

# Reflection: Teaching Online Prep Program (TOPP)

## Summary

**Teaching Online Prep Program (TOPP)** is a 6-week online professional development program piloted in summer 2016 for instructors teaching online for the first time or redesigning an existing online course. It is entirely online, asynchronous, and hands-on. The primary objective of the program was to allow instructors to experience being an online student, while applying the principles and the tools to build his/her own online course.

Although 14 instructors registered; 12 began the program; and 8 completed the program. This shows a completion rate of  $8/12 = 66.7\%$ , consistent with some of the reported averages in online professional development programs<sup>1</sup>.

Feedback on the content, organization, design, and meaningful activities were positive. Participants also said the amount of information and required work were overwhelming, especially while they were teaching or working full time, but the asynchronous online format worked well and they found the overall experience invaluable. Suggestions included offering the program earlier in the summer, extending it to more than 6 weeks, and offering regular supplemental face-to-face meetings.

The next steps include:

1. Incorporate the feedback, redesign ideas, and more instructional media.
2. Offer the program in Spring 2017 for Fall 2017 courses; in Summer 2017 for Spring 2018 courses.
3. Fall 2016: create a process to ensure successful instructional design (ID) projects, by using the first two modules of TOPP to lay the foundation of knowledge and solid planning.

## Background, Results, and the Next Steps

- Teaching Online Prep Program (TOPP) 1st Session - Summer 2016 - June 20, 2016 to July 29, 2016. Released early on June 3, 2016 to allow some participants to start early.

### a. Schedule

Week	Dates	Topics
1	6/20 - 6/26	Introduction to teaching online Important rules & regulations
2	6/27 - 7/3	Planning the weeks/modules & activities
3	7/4 - 7/10	Laulima's core & communication tools
4	7/11 - 7/17	Developing the content
5	7/18 - 7/24	Assessment tools Enhance with Web 2.0 tools
6	7/25 - 7/31	Building a learning community Facilitation skills
*	10/31/2016	Complete at least 1/2 of your online course for review

<sup>1</sup> Russell, M., Carey, R., Kleiman, G., & Venable, J. D. (2009). Face-to-Face and Online Professional Development for Mathematics Teachers: A Comparative Study. *Journal of asynchronous learning networks*, 13(2), 71-87.

**b. Learning Outcomes**

1. Identify and explain the pros and cons of online teaching.
2. Identify effective pedagogical strategies for online teaching.
3. Identify key federal, state, and ACCJC requirements in distance education.
4. Create a Lulima course site that promotes learning.
5. Design effective student-centered learning activities to address different learning styles.
6. Integrate Web 2.0 tools to enhance a Lulima course site.
7. Identify and implement accessibility and copyright.
8. Design and develop methods to build a learning community.
9. Demonstrate basic facilitation skills in an online classroom.

● **Participants**

**a. 14 signed up | 12 started | 8 completed**

#	Name	Course	Semester	Completed; If not, why?	Comments
1	Kelli Nakamura	HIST 151	F16	Yes	Weekly F2F meetings to assist with development
2	Dabney Gough	CULN 310	F16	Yes	
3	Lauren Tamamoto	CULN 231	S17	Yes	
4	Man Wa (Eva) Shing	OTA 236	F16	Yes	
5	Laure Burke	HOST 290	F16	Yes	
6	Lisa Ann Bright	COM 201	F16	Yes	
7	Joy Oehlers	Allied Health Module	F16	Yes	
8	Kevin Donnelly	HOST 293E	S17	No	Bi-weekly F2F meetings to assist with development
9	Trude Pang	ICS 101	S17	No	Using publisher content
10	Steven Young	ACC 201	F16	No	Using publisher content
11	Lisa Kobuke	EALL 272	F16	No	???
12	Charles Matsuda	BIOL 130	S17	No	Personal reasons
13	Leanne Matsumoto	ACC 201	F16	No	Did not receive the curriculum on time
14	Tasha Williams	ENG 100	F16	No	Employed at LCC

**b. Completion rate = 8/12 = 66.7%**

- c. For those who completed the 6-week module, a digital and hard-copy certificates were distributed.
- d. CELTT is continuing to meet with some of the participants to help with the development; while keeping in touch with the rest of the participants via email for occasional support.

