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Exploring Faculty Perceptions of Professional Development Support For Transitioning to Emergency Remote Teaching

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Professional development (PD) for instructors at higher education institutions offering online courses is important for assuring the quality of online programs. However, PD opportunities for faculty members have often been piecemeal and inadequate. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic that forced instructors around the world to teach online, PD has become even more critical to the success of the instructors, students, and institutions themselves. This paper describes research conducted at a large university in the United States that used a survey developed to operationalize Baran and Correia's (2014) holistic Professional Development Framework for Online Teaching (PDFOT). The survey identified strengths and weaknesses in PD support that could be targeted for growth and improvement. Key findings include a need to bolster support at each of the teaching, community, and organizational levels. Recommendations for addressing improvements are discussed.

Introduction

With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, colleges and universities around the world, along with K-12 institutions, were forced to rapidly transition from face-to-face classes to what has been coined "emergency remote teaching" (ERT; Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). ERT uses some of the same pedagogical and technological tools as online courses, but ERT and online courses are quite different. The former involves a quick and temporary transition from synchronous face-to-face teaching to virtual, technology-enabled teaching, while the latter involves thoughtfully designed and developed interactions among the learners, the instructional materials, and the instructor (Hodges et al., 2020).

In March 2020, institutions of higher education everywhere found themselves racing to provide technological and pedagogical support for instructors who may never have anticipated teaching remotely. Despite the tremendous

increase in online courses prior to the shift to ERT, many instructors were not prepared to use web-based technologies in effective ways (Alexiou-Ray & Bentley, 2015; Baran et al., 2011; Lackey, 2011). Prior to the pandemic, if a college or university's culture had not widely promoted or supported online learning, the institution may not have been able to provide adequate opportunities for faculty professional development (PD) in online teaching. Recent research indicates that faculty members who took part in more opportunities for PD for online teaching had higher self-efficacy and were better prepared to teach (Frass et al., 2017; Richter & Idleman, 2017;). Those higher education institutions (HEIs) with robust PD programs for online teaching likely equipped their faculty members for a smoother transition to ERT.

HEIs' transition to successful online and blended environments is critical for universities and their students to survive and thrive long-term. Therefore, these institutions need to identify PD support structures that will continue to support transitioning their faculty to online teaching. The purpose of this study is to describe the organizational, community, and teaching support in a university that assisted instructors to transition to online teaching quickly during the COVID-19 crisis and faculty's perceptions of the institution's support structures.

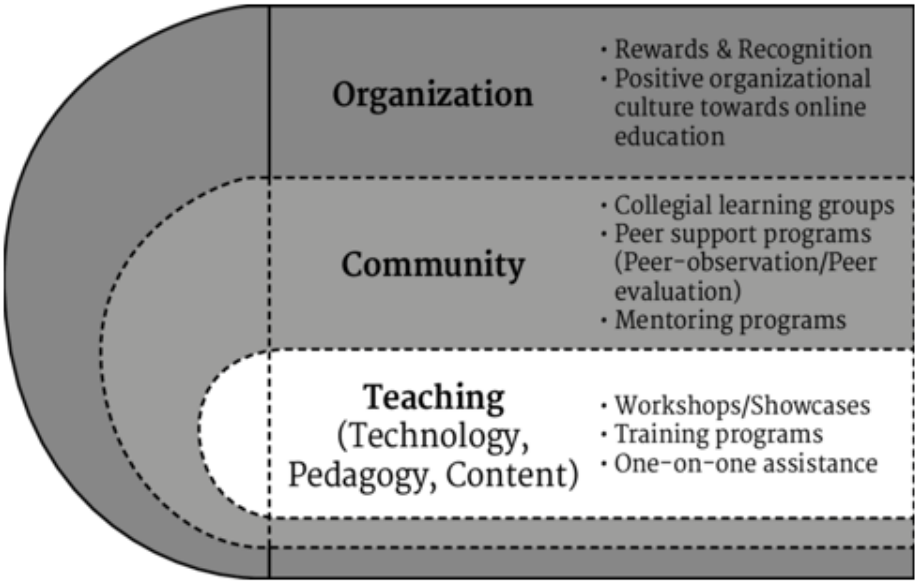
An Overview of Baran and Correia's Professional Development Framework for Online Teaching

While there has been much research conducted about how to develop and maintain PD for online faculty, research has mainly focused on a particular component of PD support, such as instructional design assistance or technology integration (Baran & Correia, 2014; Lane, 2013). Additionally, existence of a variety of online PD programs among and within institutions lead to haphazard approaches (Frass et. al, 2017; Lane, 2013). Baran and Correia's (2014) Professional Development Framework for Online Teaching (PDFOT) proposes to unite and align an institution's PD efforts to foster high quality online teaching practices and better learning outcomes for students. With faculty members moving their face-to-face and blended classes to emergency remote teaching environments during the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing PD support was critical to the success of students, faculty, and HEIs. The sudden shift to technology-enabled instruction offers institutions the opportunity to rethink their support systems for online teaching.

