including a discussion board for general comments and questions as well as using an email function within the LMS to send personal messages to the instructional designers. Faculty could also contact the instructional designers by phone and could visit them in their offices. In this way, faculty could give immediate feedback about their experiences and issues to the instructional designers in order to make prompt changes when needed. Fourth, as part of their curriculum, participants were introduced to course evaluation rubrics in Unit 2, which promote the process of evaluation and continuous improvement. Faculty provided feedback to their interdisciplinary partners using these rubrics, and they were encouraged early in the program to use these rubrics in developing their own courses. The faculty also had one entire unit dedicated to assessment in the program. This unit reinforced the ideas of understanding and effectively using assessment and evaluation in order to promote better learning and improve instruction as a continuous process. Finally, throughout each cohort's training, participants were able to communicate directly with the AP. This enabled faculty to discuss any program or personal issues with someone who was outside of the training course but who also had access to it. Having this outlet for faculty allowed them to provide an additional means of evaluation in order for the program to be improved.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

There were 80 responses to the inaugural call for proposals. After eliminating proposals based on scheduling conflicts with the face-to-face sessions, 71 participants were selected including representation from seven of the eight colleges; these colleges are Arts and Letters (AAL), Business (BUS), Design and Social Inquiry (DSI), Engineering and Computer Science (ECS), Education (EDU), Honors (HON), Nursing (NUR), and Science (SCI). The eighth college, Medicine, was newly formed and did not have representation. Since the only faculty member from the Honors College was also a member of the College of Science, his data were grouped within the College of Science. Of the initial participants, there were 53 completers of the program (Figure 1). The College of Engineering and Computer Science, followed by the College of Arts and Letters, had the highest dropout rate. The Colleges of Business, Education, and Nursing had the most successful completion rates of 100%.