● **Next Steps**

- a. Incorporate the feedback and evaluations and update TOPP
- b. Next session: spring 2017 for fall 2017 courses; summer 2017 for Spring 2018 courses
- c. Possibly share and collaborate with Leeward.
- d. Based on what we learned in TOPP and previous ID projects, we need to plan how to train and how to determine which ID projects to take on.
  - i. The BEST model: TOPP + one-on-one  
 E.g. Kelli Nakamura requested weekly meetings and development support while she was participating in TOPP. She was double-dipping: getting the broader, pedagogical picture from the TOPP and getting the hands-on development help from CELTT. This helped her to understand the pedagogical reasons behind the redesign and consequently our collaborative development work progressed smoothly.
  - ii. How to qualify online instructors before we take on projects?  
 For an ID project to succeed, two factors should be in place before proceeding:
    1. The instructor must understand the pedagogical shift in online mode, and legal requirements as well as best practices in online mode.
    2. The instructor, who is also the subject matter expert (SME), must understand his/her role and provide content and curricular framework.
 RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Require the ID project requester to complete Weeks 1&2 Modules of TOPP. (2) If the planning worksheets from Week 2 are completed and submitted, then the project with CELTT can move forward. (3) Require a full participation in TOPP when the next session becomes available. (Concurrent ID project can continue.)
  - iii. What resources will we have beyond fall 2016?  
 As our DE course support on campus becomes more visible and the demand possibly increases, we should prepare sufficient resources to meet the needs.  
 (1) Currently we are beginning the screening process of a second instructional designer (ID). We hope to have the new ID on board by October or November. (2) Look for ways to renew the contract for a casual hire employee who is performing at an APT level.
  - iv. Add more media and style to DE courses  
 We will need more manpower and time to create screencasts, testimonial videos, and to improve styles. See iii.
  - v. Develop our own staff to have better understanding of pedagogy  
 Our own staff need to be well-versed in the principles and practices of online-teaching. They should review TOPP and other related webinars for continuing education.
  - vi. Train instructors to facilitate online and maintain own content  
 This is currently a small portion of TOPP, but for instructors who request it or show potential for benefit, additional training for facilitation and maintenance can be accommodated beyond the 6-week program.
  - vii. How to certify instructors - levels of competence, mentoring and coaching others  
 Need to develop a path for professional development levels of competence.

## Program Evaluation & Comments

"I really appreciate it and **am learning so much more than I have ever had in an online course about online teaching**. Usually it is just "busy work" that has no applicability on how to improve my courses but that is not the case here. I like having specific deadlines and appreciate the reminders as I work to understand Lulima more and improve my courses."

"At the first look, I feel a little overwhelmed with all the information and all the things that I need to do. But once I get started, it is not bad at all. I am working full-time, so the online asynchronous format of this class is really helpful. ... The course sort of "forces" me to organize my class materials, so that's good. However, I still need to organize and review a lot of my course materials, which will take time. **Transforming a face-to-face course to an online course is not as easy as I thought it would be.**"

"I'm so appreciative of this incredible experience, and I can't imagine what I would have done without it (probably experience lots of frustration and wasted effort).

As a first time instructor, AND a first time online instructor, I started at square one and can't believe how much I have learned in a short period of time. While there is still a lot of work ahead of me to get my course ready, the framework is there and I have a good idea of what's ahead of me."

"Thank you for holding this course. I learned a lot about building an online course and using the different features of Lulima. I am planning to share my knowledge with other faculty. I am a little overwhelmed with the amount of work I need to do to finish building this course, but I feel confidence about doing that. **My main takeaway is that organization and clear communication are the keys to online learning/teaching.**"

"I applaud you Helen for creating such a comprehensive professional development program helping faculty to learn about effective teaching/learning online. Participating in TOPP has been a great opportunity to learn more about the Lulima 2.0 tools and to experience Lulima as a student. **Learning to teach online online helped me to reflect on my online teaching from the teacher's perspective and the student's perspective.**"

"I enjoyed learning about how to re-organize course materials using Lessons. Thank you for being such a *role model* online instructor and for encouraging me to experiment with new tools. I still have a lot of work to do but **feel more confident about making adjustments to how I teach online so that students have a better learning experience.**"

"I have known from the start that it [previous online course] was lacking in some ways. However, I wasn't quite sure how to "fix" it. This course has helped me not only better the interface and structure of my course (I LOVE all the visual tools and tidbits), but has **created a shift in my paradigm**. I am looking forward to learning more about my students personally (like in my FTF sections), developing my online student community, and actually fostering a classroom culture for my online course."