Building on research about faculty members' motivation, participation, and acceptance of online teaching, the PDFOT uses a systems approach to PD. The framework describes successful online teaching as the result of interactions among teaching, community, and organizational support in HEIs (Baran & Correia, 2014). It consists of a nested integration of the three supports: the organizational support on the outer level; the community support in the middle; and the teaching support at the inner level (see Figure 1). The purpose of this framework is to provide key administrative staff with a guide for designing, developing, and maintaining PD programs, which may involve a culture shift within the institution (Baran & Correia, 2014). Looking beyond PD support at the big picture of a HEI as a whole, an examination of what factors lead to institutional success in online development identified seven facets: advocacy and leadership within the university, entrepreneurial initiatives, faculty support, student support, digital technology, external advocacy, and professionalism (UPCEA, 2020). Faculty support in this context should "consider every touch point," (UPCEA, 2020, p. 14) including teaching, community, and organizational support outlined in the PDFOT that contribute to high quality online instruction and student learning outcomes.

Figure 1

Professional development framework for online teaching (Baran & Correia, 2014)



Picture of a Conceptual Framework Describing a Professional Development Framework for Online Teaching

Note: From "A Professional Development Framework for Online Teaching" by E. Baran and A. Correia, 2014, TechTrends, 58(5), p. 97. Copyright 2014 by Springer. Used wtih permission.

Teaching Support

Teaching support in the PDFOT refers to the formal and informal technological, pedagogical, and design and development support provided by an institution (Baran & Correia, 2014). Online teaching is vastly different from face-to-face teaching; therefore, this type of support is crucial for instructors who may find themselves uncomfortable and challenged in a new environment (Baran & Correia, 2014). Faculty do not typically have a background in pedagogy. They are subject-matter experts who often mimic the teaching style of instructors they had while they were students in the classroom (Grover et al., 2016; Mohr & Shelton, 2017). For many instructors new to online teaching, teaching support provided by department or campus-wide administrators, such as instructional designers, offer an opportunity to reexamine and improve teaching strategies (Abdous, 2011; Baran & Correia, 2014).

Online teaching support in HEIs vary widely depending on the size of the institutions and the resources available to the institution, as well as community and organizational support in place (Baran & Correia, 2014). Support ranges from simple technical assistance to full administrative centers for learning and teaching at the institutional level that provide formalized workshops and training as well as online course development. HEIs that have a dedicated center for teaching and learning more often have successful online courses and programs (UPCEA, 2020). Depending on the levels of service offered to faculty, centers may consist of a few instructional designers/technologists or an entire team including video production staff, graphic designers, and multimedia designers. For online course development, this team approach offers comprehensive and effective support for faculty (Abdous, 2020; UPCEA, 2020). Centers work hand-in-hand with or as a part of campus information technology services providing technological tools such as web-conferencing for faculty.

Types of Teaching Support

HEI's often provide teaching support for faculty in different modalities which may include face-to-face and online, self-paced workshops, a collection of online resources, and one-on-one support, provided by the center's staff (Baran &

Correia, 2014). HEI's also turn to open-source certification Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) for training online faculty (Lane, 2013). Workshops, seminars, or other formal training may be required or optional for instructors (McGee et al., 2017). Effective quality PD opportunities reflect a supportive organizational culture (McGee et al., 2017).

For a faculty member transitioning to an online format, technology support is important and should include equipment, training, and access to support staff (UPCEA, 2020). Technology support also includes the Learning Management System (LMS) and other tools such as collaborative, polling, and web-conferencing tools. However, technology use cannot be meaningfully separated from pedagogical support and, teaching support should recognize the importance of integrating both (Baran & Correia, 2014; González-Sanmamed et al., 2014).

