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Quarterly Newsletter from the Directorate of Academic Affairs at The Army University

THE CHALKBOARD

Photo By: AF Staff Sgt. Chris Hubenthal

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System For Best Practices

Dr. Wade Elmore

There is innovation occurring everywhere in the Army learning enterprise. Some of these innovations could constitute best practices for use throughout the enterprise, but currently there is no formal systematic way to identify, validate, and distribute these best practices. The Institutional Research and Assessment Division (IRAD) of Army University has been tasked with creating a system to fill this gap. IRAD has developed a multi-year, five-effort research project to establish a programmatic system to collect and promulgate best practices throughout the learning enterprise.

In effort one, IRAD will develop a definition of a "Best Practice" which clearly differentiates a best practice from several other terms widely used in the learning enterprise such as technique, tactic, or procedure, lesson learned, policy, guidance, or standard. Efforts two, three, and four will focus on instructors, curriculum and training developers, and program managers and course managers respectively using interviews and focus groups to collect techniques, tactics, and procedures (TTPs). An analysis of the information collected will determine which of the TTPs collected constitute best practices based on the definition developed in effort one. These best practices, TTPs, and lessons learned will then be disseminated throughout the learning enterprise. The fifth effort will examine the information generated in efforts two through four to identify TTPs, lessons learned, and best practices that pertain to the interaction of the different levels of the learning enterprise focused on in these earlier efforts. This effort may require further information collection to confirm TTPs identified reach the level of best practice, but should not require information collection near the levels of efforts one through four. These best practices will then be disseminated throughout the learning enterprise.

If you have any questions or would like more infomation please send an email to: usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.armyu-irad-irb-infocollection@mail.mil

Changing Enlisted Promotion Point Policy for Technical Certifications

Dr. Robert Henry

In June 2018, the ArmyU Credentialing Office reviewed a study of nationally-approved credentials in Army Credentialing Opportunities on Line (COOL). This study showed that not all technical certifications provide direct value to the Army or enhance Army Readiness, yet receive the same number of promotion points as credentials that do provide direct value to the Army.

Current promotion policy for technical credentials, as defined in AR 600-8-19, states the following: "Ten promotion points are granted for each TRADOC-approved technical, industry, and/or professional certification earned, not to exceed award for five certifications or 50 promotion points."

On 4 December 2018, ArmyU recommended a Change to AR 600-8-19 that incentivizes direct value credentials, but expands promotion point opportunities for all credentials. If implemented, this new policy will expand the number of nationally recognized credentials that provide promotion point opportunities from 735 to 1,662; a 126% increase. The new change recommends awarding fifteen promotion points for each TRADOC-approved MOS Enhancing credential, ten promotion points for each professional development credential (functional/cross-functional, related to military training and skills) earned, and five promotion points for all other nationally recognized personal credentials. Any combination of credential types may be earned to receive a maximum of 75 promotion points.

The proponent Army G1 has acknowledged receipt of the change request and notified ArmyU that the change will remain on hold until the current staffing of the newly updated AR 600-8-19 passes legal review and is published. Based on the significance of the recommended change, an expedited revision to AR 600-8-19 may be warranted. Per AR 25-30, an expedited revision must be completed by APD within 180 calendar days after acceptance of the submission.

Photo By: Mr. Paul Hughes

" ...the change will remain on hold until the current staffing of the newly updated AR 600-8-19 passes legal review and is published."

Task-based Training versus Topic-based Education

Dr. Mary Jo Gates and Mr. Wilbur J. Rabon

Curriculum development begins with the analysis phase of the ADDIE process (analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation) during which needs, mission, job, and target audience analyses are conducted. The results of this analysis lead to the writing of course and/or lesson learning objective(s) that articulate what students will be able to do as the result of instruction. At this point, the curriculum developer must decide if the learning objective is leading toward task-based training or topic-based education.

A task resides in the psychomotor domain because it involves manual or physical activity. Task-based training provides instruction that leads toward the performance of a particular activity or concrete skill and prepares the learner to execute job specific critical tasks. For example, a mechanic may need to replace a starter, which would require a set pattern of operations to be successful. This set pattern of operations, together with other operations, would constitute an individual task for which the mechanic is responsible. In training this particular task, the curriculum developer would have no option but to use the task-based training process to build the learning objectives and lessons.