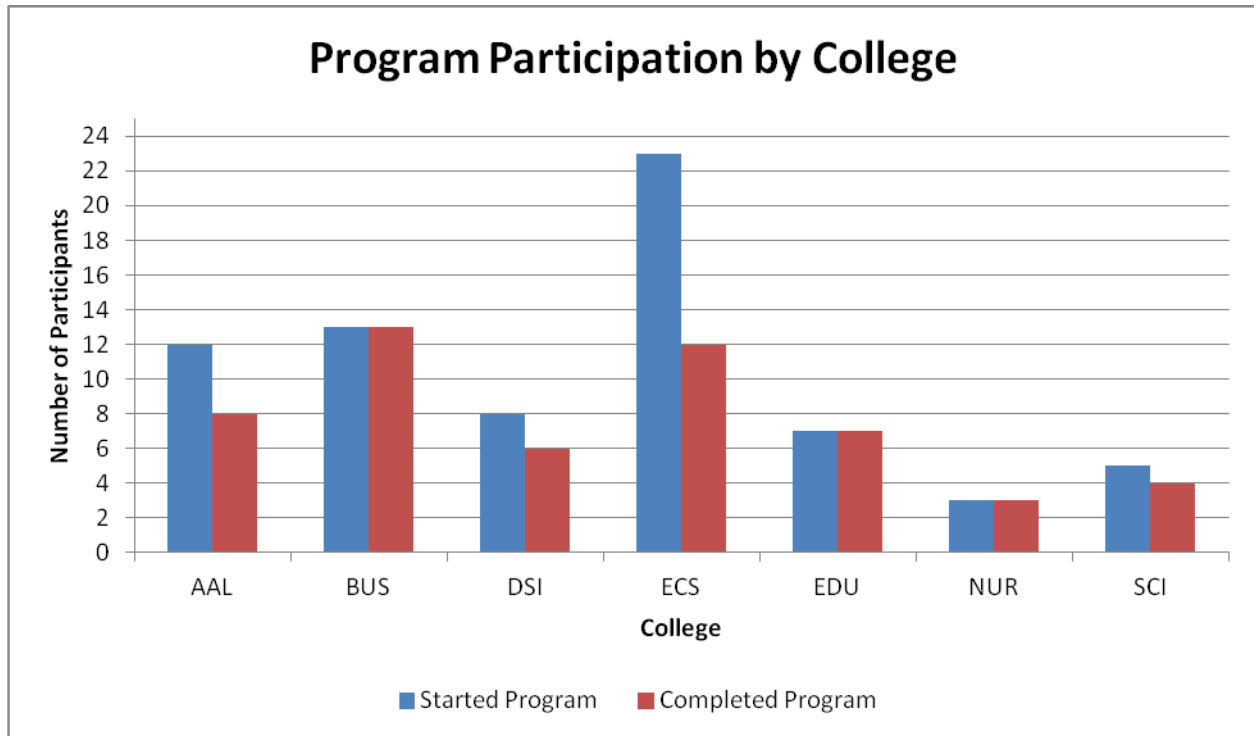


Figure 1 – Participation Frequencies for All Participants by College

The program evaluation consisted of multiple assessments given during and after the course (the full assessments can be obtained by contacting the study authors via email). Faculty members were asked to complete online evaluations for each unit when it ended as well as overall course evaluations and evaluations for each instructional designer. The unit assessments revealed scores at the midpoint or greater for objective clarity, assessment alignment, relevance of materials, and facilitator effectiveness—indicating an above average performance in all of these areas. The average time commitment per unit ranged from 5 to 15 hours with an overall average of approximately 10 hours. The program design built-in roughly 16 hours for each two-week unit, so staying within this time frame meant the program was meeting planned parameters. In terms of the quality and quantity of interacting with instructional designers and peers, the scale used asked faculty to measure their reactions using three categories: “would prefer less,” “about right,” and “would prefer more.” Faculty responses for all of these questions across all units fit closely to “about right.” In all cases, faculty indicated that they would prefer slightly more interaction with the instructional designers and their peers. These responses were used to modify the initial face-to-face meetings during the second program iteration to include some additional time for faculty to become acquainted with their peers.

As part of the program evaluation the number of times faculty attended open-lab sessions and one-on-one consultations with their instructional designers were tracked. The figures below demonstrate the number of total program participants for the consultations (Figure 2) and the open labs (Figure 3) for each college.