With regard to how HEI's provide teaching support, a large body of research shows that faculty members highly value individual support and feedback (Philipsen et al., 2019). Results of a survey indicated that faculty strongly preferred one-on-one with instructional designers and online resources over other types of teaching support; the least preferred was a formal course (Grover et al., 2016). Similarly, Lackey (2012) indicates that instructors prefer one-on-one training. Baran and Correia (2014) point out that though workshops help build confidence in instructors, workshops alone may not be enough to address individual needs and one-on-one assistance may be needed.

To be successful, online faculty need ongoing, sustained teaching support because as they receive more training, faculty may become more aware of personal gaps in skills (González-Sanmamed et al., 2014). The feedback provided by individual support is important for helping instructors identify their PD needs (Philipsen et al., 2019). Using an embedded mixed-methods design, Brinkley-Etzkorn (2019) found that instructors were very optimistic about their ability to teach online before and after a three-week-long intensive hybrid workshop. However, they became less optimistic about and satisfied with their training after teaching their first online course, mainly due to a lack of other teaching support which made instructors feel abandoned. These results align with findings that experienced online instructors were more likely to disagree with the statement that online classes are easier to teach than novice instructors, indicating that novice instructors are more likely to overestimate their capabilities to teach online (Rhode et al. 2017). To address this issue, McGee et al. (2017) recommended offering PD opportunities that incorporate strategies such as case studies to allow instructors to develop expertise over time by putting their learning in context.

The amount and variety of teaching support available for faculty appear to influence instructors' readiness to teach online. Results of a causal-comparison study showed that online instructors who participated in more support activities had higher self-efficacy (Richter & Idleman, 2017). An examination of the teaching support provided by four HEIs revealed that faculty who were required to participate in PD for online teaching felt better prepared to teach than those participating in voluntary PD (Frass et al., 2017). A phenomenological study of six novice and experienced online instructors found that their institutions offered no formalized training leaving instructors feeling ill-prepared to teach online. Instructors had to seek out resources on their own or one-on-one assistance from an instructional designer or colleague (Lackey, 2012). These findings clearly show the interconnectedness of the organization, community, and teaching support.

Community Support

Community support refers to collaborative support provided by in-depth interactions between faculty members and their colleagues. These types of support can be formal or informal and include collegial learning groups (CLGs), communities of practice (CoPs), and peer support (Baran & Correia, 2014). Scarpena et al. (2018) argued that community support is integral to all levels of the PDFOT and proposed an expanded framework to include additional opportunities for online faculty to connect. The PDFOT describes community support as critical in combating instructors' feelings of social isolation that can occur due to the lack of face-to-face interaction with colleagues. In a phenomenological study, Lackey (2012) found online instructors' feelings of isolation were the driving factor behind preference for opportunities for collaborating with colleagues over any other type of support. In light of social distancing and quarantine policies enacted to prevent the spread of COVID-19, formal and informal online community support emerge as even more important for the psychological and emotional wellbeing of instructors (Golden, 2016).

Social Networks and Communities of Practice

CLGs, sometimes referred to as professional learning communities (PLCs) or professional learning networks (PLNs), and CoPs are informal and formal networks formed by instructors or by an organized group where ideas and diverse perspectives can be exchanged (Baran & Correia, 2014; Trust et al., 2017). These groups are important for HEIs to promote as the exchange of dialogue and reflection on teaching practices can improve pedagogical practices (Luo et al., 2020; UPCEA, 2020). Research indicates that social construction of knowledge can lead to transformative teaching practices (Baran & Correia, 2014). However, social networks can offer faculty richer experiences that include an emotional or affective component that is not present as part of a CoP (Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Trust et al., 2017).

Social networks offer faculty an informal, open support system for sharing ideas and resources. They also provide instructors with support in their peripheral roles, which may not be included in formal PD at their HEIs (González-Sanmamed et al., 2014). Regardless of whether a HEI offers formal opportunities for shared dialogue, faculty often seek out support from their peers (McGee et al., 2017). Social networks are frequently formed in social media spaces such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter (Ferguson & Wheat, 2015; Lantz-Andersson et al., 2018; Luoet al., 2020). Social media tools offer online educators ways to engage in PD opportunities that impact their growth as professionals (Trust et al., 2017).