Topic-based education focuses on abstract concepts and leads toward knowledge and understanding of a particular subject. The learning experiences in topic-based education reside in the cognitive learning domain as they involve intellectual skills. For example, a successful leader must be able to communicate effectively to command and direct his or her followers. A leader does not perform a pattern of operations in order to communicate. However, there are theories and concepts that guide effective communication. These theories and concepts are comprised of topics that will allow the leader to develop an intellectual understanding of communication through analysis, inductive reasoning, problem solving, and critical, reflective, and creative thinking. In this situation, the curriculum developer would look to topic-based design to build learning objectives and lessons.

It is important to understand that learning outcomes determine learning objectives and learning objectives determine whether instruction will be task-based or topic-based. Curriculum developers should look to TRADOC Pamphlet 350-70-14 for guidance on the learning product development processes for both task-based training and topic-based education. Curriculum developers working with topic-based education should seek further guidance from TRADOC Pamphlet 350-70-7.

Photo By: Amber Whittington

FDRP milBook

SFC Lindsay Tramel

Army University has created a milBook page for all Faculty Development Recognition Program (FDRP) managers. The intent is to create a space for Q & A, collaboration, and best practices to be posted. This is also an opportunity for managers to network with one another. As the page evolves we will send polls to survey the needs of managers to make sure the page is meeting the needs of the force.

Appointment memos assigning personnel as FDRP managers are a necessity to be granted access to the milBook page. If you have sent your memo to ArmyU, you have already been added. While this is intended to be a collaborative tool, it is also a professional medium and we want to ensure accurate information is being disseminated. If you have not submitted your appointment memo to Army University please do so immediately by emailing them to Usarmy.leavenworth.tradoc.mbx.armyu-fsdd-policy@mail.mil

Mid-Grade Learning Continuum (MLC) Leaders Workshop

Mr. Samuel J. Lex

The Midgrade Learning Continuum (MLC) team within the Instructional Design Division (IDD) will host its second annual MLC Course Leaders Workshop at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas on April 16-18, 2019. The purpose of the workshop is to provide an opportunity for course leaders to discuss the development and implementation of the common core curriculum in the Captain Career Courses (CCC) and Warrant Officer Advanced Courses (WOAC). Soldiers and Civilians are invited to attend this three-day event designed to share effective CCC and WOAC course management techniques across all schools.

The workshop will include: an after action review (AAR) of the last academic year's curriculum, a writing rubric calibration exercise, a discussion of learning management systems, demonstrations of student-centered facilitation techniques, and a review of the curriculum updates and revisions for FY20.

During the workshop, the course leaders will receive presentations on FM 3-0, Operations, and FM 6-0, Commander and Staff Organization and Operations, from the Combined Arms Doctrine Directorate (CADD), an overview of the Common Faculty Development Program (CFDP) and the instructor badging program from the Faculty and Staff Development Division (FSDD), and briefs on the Army Cyber Operations Training Strategy (ACOTS), Denied, Degraded, Disrupted, Space Operational Environment (D3SOE), and the integration of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) as a requirement for the Captains Career Course.

How To Use Technology To Promote Reflective Teaching

Dr. Ilknur Oded
DLIFLC

Reflective teaching is a self-assessment technique which is essential to improving one's teaching. One of the most important features of self-reflective teaching is to critically think about one's own teaching and look for ways to improve for recurring issues. Brookfield (2017) suggests that there are three crucial sources for reflective teaching which include one's own teaching experience, students' feedback and colleagues' perceptions. In this article, we aim to provide a brief overview of helpful digital tools that enable us capturing and storing information about these three crucial sources by integrating technology.

One of the ways of gathering information about one's own teaching experience is to use audio recording apps. Fortunately, there are several free audio recording apps such as Easy Voice Recorder for Android phones, and Audio Memos and Voice Recorder for iPhone/iPad which afford teachers the opportunity to easily record their teaching practice to reflect about it later on.

In order to capture students' perspective on a lesson, teachers can use online forms to pose open-ended questions to get some feedback about their teaching and easily get a better sense of how students feel about their class. For example, Edmodo allows users to integrate newsfeed and posting options which allows teacher to easily get some feedback from their students. Twiducate is another easy way of getting student feedback and user-friendly as it functions similar to Twitter and offers ease of use and familiarity for young learners who might be already using Twitter.