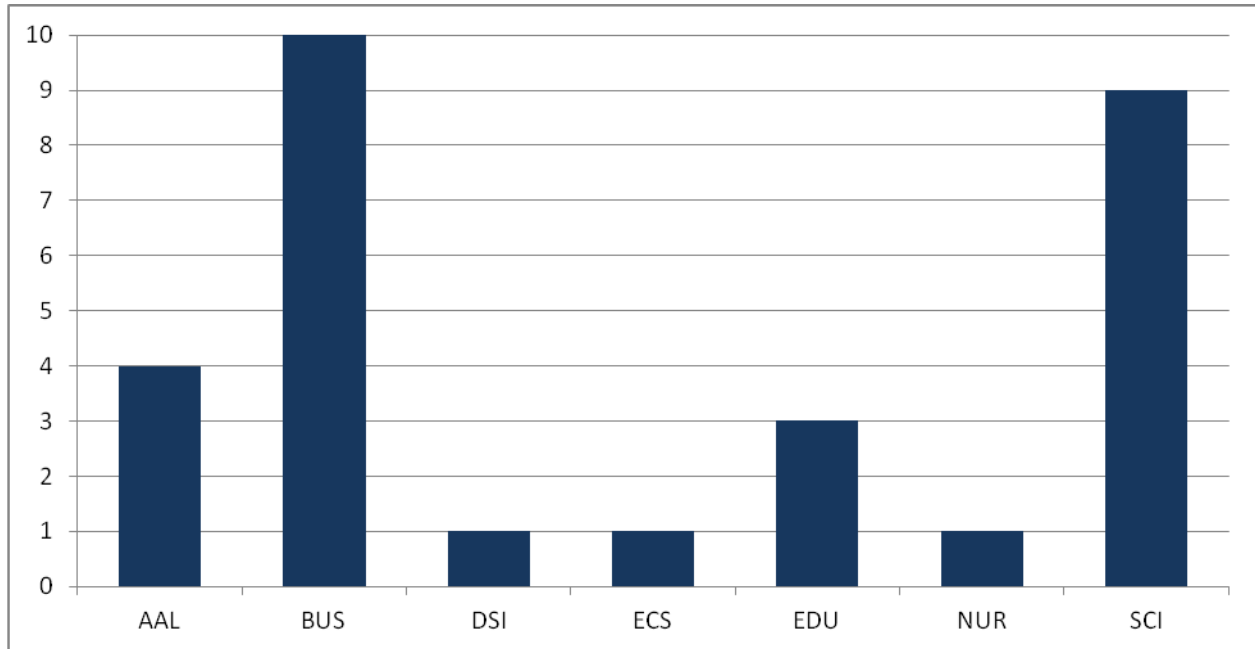


Figure 2 – Frequencies for One-on-One Consultations with Instructional Designers by College

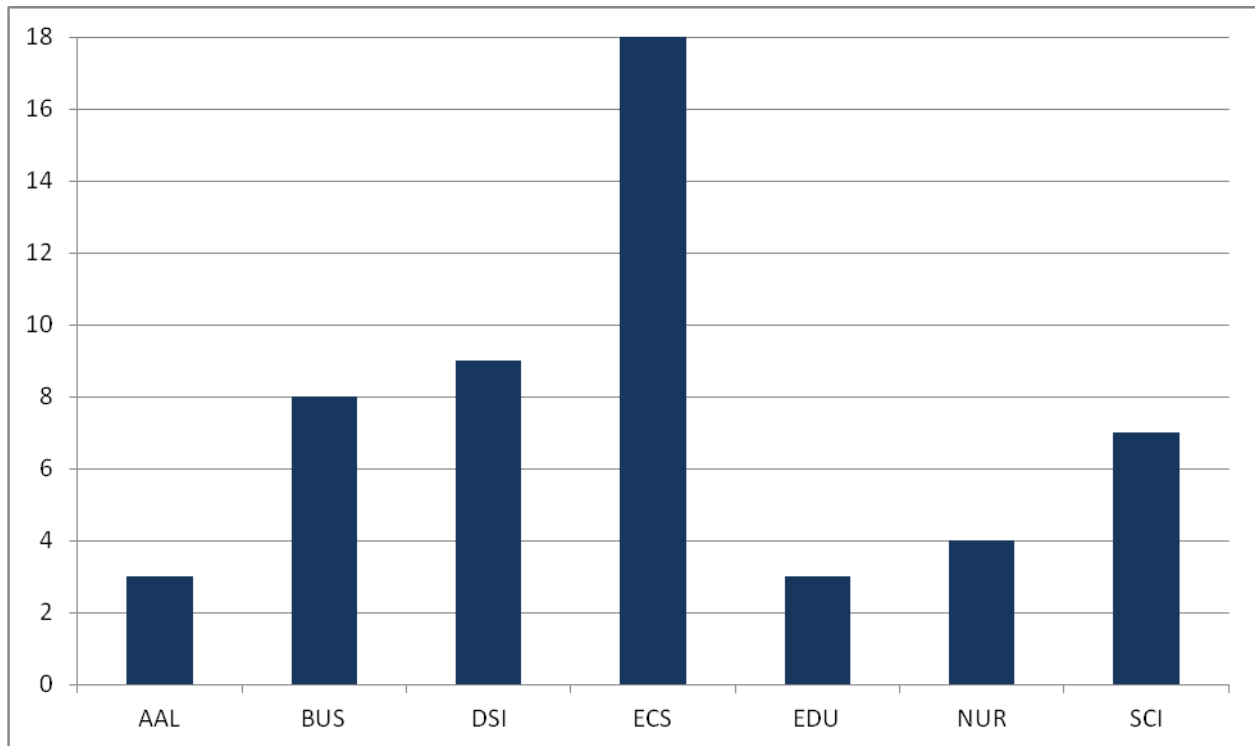


Figure 3 – Total Frequencies of Open Lab Sessions Attended by College

As a result of these data, the instructional designers also planned to ask faculty in the second program iteration to come to more one-on-one consultations and open lab sessions to ensure that they receive sufficient support and assistance with their course development. Also, faculty in the second iteration were encouraged to seek out their instructional designers even earlier in their course development process rather than waiting until later in the course.