CoPs offer instructors with more formal opportunities for collegial interactions and can be provided by institutions, departments, or professional associations. Main characteristics of CoPs include participants learning from each other through interactions, shared interest and competence in a domain, and a shared practice (Reilly et al., 2012). Though online faculty members may interact frequently with staff who provide teaching support, they may find few opportunities or additional time to participate in formal CoPs to exchange knowledge and ideas with their peers. Online teaching is a subjective practice and PD opportunities should allow instructors to share personal experiences teaching rather than just sharing technology tools (Glass, 2016). Instructors participating in both formal and informal networks, such as CLGs and CoPs, also transition better to teaching online (Baran et al., 2011; Samarawickrema & Stacey, 2007).

Peer Support and Mentoring

Like other types of support, peer support available to online faculty is often dependent on organizational support in place. It may include peer observation, peer feedback, and peer mentoring (Baran & Correia, 2014) which are important for promoting confidence and motivation (Philipsen et al. 2019). A descriptive survey study of 47 faculty at a large public university showed that a university-wide mentoring program for online faculty facilitated high quality online programs (Buckenmeyer et al., 2011). These results support the University Professional and Continuing Education Association's (UPCEA's) 2020 recommendation for establishing a mentor-program for new online faculty. Embedding faculty mentoring in a formalized online professional development workshop, where the novice instructor shadows and is then observed by the mentor, has been used as a personalized and contextualized method of incorporating peer support (Gregory & Salmon, 2013; Frass et. al, 2017).

Organizational Support

Organizational support refers to the rewards and organizational culture of a HEI that support online teaching and learning. At the overarching level in the PDFOT, organizational support and strategic plans are crucial to support student success though faculty support systems that include teaching and community support (Baran & Correia, 2014; Lackey, 2011). HEIs seeking success and effectiveness in online education need to align their institutional priorities by providing these kinds of organizational support systems (Herman, 2013; Velez, 2015).

Rewards

Online faculty can encounter a variety of barriers, such as lack of technical skill and increased workload. Thus, organizational rewards are critical for motivating online faculty and maintaining continued engagement and interest (Baran & Correia, 2014). Rewards include stipends, technology, internal and external recognition and respect, credit

toward promotion, job security, and release time for professional development opportunities and online course development (Baran & Correia, 2014; McGee et al., 2017). Part-time faculty teach online courses more frequently than full-time faculty, making rewards such as stipends and release time may be more important for them (Herman, 2013). Lackey (2012) points to the need for institutions to find ways to gain buy-in from faculty. These types of rewards can provide incentives toward this aim. UPCEA (2020) recommends that compensation for faculty in terms of money and time should be standardized by institutional policy and communicated to all stakeholders clearly. However, a large-scale study involving 821 HEIs in the United States found that the majority of faculty perceived the incentives for developing and delivering online classes to be inadequate (Herman, 2013). This study also showed that about half of the HEIs did not provide online course design and delivery support or PD support in tenure and promotion.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture includes an institution's technology infrastructure to support online education and a positive attitude toward online teaching. Strategic leadership and advocacy at the institution level is critical for developing a strong organizational culture (King & Boyatt, 2014; UPCEA, 2020). For institutions seeking to establish the infrastructure and culture necessary to adopt or grow their online offerings, a strategic plan serves as the foundation for all faculty development support (King & Boyatt, 2014). Leaders who create opportunities for faculty to feel encouraged, respected, supported, included, valued, and rewarded by their institutions will see increased motivation in their faculty to teach online (Baran & Correia, 2014). One way to sustain faculty support and motivation is for an institution to share governance with faculty, alumni, administrators, and students – a hallmark of excellence in online leadership (UPCEA, 2020).

Purpose Statement and Research Question

PD for faculty developing and teaching online is strongly correlated to the quality of online programs in higher education (Baran & Correia, 2014). Past research has examined the types of HEI support systems in place to foster success in faculty members transitioning from face-to-face to other environments, but there is a lack of research about the extent to which HEI's use a holistic approach to PD. The purpose of the current study is to investigate the impact of the types of organizational, community, and teaching support structures on faculty success in transitioning from to face-to-face to other environments. The following research question will guide this study: To what extent did a university's organizational, community, and teaching support structures impact faculty members' perceptions of their ability to transition from conventional environments to ERT?