Receiving feedback from other teachers serves as another crucial source of information for reflective teaching. In this respect, Edublogs and Tumblr might serve as beneficial tools as they allow teachers to keep a digital journal of their day-to-teaching while providing the opportunity to network with other educators and gain useful insight about their daily teaching practice.

In conclusion, we briefly discussed several technology tools for integrating reflective teaching in daily instructional practice to improve how we teach and to enhance learning effectiveness. Readers are encouraged to explore these technology tools by using the tutorials provided in the links under resources.

References and Resources

- Brookfield, S. (2017) Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher Wiley: San Francisco, USA.
- Edmodo: https://new.edmodo.com/home
- Video tutorials on Edmodo: https://support.edmodo.com/hc/en-us/articles/205012194-Video-Tutorials
- Twiducate: https://www.livelingua.com/twiducate/
- Twiducate tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nx7FmWI1hhc
- Edublogs: https://edublogs.org/
- Edublogs Tutorial: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDxg5ODEXEQ&list=PLq4p3q2fmMYW_Ix1OR6tFT1iFdwiMkf42

IRAD Assists with Automating Course Evaluations: Tracking and Visualizing Scores

Dr. Vista Beasley

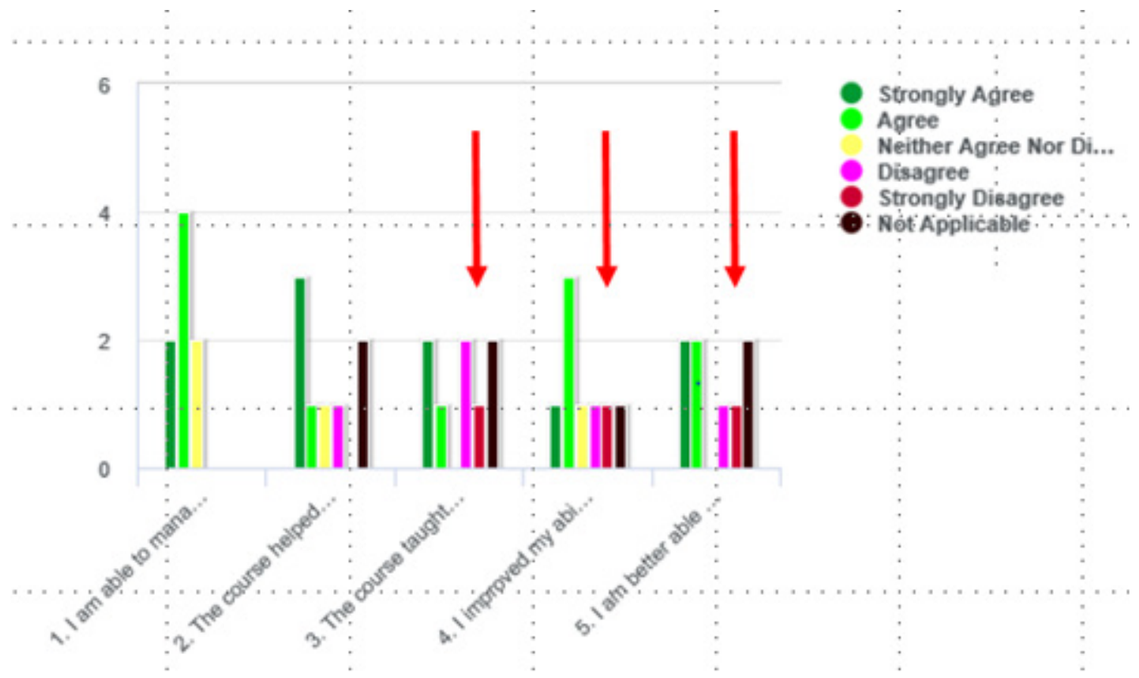
The Army University (ArmyU) Institutional Research and Assessment Division (IRAD) is offering to help ArmyU schools automate course evaluation feedback by:

- Calculating and tracking mean scores over time
- Creating automated reports which instantly present analysis

Below, we present examples to show how course evaluations administered via online survey software can help ArmyU schools more easily interpret student feedback.

Suppose a new instructor, Chelsea H. teaches a course for the first time. If students took the end-of-course evaluation via online software, Chelsea could quickly receive feedback from automated—and anonymous—reports such as the one in Figure 1. From that, she could focus on items with "Red" responses as areas for improvement.