Faculty members were also given four open-ended questions at the end of each unit in order to provide their responses about (a) the best idea or piece of information they experienced in the unit, (b) the muddiest or most unclear point(s) in the unit, (c) what content / materials could be eliminated, and (d) general comments about the unit or program so far. These responses were read, considered, and changes were implemented where possible in the unit for the following iteration. Overall, the unit assessments indicated that each unit was functioning well in the program.

The overall course evaluation was given online in Unit 8. There were 27 questions that covered multiple aspects of the course including objectives, orientation, assignments, organization, feedback, pace, technology, learning, navigation, critical thinking, effectiveness, and clarity. These questions used a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Also included were five questions about perceived changes in faculty skills, confidence, and comfort relating to technology use for instruction. These questions used a five-point Likert scale that ranged from much worse (1) to much better (5). Responses were examined for both initial cohorts and no significant differences were found. All of the data were then combined to provide a total picture of how faculty viewed the course. As seen in the means in Table 2 below, every course aspect score was above the midpoint of 4—indicating that these aspects were covered well during the course.

Table 2 – Means (M) and Standard Deviations (S) for Course Aspects for the Overall Course

	M	S
1. Objective Clarity	6.11	1.429
2. Objective Coverage	6.18	1.159
3. Expectation Clarity	5.37	1.746
4. Orientation Effectiveness	4.76	1.700
5. Assignment Alignment	5.79	1.339
6. Course Organization	5.42	1.553
7. Assignment Relevance	5.79	1.473
8. Feedback Appropriateness	5.39	1.717
9. Pace Appropriateness	4.49	1.820
10. Technology Clarity	5.49	1.446
11. Course Interest	6.16	1.197
12. Learning Quantity	6.05	1.506
13. Course Level Appropriateness	4.97	1.924
14. Ease of Interaction	5.42	1.703
15. Ease of Navigation	4.86	1.903
16. Enhanced Critical Thinking	6.13	1.166
17. Material Relevance	5.67	1.373
18. Technology Use	6.00	1.171
19. Course Structure	5.32	1.491
20. Example Relevance	5.66	1.258
21. Discussion Effectiveness	5.16	1.653
22. Presentation Effectiveness	5.82	1.249
23. Video Effectiveness	5.70	1.288
24. Synchronous Conferencing Effectiveness	5.03	1.878

25. Rubric Effectiveness	5.89	1.048
26. Instructions Clarity	5.58	1.200
27. Course Overall	5.89	1.331

If any course aspect mean was at 5 or greater, it was considered acceptable since this level indicated that faculty felt that aspect was working in the program. The overall means that were of concern were for Orientation Effectiveness (#4), Pace Appropriateness (#9), Course Level Appropriateness (#13), and Ease of Navigation (#15). These issues were discussed among the instructional designers and some changes were made including adding new videos on course navigation, altering when specific assignments were due in order to make the pace more appropriate, and revising orientation aspects to make them more effective. One of the issues with course appropriateness concerned the level of skill of faculty when they entered the program; some faculty members were more developed and had taught online previously. These faculty members indicated that they wanted more advanced coursework than the program could provide at this time. The instructional designers had already planned to develop a more advanced faculty training program for the future, but since it is not available now all of the faculty must take the same program regardless of their previous skill level. The instructional designers recognized that some frustration with course level appropriateness could not be ameliorated due to this factor.

The five additional questions regarding changes in faculty yielded similar positive results. As seen in Table 3, all faculty saw improvements in their instructional skills, technology skills, ability to facilitate discussions, confidence for teaching with technology, and comfort for teaching with technology. If any faculty aspect mean was at 4 or greater, it was considered acceptable since this level indicated that faculty perceived a positive change for this aspect due to the program. Only one mean was slightly below 4 and that was for instructional skills improvement. Given that some of the faculty were already advanced teachers and some had taught online previously, the instructional designers viewed this aspect as one in which a high score may not be achievable. Overall, these responses indicate that faculty perceived improvements in these aspects and that the program is positively contributing to their personal development as well as their ability to develop online instruction.