Methods

Participants and Setting

Participants were recruited from the target population of faculty members in a public university on the east coast of the United States. This study used a convenience sampling approach to solicit participants. At the time this study was conducted, there were around 1200 faculty members who may have transitioned their face-to-face classes to ERT due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring and summer of 2020. 88 responses to the survey were collected in total. Those who volunteered to participate and did not teach one or more courses with a face-to-face component on campus during the transition to ERT during the spring or summer semesters in 2020 were excluded from the study. Additionally, faculty members who taught online classes exclusively were also excluded, leaving the number of participants at 55.

Instruments

The authors created an online survey to collect data using Qualtrics. The items in the survey were based on teaching, community, and organizational support described in the PDFOT (Baran & Correia, 2014). Teaching support consisted of three subscales of participant satisfaction with technological, pedagogical, and design and development support created or expanded during the shift to ERT. Participants indicated satisfaction with community support and agreement

with organizational support for technology-enhanced learning already in place prior to the transition. The authors conducted a check of the internal consistency of the survey's scale items (See Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Teaching supports		
Technology	.92	8
Pedagogy	.98	6
Design and Development	.93	6
Community supports	.79	6
Organizational supports	.80	8

Data Collection

The survey consisted of two demographic items regarding the participant's college or role (e.g., Arts and Letters or Administrative office) and status (e.g., adjunct instructor, assistant professor, etc.), and one inclusion question to determine if the participant taught on campus prior to the transition to emergency remote teaching in the spring and summer of 2020. In addition, participants were asked whether they had previously taught an online or blended course to gauge prior familiarity with the university's support systems for online teaching. The remaining items included five-point Likert scale items ranging from "not at all satisfied" to "extremely satisfied," five-point Likert scale items ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly disagree," and four open-ended items. Participants agreed to informed consent prior to beginning the study and no identifying information was collected.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed in SPSS using descriptive statistics. The open-ended questions on the questionnaire were analyzed using open-coding procedures and further refined by secondary and axial-coding techniques. The purpose of the procedures was to triangulate emerging themes within the data (Creswell, 2019).

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive analysis, shown in Table 2, revealed participants were most satisfied by community support (M = 4.17) and then, followed by satisfaction with teaching support (M = 3.92). The higher mean scores for community support may be attributed to fewer respondents who indicated that they used this type of support. With regard to teaching support, participants were most satisfied with pedagogical support and (M = 3.95) and least satisfied by design and development support (M = 3.83). Participants perceived organizational support as the weakest, as indicated by their agreement scores (M = 3.41). Scores for community support deviated the least (SD = .77) and the most for pedagogical support (SD = .93).

Table 2

Satisfaction scores for teaching, community, and organizational support

	Total responses (N)	M	SD
Teaching supports satisfaction			
technology supports satisfaction	30	3.94	0.80
pedagogical supports satisfaction	18	3.95	0.93

	Total responses (N)	M	SD
design and development support satisfaction	12	3.83	0.84
Community supports satisfaction	22	4.17	0.77
Organizational agreement score	50	3.41	0.82

Teaching Support

The survey items (See Table 3) asked participants if they sought teaching, pedagogical, or design and development support during the transition to ERT. Technology support was used the most (56.4%) while design and development support was used the least (23.1%).

Table 3

Teaching Support: Total Responses

During the transition to ERT did you seek...	Yes		No	
Total responses (N)	Percent	Total responses (N)	Percent	
technology support?	31	56.4%	24	43.6%
pedagogical support?	19	34.5%	36	65.5%
design and development support?	12	23.1%	40	76.9%

Technology Support

As described in the PDFOT, technology support refers to help with online environment, infrastructure, and technical issues (Baran & Correia, 2014). Participants were prompted with specific technology support examples customized to the particular support provided by the university (e.g., Blackboard, Zoom, etc.). Technology support was provided by three departments within the university: Information Technology Services (ITS), the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT), and the Center for Faculty Development (CFD). Support included websites, workshops, and one-on-one staff assistance. It should be noted that although each department had maintained websites prior to the transition, CLT developed an additional site called “Keep Teaching (KT)” to organize and consolidate resources to assist instructors during the transition. Table 4 shows that among various technical support, participants were most satisfied by workshops provided by the CFD (M = 4.12) and CLT (M = 3.96), and least satisfied by CLT and CLD staff assistance (M = 3.67; M = 3.78).

