

The TLT Group

Teaching, Learning, and Technology

Faculty/Professional Development Program

See: <<<http://www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/home.htm>>>

Planning/Description Template

(Improve Teaching/Learning with Information Technology)

Make an Improvement; Assess and further improve; Help faculty colleagues; Seek/Accept help

This template/form is designed to help faculty members plan and describe important phases of an improvement in teaching and learning with technology. We hope this structure helps analyze, select, and combine important options and makes it easier to share and compare work among colleagues.

The TLT Group recommends using this template within an ongoing low-threshold *program of collaborative institutional support* for faculty members, academic support professionals, and their colleagues. Our “Low-Threshold” approach uses LTAs [Low-Threshold Activities and Applications] to enable participants to make course improvements that are comfortable, low-cost, convenient, and meaningful. We encourage an attitude of: “What is the smallest meaningful next step I/we can take? How soon can I/we take it?”

This template is organized into four sections:

1. Describe the improvement itself
2. Use assessment to guide further improvements [and prepare for problems]
3. Deepen your own understanding as you help colleagues make similar improvements
4. Identify and obtain additional resources if necessary.

The faculty/professional development support programs we recommend include these elements *in a repeating cycle*:

1. *Cohort* of “compassionate pioneers” – faculty members and academic support professionals who are willing and able to help each other improve teaching and learning with technology
2. *Local collections* of instructional resources especially attractive to the participants and widely useable within your institution
3. *Activities* that introduce – in small doses – collections and selected examples (including and emphasizing varied educational approaches as well as specific technology applications and other materials) to participants
4. Tools and approaches for collecting, using, and sharing *constructive feedback* about each improvement
5. Opportunities and strategies for *helping colleagues* to make similar improvements and deal effectively with problems
6. Encouragement for identifying *additional resources needed* and developing strategies for getting them consistent with the institution's mission, culture, and resources.

Caveats: Training Wheels!

We recommend that faculty members complete this planning template in detail only when using it the first few times or when developing major/significant improvements in teaching and learning using information technology in their own courses. Trying to use it in detail for too many small changes may become more of a deterrent than a help.

However, we do hope that faculty members will use this template at least as a guide when planning or preparing most such improvements.

Please consider the suggestions and questions within this template as guidelines, and tell us how to make them more useful. We also suggest that you try filling in most of the boxes now, but feel comfortable about revising your notes to reflect changes in your thinking and experience during the coming weeks and months.

[What, if any, additional resources do you need to complete this template? From whom?]

Make at least one improvement – in at least one course	
Identify a topic, issue, etc. where you would like to improve teaching/learning using information technology. Describe three elements of this improvement: 1. <u>Goal(s)/Benefit(s)</u> What kind(s) of improvement(s) do you hope will result? See << http://www.tltgroup.org/WhyBother.htm >> 2. <u>Educational Activity(ies)</u> What kind(s) of educational activity(ies) or approach(es) are likely to help achieve the educational benefits you seek? See << http://www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/Approaches.htm >> 3. <u>Technology Application(s)</u> What kind(s) of applications of information technology are likely to fit well with your goals and activities? See << http://www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/ExplorationGuides.htm >> For additional help answering these questions, see below and see << www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/home.htm >>	
<p>1. Goal(s)/Benefit(s) Describe your intended <i>Educational Outcomes</i>: E.g., Describe how you hope students will make [better? faster?] progress toward some skill, knowledge, etc. in one course, in their major and/or across different disciplines (and over several years?) [If this is an LTA (Low-Threshold Application/Activity), try to be a little more specific and use the next row IN ADDITION.]</p>	
<p>Savings: Describe how this LTA saves time, money or stress: How and to what extent the results are easier and less stressful to achieve (especially in the long term) than via other methods.</p>	
<p>2. Educational Activity(ies) What pattern of actions by faculty members and students will help achieve the outcome(s) you just described? What kind(s) of pedagogy are involved? What is your educational approach? YOU SHOULD NOT NEED TO REFER TO THE TECHNOLOGY IN THIS DESCRIPTION!</p>	
<p>3. Information Technology Applications What information technology application(s) will help the students and/or faculty carry out the activity(ies) described above?</p>	