Table 3 – Means (M) and Standard Deviations (S) of Faculty Aspects for the Overall Course

	M	S
1. Instructional Skills Improvement	3.97	.687
2. Technology Skills Improvement	4.05	.575
3. Discussion Facilitation Improvement	4.00	.697
4. Teaching with Technology Confidence	4.03	.645
5. Teaching with Technology Comfort	4.11	.737

The last course evaluation assessment was for the instructional designers themselves. Three instructional designers developed and facilitated the program. Each of them was evaluated on different dimensions including knowledge of instruction and technologies, ability to make faculty feel respected and comfortable, ability to answer questions and provide solutions, and availability. These questions used a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). An overall rating question was also asked for each instructional designer. The scale for this question ranged from very poor (1) to excellent (7). Finally, there were two open-ended questions about how each instructional designer could improve and for any additional comments for him or her. No significant differences were found between the two cohorts, so all data were combined into one dataset in order to examine the results that can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4 – Means (M) and Standard Deviations (S) for Each Instructional Designer (ID) and by Category

	ID1	ID2	ID3	Category M	Category S
Technology Knowledge	6.80	6.25	6.63	6.56	0.25
Pedagogy Knowledge	6.66	6.34	6.61	6.54	0.17
Felt Respected	6.23	6.47	6.47	6.39	0.19
Felt Comfortable	6.19	6.53	6.44	6.38	0.18
Addressed Questions	6.26	6.45	6.45	6.39	0.09
Availability	6.23	6.24	6.55	6.34	0.20
Improved Facilitation	6.40	5.79	6.52	6.24	0.32
Improved Design	6.43	5.94	6.51	6.29	0.25
Found Solutions	6.43	5.89	6.31	6.21	0.24
Overall Rating	6.44	6.40	6.59	6.47	0.11
Overall Mean	6.40	6.21	6.50	6.37	0.12

If any instructional designer mean was at 5 or greater, it was considered acceptable since this level indicated that faculty perceived the individual as positively contributing to their development. Every score for all instructional designers met this criterion, with most scores attaining a 6 or higher. All of the overall ratings for the instructional designers and the average ratings for each category were above 6—indicating a very positive evaluation of them. The open-ended comments were gathered and disseminated to each instructional designer so that he or she could see if further improvements could be made in specific areas.

In examining all data for the first iteration, the program appears to be working well. The unit-level data indicated positive functioning and appropriateness concerning all program parameters. The overall course and all aspects of the course received positive evaluations. The program improved faculty skills, comfort, and confidence, and the instructional designers were rated favorably across all categories. Using the open-ended questions, the instructional designers took the input and made changes in the program where appropriate including adding new course features, modifying the schedule, and adding emphasis where needed. The second iteration of the program has begun and the same assessments will be given to these faculty members while they complete the program. After each unit and the overall course in the second iteration are completed, additional rounds of evaluation and course improvement will be completed. Faculty will also be surveyed after they have taught the online course that they develop during the program in order to gauge any additional progress beyond what they have learned in the program and to use those responses to help further modify it for added improvement.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Several lessons were learned as this program was implemented with the first two cohorts. First, due to the short time between the CeL’s creation and Fall 2011, we had sent out the initial call for proposals while we were designing the program. Thus faculty members did not know the scheduled required dates or the intensity of the program when they made their original proposals. We believe that lacking this information up front explains most of the high attrition in the first run of the program. There were also faculty members who had unforeseen schedule changes due to adjustments made in their respective departments or colleges; these faculty members could not continue in the program under any circumstances. All faculty members who had to drop the program were urged to reapply in the future when their schedules permitted. Our second call for proposals was sent out during Fall 2011 for the Spring 2012 program and that call was modified to include the required face-to-face dates. The call also

described the course structure more clearly and made faculty members aware that the expected time commitment is 128 hours. In this way, faculty members are better able to determine whether this program will work with their demanding teaching and research responsibilities. Second, we made adjustments within the course in the areas of pacing and workload. The workload is still intense but we did reduce it in two modules that were significantly more time intensive than the others. Some requirements were moved to other units to better balance the workload. Additionally, we made a change in the overload payment incentive. In the first run of the program we offered overload payment based on a percentage of the participants' regular salaries. We have now moved to a flat rate overload payment. This move increases the incentive for some participants but lowers it for others. However, it makes the overall cost of the program more manageable and makes the incentive fair across colleges. Finally, we are moving away from including a full-day of face-to-face LMS training in the course in favor of requiring the LMS mastery exam be completed successfully prior to the program. Faculty members may acquire the necessary competence via LMS training provided by OIT or by watching online demos and tutorials.