Table 4

Technology support: Measure of central tendency and spread of Likert-type items

	Ext Diss (n)	Somewhat Diss (n)	Neither (n)	Somewhat Sat (n)	Ext Sat (n)	Total (N)	M	SD
ITS website	1	1	5	12	8	27	3.92	1.00
ITS Help Desk	1	4	2	6	11	24	3.92	1.28
CLT’s KT website	0	2	5	13	6	26	3.88	0.86
CLT workshops	0	3	2	14	7	26	3.96	0.92
CLT staff assistance	1	2	4	2	6	15	3.67	1.35
CFD website	0	1	5	13	4	23	3.87	0.76
CFD workshops	0	2	2	5	8	17	4.12	1.05
CFD staff assistance	0	1	3	2	3	9	3.78	1.09

Pedagogical Support

This type of support refers to providing information about selecting appropriate technological tools and teaching strategies to help learners meet course objectives (Baran & Correia, 2014). Two organizations provided pedagogical support during the transition to ERT – the CLT and the CFD. Participants were most satisfied with the CLT and CFD staff assistance (M = 4.0; M = 4.20) and least satisfied with CLT's KT website (M = 3.69) and CFD workshops (M = 3.75) (see Table 5).

Table 5

Pedagogical supports: Measure of central tendency and spread of Likert-type items

	Ext Diss (n)	Somewhat Diss (n)	Neither (n)	Somewhat Sat (n)	Ext Sat (n)	Total (N)	M	SD
CLT's KT website	0	2	2	7	2	13	3.69	0.95
CLT workshops	0	2	3	4	6	15	3.93	1.10
CLT staff assistance	0	1	0	2	2	5	4.00	1.22
CFD website	0	0	4	4	3	11	3.91	0.83
CFD workshops	0	1	3	6	2	12	3.75	0.87
CFD staff assistance	0	0	1	2	2	5	4.20	0.84

Design and Development Support

Design and development support refers to assistance with editing media, designing online content, and evaluating courses (See Table 6). The CLT and the CFD websites (developed during the transition to ERT) provided the most satisfying experiences for participants (M = 3.83; M = 3.8), while the CLT and CLD staff provided the least satisfying experiences (M = 3.60; M = 3.67). This result could be attributed to the emphasis instructors and support staff placed on technology and pedagogical support during the transition to ERT. Few instructors requested design and development support during this time. The low satisfaction scores and low number of responses to the staff assistance items may also reflect a lack of awareness of the availability of staff support for design and development by respondents who did not teach in technology-enabled environments prior to the pandemic.

Table 6

Design and development support: Measure of central tendency and spread of Likert-type items

	Ext Diss (n)	Somewhat Diss (n)	Neither (n)	Somewhat Sat (n)	Ext Sat (n)	Total (N)	M	SD
CLT's KT website	1	0	2	6	3	12	3.83	1.11
CLT workshops	0	1	4	4	3	12	3.75	0.97
CLT staff assistance	0	1	1	2	1	5	3.60	1.14
CFD website	0	0	4	4	2	10	3.80	0.79
CFD workshops	0	0	4	3	2	9	3.78	0.83
CFD staff assistance	0	0	1	2	0	3	3.67	0.58

Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Items

Teaching Support

Analysis of the open-ended items provided by the participants (n = 33) revealed three main themes: frustration, satisfaction with workshops and one-on-one assistance, and lack of need for teaching support. Though quantitative analysis revealed that participants relied mainly on technology support (56.4%), many of the participants' comments focused on pedagogical and design and development support. These findings may be an indication of the overlap among supports.

Though the overall perception of teaching support was positive, some participants indicated a sense of frustration. Several participants noted that the one-week transition to ERT made it difficult for instructors to find and use what they needed. One participant noted:

> *I didn't really have the opportunity to use all of the resources at the time of the transition in the spring, as I was trying to balance my full-time responsibilities, modifying my course content and learning new technology on the fly.*

Others mentioned frustrations with the LMS and having to purchase their own screen-capture and video editing software.

Those respondents who weighed in about workshops and one-on-one assistance had mixed feelings. Some indicated they found the workshops very helpful while others found the workshops did not always provide them with what they needed. So, they sought one-on-one assistance from CLT and CFD staff. A participant stated "some of the workshops moved too quickly and assumed there was a base level of knowledge that was not there. Other workshops were too basic." This sentiment was echoed by other participants who said "some workshops were more informative than others. I found the workshops that provided specific examples to be most helpful to identify if the approach would be appropriate to adopt."

Another common theme was the lack of need for teaching support. Several participants described the transition to ERT as "seamless" and "simple" due to having taught online or having participated previously in a variety of PD opportunities. One participant noted, "I felt very comfortable knowing that the support was there if I needed it, and there were multiple PD opportunities to support faculty available."