<p>Assess and further improve at least one aspect of the change [Prepare for problems!] Collect information to confirm or reject a new practice; or, preferably, to guide further improvement in the same direction. [Anticipate and prepare to cope with most likely problems.]</p>	
<p>See <<http://www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/Assessment.htm>></p>	
<p>Sources What are some of the different ways in which you can collect USEFUL feedback, information, data? Observation of students? Paper surveys of students during a class? Online surveys of students during a course? Where can you find sample survey items, questions, survey templates, study designs RELEVANT TO THIS "IMPROVEMENT"? From the TLT Group and/or elsewhere - especially from colleagues at your own institution?</p>	
<p>Assess today to improve today How will you gather data that could guide an improvement you could make almost immediately after collecting the data? Something you might do in the middle of a class meeting or to prepare for the next online session? What kinds of info?</p>	
<p>Assess today to improve next term What kind of study might you do this term (e.g., baseline data; evaluation of a particular unit) to help you teach the course better the next time it's offered? What kinds of info will be elicited soon but may not be applied until next semester or next academic year?</p>	
<p>Anticipate problems What is most likely to go wrong? With equipment? With responses of students? Etc.? How will you cope? How will you remain comfortable and move forward? How can you learn from problems or failures in this situation?</p>	

Help faculty colleagues - Learn by teaching Understand the improvement more deeply through learning by teaching. Help faculty colleagues make similar improvements	
<p>Help who? When Individuals, department, other group? When? Spring 2005?</p>	
<p>How will you help them and with what? What's the simplest, best way for you to help others learn from your experience with this idea? Private conversation at the water cooler? A handout or Web page? (You might get some of the text from what you're written above!)</p> <p>A workshop? a talk? Should you be taking pictures or recording a little video now to help explain your experience to colleagues later?</p> <p>Minimally: Create a description using this template -- a description that a colleague would find useful, compelling, or provocative.</p> <p>How/where/when can you make a description or sample of your improvement attractively accessible to colleagues?</p>	

<p>Seek and accept help</p> <p>Determine the kinds of help and resources you need to make a meaningful, continuing success of your change. Determine who can provide that help and those resources – and what you can do to obtain and comfortably accept them! [Consider working more collaboratively.]</p>	
<p>See<<http://www.tltgroup.org/profacdev/Institutionalizing.htm>></p>	
<p>What kinds of help or additional resources? What, if any, additional resources do you need to effectively implement, assess, improve, share, or continue using the change you are making? To complete this template?</p> <p>Equipment? Special scheduling for course meetings? Specially equipped classroom? Students having easy, reliable access to specific tools or resources on the Web? Recognition/support of the value of your efforts to improve teaching/learning with technology in the promotion/tenure process? Recognition/support of the value of your collaborative work to improve teaching/learning with technology in the promotion/tenure process?</p>	
<p>Help from whom? Who can provide the kinds of help you want or need? Faculty member colleague, other academic support professional, or students? Within your department or institution? Elsewhere?</p> <p>Whose support or authorization (formally or informally) do you need to continue or extend this work? Chief Academic Officer? Faculty Development Professional? Technology Support and/or Instructional Design Professional?</p>	
<p>Help when (and how often and how quickly)? Current academic term? Next</p>	

term? Summer? Next academic year? Tomorrow? Every day? Within a week? Within 5 minutes of your request?....	
Obstacles? What are some obstacles that might prevent you from getting the help, resources you need? What are some obstacles that might prevent you from being receptive toward and comfortable in accepting the help and resources you need?	
Next Step(s)?	
What are your very next steps? Consider an SMS? [Smallest Meaningful/Material Step] How soon can you take this next step? Today? Tomorrow?	