

Supporting and Transforming Powerful Online Learning through Quality Assurance

Vicky Zygouris-Coe, Ph.D., Associate Professor,
University of Central Florida,
Principle Investigator of FOR-PD Project
vzygouri@mail.ucf.edu

Wendy Bedwell, M.A., University of Central Florida,
FOR-PD Facilitator Support Specialist
wendy@orion.itrc.ucf.edu

Allison Galloway, M.A., University of Central Florida
FOR-PD Quality Assurance Specialist
allison@orion.itrc.ucf.edu

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NCLB and Qualified Teachers

■ NCLB Act and Scientifically Based Reading Research

- A qualified teacher in every classroom to help all students read by grade 3
- Emphasis on reading process, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, assessment, differentiated instruction, reading in the content areas, ESOL instruction, and struggling readers
- Building teacher expertise in reading (P-12)



Online Professional Development

- FOR-PD is aligned with the following professional standards:
 - SREB Standards for Online Professional Development
 - California State University's Rubric for Online Instruction
 - National Staff Development Council Standards
 - State of Florida Professional Development Protocol Standards



Florida and Qualified Teachers

- Launched on January 21, 2003
- *Just Read, Florida!* Initiative—funded by FL DOE
- Large-scale online professional development project
- Named in US Secretary's National Technology Plan as innovative model for preparation of qualified teachers
- Meets Competency 2 of FL Reading Endorsement



Competency 2 of FL Reading Endorsement

- Foundations of Research-Based Practices
 - Understands the principles of scientifically based reading research as the foundation of comprehensive instruction that synchronizes and scaffolds each of the major components of the reading process toward student mastery.



FOR-PD and State of Florida

- FOR-PD & Reading Endorsement
- FOR-PD & Competency 2
- FOR-PD & RE-ESOL
- FOR-PD & ACP



Current FOR-PD Numbers

- 11,465 students
- 787 sections
- 67 participating districts
- 7 participating universities
- Community colleges - EPI programs



FOR-PD Online Literacy Facilitators

- District-based
- Reading expertise
- Aware of local & district literacy initiatives
- Aware of district staff development policies and procedures
- A (literacy) teacher known to teachers



Building Facilitator Expertise

- Facilitator course (7-week)
- Facilitator support
 - Facilitator Leadership Board (experts)
 - Professional development (Book Club) per semester
 - Bi-monthly discussions
 - Asynchronous discussions
 - Facilitator specialist
 - Reading specialist
 - Help desk
 - Learning from other facilitators and from participants
 - Facilitator newsletter
 - Online chats
 - Expert interviews
 - Resource database
 - Literacy resources (e.g., reading strategy of the month, literacy newsletter, instructional materials)



Facilitator Course

- The role of the FOR-PD Facilitator
- The FOR-PD course
- WebCT Communication Tools:
 - Discussion boards/Threaded discussions
 - Group email
 - Individual email
- Ways the FOR-PD facilitator may provide assistance to the school district and to the project
- Tips for being an online facilitator
- Facilitator best practices in regards to the FOR-PD course
- FOR-PD Facilitator expectations
 - Before the course begins
 - During the first week of class
 - Throughout the remainder of the class
 - After the course closing date



Facilitator Course

- Added a facilitator to model facilitation
- Added discussions to each lesson
- Added simulations and “voices from the field”
- Updated content (e.g., currency, relevancy, interactivity)
- Summer 2005—30 graduates
- Fall 2005—43 participants



Facilitator Ongoing Professional Development

- Facilitator specialist
- Facilitator discussion board
- Facilitator monthly E-newsletter
- Facilitator monthly literacy E-newsletter
- Semester Book Club—structured discussions on selected book
- Expert interviews
- Online chats
- Face-to-face meetings
- Project resources



Facilitator Support

- Facilitator course
- Facilitator manual
- Facilitator specialist
- Reading specialist
- Facilitator leadership board
- Facilitator monthly E-newsletter
- Monthly Literacy E-newsletter
- Online chats (content, technical)
- Facilitator discussion board
- Help desk
- Tutorials
- Troubleshooting
- Facilitator and literacy e-resources
- Facilitator meetings (2 face-to-face last year)
- Facilitator professional development