Every institution is different and this program may not work in every situation. However, if an institution can identify a sustainable funding source (like our eLearning fee), incentivizing eLearning training and productivity becomes much more feasible. In our model, the incentive funds are only spent when faculty members complete the requirements of the training program, the online course production, and the teaching of the course on overload. The first half of the \$3000 stipend is paid upon completion of the training program. The second half and the overload payment is paid during the semester that the course is taught on overload the first time. In that way, the new courses are generating tuition and fee revenues as the incentives are being paid out and so the budget is never depleted.

Based on the success of the program and the training needs of the university, additional programs are now being planned and developed, and additional instructional designers are being hired. A variety of programs are needed to address the various populations involved with eLearning: administrators, faculty course designers, faculty course facilitators, teaching assistants, and students. Feedback from department chairs and deans thus far is leading us to prioritize a program for course facilitators, which would include adjuncts and graduate teaching assistants, as our second program launch. We also have requests to begin offering shorter, focused workshops for skills enhancement. For now, considering the limited number of instructional designers on staff, we have purchased the 100-seat college pass for Sloan-C workshops and advertised them to our faculty. There is also much left to do administratively within the CeL. With the guidance of the faculty senate, minor changes are being made to the advisory committee in order to ensure appropriate cycling of faculty and staff representatives. Going forward the AP, along with the advisory committee, will work on a five-year strategic plan for the CeL and will review and revise the university's eLearning policies.

VI. ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Monica Orozco, Ph.D., is Assistant Provost for eLearning at Florida Atlantic University. She is responsible for directing the work of the Center for eLearning and for guiding policy development and best practice implementation as they relate to eLearning university-wide. Dr. Orozco has been an administrator and online faculty member for over 10 years. Dr. Orozco has published previously in the *American Journal of Distance Education* under her former name, DeTure.

James K. Fowlkes, M.S., is the Director of Instructional Design within the Center for eLearning at FAU. His department is responsible for training and consulting with faculty regarding instructional design and their use of educational technology in the eLearning environment. Additionally, the department collaborates with the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Instructional Technologies department to develop and present faculty workshops supporting quality academic practices. He received his Master of Science in Leadership in Higher Education from Capella University and has been active in the instructional design community since 2000.

Page Jerzak, M.A., is Coordinator of Educational / Training Programs and an instructional designer with the new Center for eLearning at Florida Atlantic University. She has a Master's Degree in Psychology and has completed doctoral work in Social Psychology. She served as a full-time university instructor for seven years before becoming an instructional designer. She has also served as a statistician and researcher for her own and others' work—producing two publications and twelve conference presentations. She has attended national conferences on assessment, and often works with assessment issues in higher education. She helped create the curriculum for the EDFC Program and facilitates it with the help of her fellow instructional designers. They are currently developing new training programs for administrators, course facilitators / teaching assistants, and students which are based on the EDFC program. She enjoys consulting with faculty and sharing her enthusiasm for creating and researching innovative instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Ann Musgrove, Ed.D., is Coordinator of Educational / Training Programs and an instructional designer with the Center for eLearning at Florida Atlantic University. Ann's Doctorate and Master's degrees are both from FAU's College of Education where she has served as a graduate assistant, visiting professor, full-time instructor for the Digital Teaching Academy Program, and currently holds Associate Graduate Faculty status. She has a course nationally certified by the Quality Matters program. Her research interests include best practices in online learning and cognitive styles. She is part of the team that developed the curriculum and facilitates the EDFC program. Ann has taught and developed 10 other undergraduate and graduate education courses and enjoys working with faculty to create quality learning environments for our students.

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