Figure 1. Example automated report from course evaluation administered via "Verint" software



Note: Horizontal axis: Items on the course evaluation. Vertical axis: Number of students who marked the response.

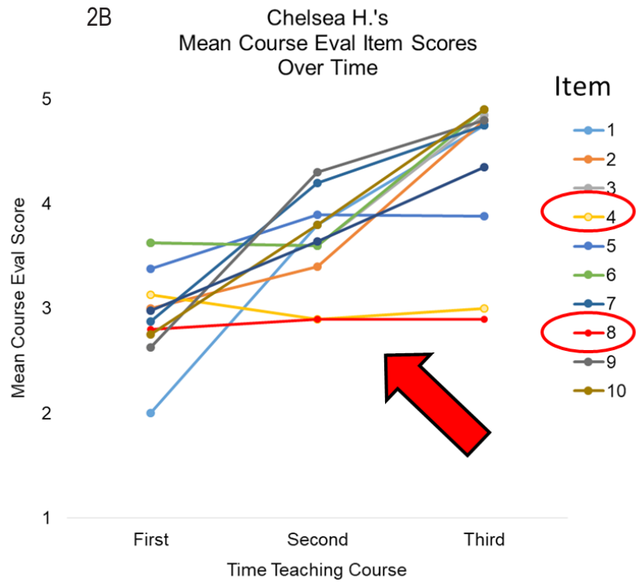
As shown in Figure 2, tracking scores over time enables Chelsea to see her strengths and areas of concern. At first, Chelsea scores low on Item 1, but over time, her score on Item 1 improves. By the third course evaluation, she can detect a pattern of having low scores on Items 4 and 8, so those low scores may not be due to her being a new instructor. *(Contnued on Next Page)*

2A

INSTRUCTOR: Chelsea H.			
Item	First	Second	Third
1	2.00	3.80	4.75
2	3.00	3.40	4.80
3	3.63	3.60	4.85
4	3.13	2.90	3.00
5	3.38	3.90	3.88
6	3.63	3.60	4.90
7	2.88	4.20	4.75
8	2.80	2.90	2.90
9	2.63	4.30	4.80
10	2.75	3.80	4.90
TOTAL MEAN	2.98	3.64	4.35

Note: Range of mean scores is 1 (low) to 5 (high).

2B



From Figure 3b, it's clear that Item 4 is a problem for all three instructors, not just Chelsea H. Now the program manager can probe the reason for the low scores to determine whether there is a problem with Item 4 itself, or whether there is a need for program-wide remedial action to address Item 4.

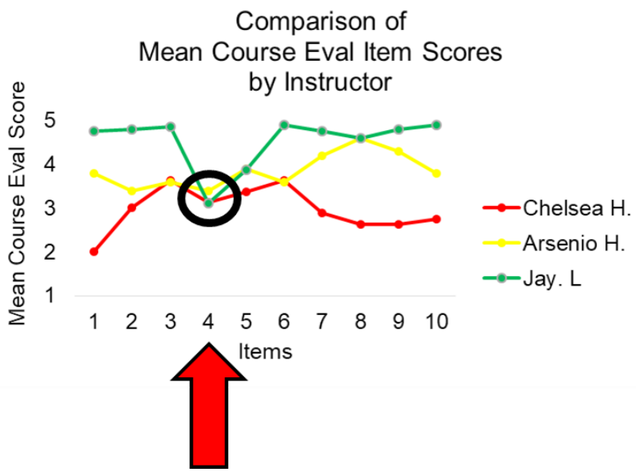
In Figure 3, we also see that Jay L.'s scores are generally higher than the scores of the other instructors. The program manager may consider looking into what Jay L. does differently to identify best practices.

If you would like to explore ways to automate your school's tracking and visualization of course evaluation scores, please contact Dr. Sena Garven, Division Chief, at alice.j.garven.civ@mail.mil to be assigned to an IRAD team member.

3A

Item	Chelsea H.	Arsenio H.	Jay. L
1	2.00	3.80	4.75
2	3.00	3.40	4.80
3	3.63	3.60	4.85
4	3.13	3.40	3.10
5	3.38	3.90	3.88
6	3.63	3.60	4.90
7	2.88	4.20	4.75
8	2.63	4.60	4.60
9	2.63	4.30	4.80
10	2.75	3.80	4.90
TOTAL MEAN	2.97	3.86	4.53

3B



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