Monitoring of Facilitator & Participant Performance

- FORPD began sporadic QACs in the fall of 2004.
- Spring 2005 began systematic QACs
- QAC schedule: 3 facilitator checks, 2 participant checks
 - weeks 2-3 first facilitator and first participant checks
 - weeks 6-7 second facilitator check
 - weeks 9-10 second participant check
 - weeks 11-12 third facilitator check
- QAC Database



Facilitator Check Criteria & Steps

- Welcome Message
- Lesson 1 Model and introduction
- Course Calendar
- Timely Grading
- Interaction in Discussion Board
- Email to Facilitator with personalized report on their efforts to meet the requirements
- Data and response recorded in database



Excerpts from a Facilitator Check

“I did notice that you have posted a **"Welcome" message** and many informational updates in the “Facilitator Announcement” area. You were very specific in your expectations for the course and had great suggestions for students! You seemed friendly, encouraging and informative which is always good practice. I also saw that you have posted a clear **Course Schedule** in the course calendar tool. As you know, this is very important because the FORPD policy is to deny student access the day after the closing date. Also, students need to be reminded when lesson assignments are due.”

“Participating in discussions is a critical component to successful online facilitation. Students only know that you are "there" by seeing your active participation in class. Also, this helps create a sense of community among participants and yourself, which is one of the most important criteria for success in an online course. Please make sure to post several comments, responses, or content questions in this area each week. If your participants see that you are checking into the course and interacting in the discussions, they will follow.”



Testimonials

- “Thank-you! I really am trying to do some things better than before and it is so nice that it has been noticed. Thanks for the encouragement!”
- “Thanks for your positive feedback and suggestions... I really appreciate the quality assurance checks and FOR-PD's viewpoint on how the course is progressing.”
- “Thank you for the feedback. I think it is those personal touches that have kept the majority of my participants moving through the course.”
- “Thank you for the quality checks - it helps to get some feedback from 'cyberspace' --- something concrete! I have tried to respond to all participants in the first few lessons... in order to have them participate in discussions ... it is indeed a learning process! Thanks for your feedback - I will make adjustments as needed!”



Participant Check Criteria & Steps

- Total # of participants enrolled
- # of participants who have dropped
- # of participants who are up-to-date
- # of participants who have not started
- # of participants who are lagging
- Email to participants who have not started or are lagging behind
- Email to Facilitator with report on the status of all participants
- Data and responses recorded in database

