



Online Course Improvement Program

<http://ocip.nmsu.edu>

All About Discovery!

To: Araceli Hernandez, Manager, Student Relations
From: Susan Bussmann, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Innovation and Quality & OCIP
Sandra Johnson, Instructional Innovation and Quality, OCIP Coordinator
Subject: OCIP Year 5 Executive Summary
Date: August 31, 2014

The Online Course Improvement Program (OCIP) started in 2009 as a partnership between The Associated Students of New Mexico State University/Student Technology Advisory Committee (ASNMSU/STAC) and the College of Extended Learning (CEL), now Instructional Innovation and Quality. With the completion of OCIP's 5th year (Y5), the program has made progress in meeting its overall goal of supporting improvement in the quality of blended and online courses.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Student Technology Advisory Committee an update on the impact and progress of OCIP. Both quantitative (data tracking) and qualitative measures (focus groups, surveys, and communications) inform the results of this report. Three major themes to emerge from the data are as follows: 1) OCIP is helping to address a faculty professional development need; 2) The One Year Plus Fellowship Program (1Yr+) and New2Online Program (N2O) are helping faculty improve the quality of their courses and teaching in all contexts; 3) Revised and improved blended/online courses are having a positive impact on students and their learning.

Thirteen events were hosted in conjunction with the Teaching Academy such as Let's Talk Online Teaching and guest speakers. Eight events were hosted in partnership with the Academic Technology Team which supports Canvas. Forty-two events directly supported Quality Matters (QM) Standards. OCIP events and presentations, as well as the online professional development training course, were thematically organized around the eight research-based Quality Matters Standards to ensure quality in blended/online course design.

For the 1Yr+ Fellowship there have been participants from all six academic colleges. All levels of faculty (Prof., Assoc. Prof., Assist. Prof, etc.) attended OCIP professional development. This data indicates OCIP is of value to a wide audience of faculty members teaching online and blended courses.

Recruitment for Cohort 5 of 1 Yr+ Fellows ran from July 18–August 30, 2013. Twenty-seven applications were submitted. Twelve applicants were accepted. Two applicants dropped the program within the first six months. Four participants from Cohort IV completed the program with Cohort V. All have completed the program except for three members who report they will complete by September 30, 2014.

The New2Online Program was added this year due to the demand to assist those that are new to online teaching and learning. This program focuses on basic use of the learning management system and online course development and design. The program works to move content to fully online or in blended formats. The program saw 33 applicants with a final selection of 15 participants. Four participants dropped the program. To date, 10 people have completed the program and one is scheduled to complete the course development by September 15, 2014.

As part of their commitment to the program, the 1 Yr+ Fellows and N2O participants are giving back to the faculty community through peer mentoring and professional development. For example, some participants have presented for the Teaching Academy while others have presented workshops for OCIP. Their activities help meet the program goals of fostering peer interaction encouraging best practices in online learning and fostering a culture of quality for online courses.

The student enrollment data is based on the available data for the 1 Y+ Fellows' courses for Cohort V. In terms of primary impact, the estimated number of students enrolled in the courses under revision is 846. In terms of secondary impact (estimating each instructor teaches three courses for two semesters), the estimated number of students enrolled in the online courses taught by the 1 Y+ Fellows is ~3389. Secondary impact means students taking other online courses that 1Y+ Fellows will improve due to what they have learned about online course design and the Quality Matters Standards. Within the N2O Program, student feedback cannot be gathered at this time since the courses have not yet been fully developed and delivered.

OCIP is using Quality Matters <https://www.qualitymatters.org> as the foundation for improving online courses. OCIP is committed to implementing the Quality Matters standards for the design of online and/or blended courses, and are systematically building and evaluating courses based on these rigorous, research-based standards. The Quality Matters Standards help assure that the online components of courses promote learner engagement and provide students with tools and information they need to be successful learners.

Scholarships were offered for OCIP fellows to attend national/regional conferences concerning online and/or blended learning. Through an application process, 10 fellows were chosen to attend three different national /regional conferences. The scholarship paid for the attendee's conference Early Bird registration, travel, hotel, food, transport, parking, and other miscellaneous expenses. As part of the opportunity to attend the conference of their choice, OCIP fellows are encouraged to present at the conference, agree to "give back" to the university community in the form of a presentation, workshop, or as a guest speaker. Seven of 10 conference scholarship recipients also presented about their online/blended courses at the conferences they attended.

Focus Areas for OCIP Y5

- Target data collection and analysis efforts to document reductions in cost of course materials.
- Improved communication with 1Y+ Fellows and N2O participants where the OCIP team will meet monthly with their mentees, continue to hold the orientation sessions, mid-year focus groups, and follow-up sessions.
- Support faculty in transitioning their teaching into blended and online formats by providing a Summer Course Development Camp.
- Develop one online degree program professional development partnership.
- Leverage the expertise of the 1Y+ Fellows and N2O participants to strengthen the culture of quality through a peer-to-peer support network via presentations, mentoring, course reviews, and other activities.

The long-term goal is to grow OCIP and the 1Yr+ Fellowship Program. With the securing of \$225K in Course Delivery Fees (CDF) for FY 2014, per the Deans and Provost's recommendations, progress has been made to secure stable and adequate funding for OCIP. However, securing CDF funding will need to be done annually for the foreseeable future. STAC support played an important role in supporting our unit's efforts to secure

CDF funding. Since STAC continues to co-fund the program, request for support will be submitted each year since a multi-year OCIP funding commitment cannot be supported by STAC.

Faculty Comments on Reduction in Materials

- I've been thinking more about how to appeal to different types of learners in different environments that may learn better in one sense or another, such as an audio versus visual learner.
- I don't just slam a module with a bunch of websites, you know what I mean, the more information the better, but really narrowing it down and trying to have a couple of different ways of presenting the information that will appeal to the class.
- Its almost like inviting professionals....I teach English, so we have majors in all of the areas and I've put in more, not more links, but I've put in more videos like the TED talks videos that apply to what I'm teaching.
- I teach ethics and I have a link with all the different ethics and some of them are videos. Oh and career services. We created a video for them so basically its just inviting an expert in to speak to the course. But again, we don't want to overwhelm them because some these talks or videos we want them to watch are still fairly long. So we have to watch that.
- I have created my own textbook and instructor book. I have found this to be easier to use with students. I am able to link information quickly and without fear of copyright issues.
- I include links to online texts or alternative sources for books.

Samples of Student Feedback

- Reading material posted within the course was great and timely.
- All the extra resources were very helpful. (Graphic syllabus, typed lectures, etc.).
- The layout of this class is wonderful.
- This class is the best online course I have ever taken.
- The modules are very well laid out and structured, allowing me to feel organized and able to look ahead and know what assignments to expect.
- Gave clear instructions on every unit on how to find things.
- My professor has everything perfectly laid out for the semester.
- The activities are not overwhelming and they are very informative.
- It helped me change my perspective on how to communicate with certain individuals.
- I liked the interaction between my peers and I.
- Overall, I liked the organization of the course and its materials and how understanding the instructor was.

OCIP Five Years in Review

The following themes are based on five years of evaluation data. Instructors are:

- Applying new skills and techniques in F2F, blended, and fully online courses.
- Seeing the importance and value of a Getting Started unit for their courses.
- Paying attention to the importance of measurable learning objectives.
- Applying the alignment principle in the design of their blended & online courses.
- Reporting increased student response, satisfaction, and performance in blended & online courses.