Community Support

Community support refers to opportunities provided within or outside of the university for faculty members to connect with each other in formal and informal ways. For example, this type of support could mean reaching out to a peer for social, emotional, or teaching support. Almost half of participants indicated they used community support (42.6%). Participants indicated they were most satisfied with peer collaboration and group support most (M = 4.35) and least satisfied by university support networks (M = 3.80) (see Table 7).

Table 7

Community support: Measure of central tendency and spread of Likert-type items

	Ext Diss (n)	Somewhat Diss (n)	Neither (n)	Somewhat Sat (n)	Ext Sat (n)	Total (N)	M	SD
Formal support networks developed by the university or dept.	0	3	2	5	5	15	3.80	1.146
Formal support networks developed by external professional organizations	0	2	2	5	4	13	3.85	1.068
Informal, self-directed peer mentoring or collaboration support	0	1	2	6	11	20	4.35	0.875
Informal, self-directed one-on-one peer support	0	1	3	6	11	21	4.29	0.902
Informal, self-directed group peer support	0	1	3	2	11	17	4.35	0.996
Social media networks	0	1	3	4	6	14	4.07	0.997

One main theme emerged from the responses – support from colleagues. The responses overwhelmingly aligned with the quantitative results indicating that individual and peer-group support provided by colleagues was the most used and valued community support. Almost all respondents (n = 16) mentioned the assistance provided by their peers was very helpful. They communicated with peers in a variety of ways: web-based meetings, phone calls, emails, and messaging apps such as Slack. One participant wrote "this is the resource I've used the most, mostly informal collaborations and

peer support. I get the most benefit from hearing other's ideas of how they have taught online or re-vamped assignments or experiential activities, and then work through how to apply those to my courses." Another wrote "the community support was key! It involved mostly reaching out to friends/colleagues and saying, 'this is what I'm thinking... what do you think?' or 'What are you doing about X?' I think what made these conversations so valuable was they were based on my schedule and quick."

Organizational Support

A system of rewards for faculty developing and teaching online courses, as well as overall organizational culture, comprises organizational support. This type of support system is different from teaching and community support in the current study because the university already developed robust and long-standing online teaching and learning efforts. These efforts were largely unchanged during the transition with the exception of expanded training opportunities and technology tools. With regard to the rewards in place at the time of the transition to ERT, participants indicated that the university did a better job of providing training opportunities (M = 3.19) and equipment and technology tools (M = 3.49) than financial stipends (M = 2.55) and release time (M = 2.26) for developing online courses (see Table 8). With regard to the organizational culture in place, participants felt strongly that online teaching and learning were supported at the highest administrative levels (M = 3.81). Participants also strongly agreed that they valued the university's online teaching and learning initiatives (M = 4.21) but conversely, felt that their peers did not value them as much (M = 3.36).

Table 8

Organizational supports: Measure of central tendency and spread of Likert-type items

	Strongly disagree (n)	Somewhat disagree (n)	Neither (n)	Somewhat agree (n)	Strongly agree (n)	Total (N)	M	SD
Instructors receive adequate…for developing and teaching online courses								
financial stipends	11	11	5	6	5	38	2.55	1.41
release time	14	12	4	4	4	38	2.26	1.35
training opportunities	4	7	13	15	4	43	3.19	1.12
equipment and tech tools	3	9	9	11	13	45	3.49	1.29
Online teaching and learning are…								
well-respected by university faculty and staff	2	5	12	12	16	47	3.74	1.17
supported at the highest admin levels	2	5	13	7	20	47	3.81	1.23
…value university online teaching and learning initiatives								
My peers	4	8	13	11	11	47	3.36	1.26
I	1	3	7	11	26	48	4.21	1.05

Two themes emerged as a result of analysis: lack of awareness of available organizational support and lack of centralized information. 27 participants responded to this prompt. A few respondents (n = 9) indicated they felt fully supported at the organizational level, but some (n = 4) indicated that the only organizational support they were aware of or had used were the training opportunities provided by the CLT or CFD. Notably, several (n = 8) respondents pointed out though they had developed online classes, they never received rewards such as financial stipends, release time, or equipment and technology. At the university, such rewards are typically decentralized at the department level and vary widely. Only faculty who agree to work with CLT to develop online courses are provided a stipend at the organizational level. Therefore, other faculty may be unaware that such rewards exist. A respondent summed this up well indicating, "I do not believe the university does a very good job of telling faculty about the support available."