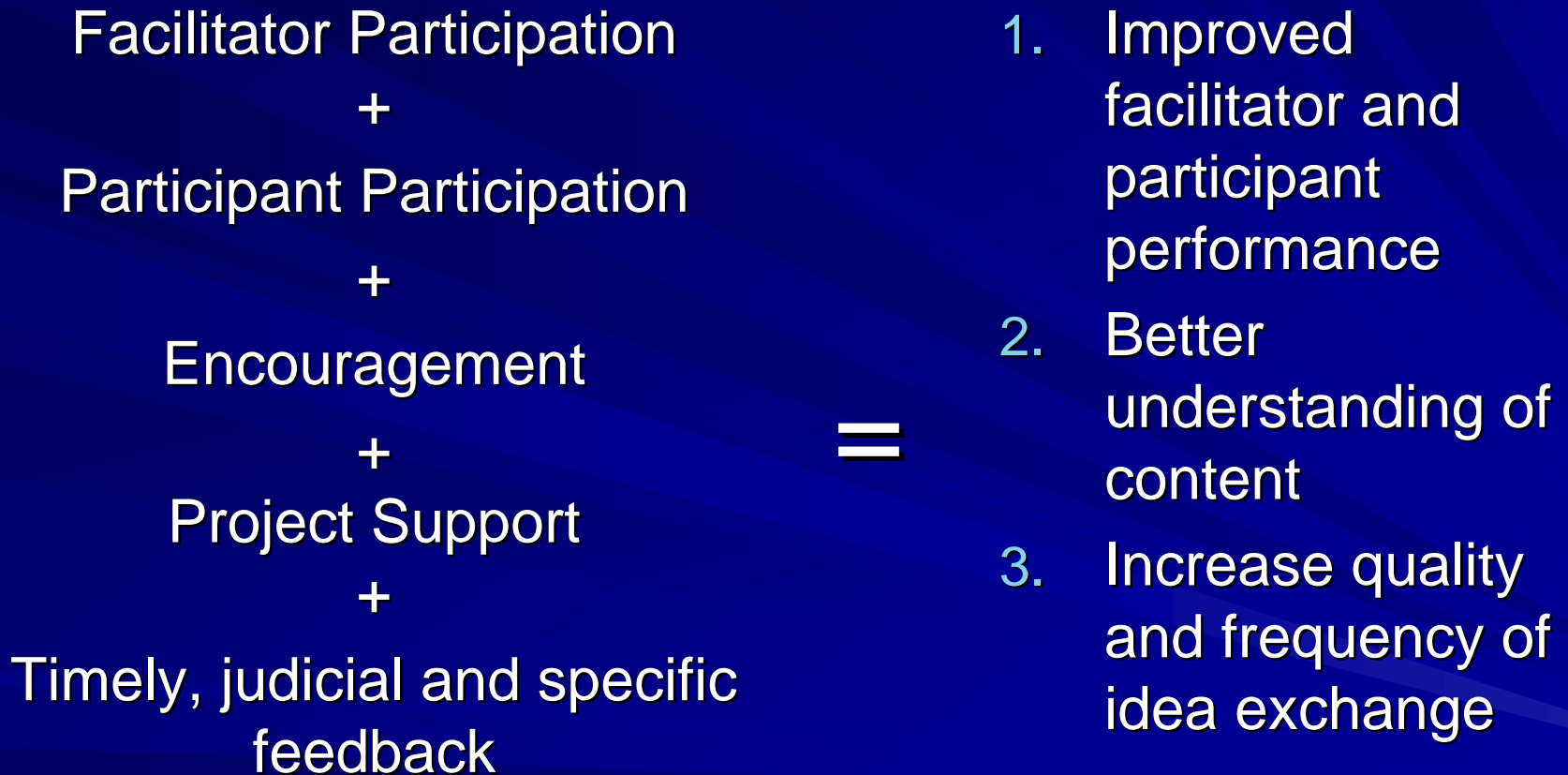


QAC Support for Facilitators and Participants

Facilitators	Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Positive Feedback and encouragement■ Personal evaluation■ Concise overall data on each section■ Help in communicating with participants■ Reminders about important facilitator information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Reminder of critical course information■ Motivation to complete the course■ Provides information on support systems for participants



QACs' Impact on Courses



Overall Benefits of QACs

- Increased communication between FOR-PD office and facilitators
- Increased communication between facilitators and participants
- Increased completion rates
- Increased awareness of course expectations
- Improved sense of Online Community
- Improved facilitator and participant performance
- Improved understanding of the content and tools
- Improved participation and exchange of ideas



QACs' Impact on Project Development

- Policies for participants who fall behind or get ahead
 - 7 weeks behind
 - 2 weeks ahead
- Deny Access policy for participants and facilitators
- Addition of Course Calendar
- Participant Expectations Document
- Facilitator Expectations Document
- Updated database information
- Updated Facilitator Manual
- Updated Conditions of Service Agreement for Facilitators
- Data-based decisions



Next Steps

- Evaluation of QACs (Phase III and IV of project evaluation)
- Facilitator performance matrix
 - A database of core facilitator performance indicators
- Ongoing monitoring of QACs' impact on online facilitation, participant success, and project development



Questions?

- Please e-mail us your feedback at vzygouri@mail.ucf.edu, and/or allison@orion.itrc.ucf.edu
- Please visit FOR-PD project at:
 - www.itrc.ucf.edu/forpd

Thank you!