The other theme that developed was frustration with the lack of centralized dispersion of information. Three respondents wrote responses indicating during the transition to ERT, they received too much information from too many

sources. One noted “reading through a flurry of emails, some with very helpful and relevant information, but some repeatedly advertising non-essential meetings, was a bit confusing.” Another wrote:

> *Often, I'd get 3 separate emails from 3 different places with the same information. I became increasingly frustrated with this ‘throw everything at the faculty’ approach in the hopes that something might be of use. A central repository should have been set up in an organized way, rather than feeling the need to send an email to faculty each time someone had a thought or idea.*

Overall Support

At the end of the survey, 35 participants responded to the open-ended prompt: How can the university support your teaching better in technology-enabled environments (e.g., remote, online, hybrid/blended, hybrid/classroom, etc.)? Analysis revealed that most respondents (n = 33) requested additional teaching and organizational support (see Table 9). This supports the qualitative data showing lower satisfaction scores of teaching and organizational supports than community support. The low number of respondents requesting community support may reflect their perceptions of community support mainly as a self-directed, peer-to-peer social activity rather than a university-supported activity.

Table 9

Recommendations for supports

Teaching supports	N of responses
Continue providing good supports	7
Improve technology tools, equipment, and integration	4
Provide additional asynchronous resources	4
Provide hardware, software, Internet for ERT at home	4
Provide research regarding effectiveness of online teaching	1
Provide more resources to reduce cheating on exams	1
Add more CLT support staff	1
Community supports	**N of responses**
Provide more opportunities for peer sharing	2
Organizational supports	**N of responses**
Improve communication (e.g. centralized dissemination of information, tech. outages, info for TAs)	4
Provide more rewards	3
Reduce class size	2

Discussion

The present study investigates instructors’ satisfaction with their university’s PD support assisting with transition to ERT. Overall, participants indicated they were mostly satisfied with the PD support received. This university has over 30 years of experience in providing quality distance learning and online programs, therefore, it is not surprising that many reported feeling well-supported during the transition to ERT. However, it is evident that PD at this university can be improved and recommendations for improvement are discussed as implications for practice.

Personalize PD Opportunities to Meet Individual Needs

Participant responses indicated a wide range in teaching-support needs suggesting the need for personalization. Several participants noted some workshops were too basic while other workshops were too detailed. This may be because many workshops were quickly developed and put in place within a week. Consequently, both the CLT and the CFD were building resources for faculty while delivering the resources. In addition, staff members initially involved in

delivering workshops and on-on-one assistance were limited to those accustomed to working closely with faculty. Later, as it became clear that demand greatly outweighed supply, other staff members were brought into assist.

The disparity in participants' experiences with workshops and other teaching support may also be attributed to a clearer understanding of personal needs. As instructors sought more professional development, they likely become more aware of personal gaps in skills (González-Sanmamed et al., 2014). In other words, additional training may have revealed to instructors that they overestimated certain skills and were not as proficient in some areas as they thought (Brinkley-Etzkorn, 2019; Rhode, et. al, 2017). By placing priority on instructors' individual needs and focusing on those types of PD offerings, support staff can maximize relevance, increase motivation, and encourage effective transfer of skills (Adnan, 2018; Baran & Correia, 2014; Baran, 2015; Philipsen et al., 2019). One way to address this need is for support staff to administer an initial self-assessment that determines an instructor's individual needs (Rhode et al., 2017).

Provide a Variety of PD Opportunities

With those who sought PD assistance, a three-tiered process emerged in participant responses. Some (n = 3) described starting with web resources, moving to synchronous and asynchronous workshops, and then seeking one-on-one staff assistance to resolve outstanding questions and need for assistance. One participant summed up this process well by indicating, "general materials like the webpages were useful, but only after attending seminars or personal help to navigate them. Even then, I had to turn for personal help more than once to understand what I saw there." HEIs should provide a wide variety of PD opportunities to meet different needs and encourage participation (Elliott et al., 2015; McGee 2017). Opportunities should include one-on-one support with feedback, online resources, and workshops offered in different modalities and feasible durations (Grover et al., 2016; Lackey, 2011; Philipsen et al., 2019).

A key lesson learned for this university was that a more balanced approach to offering PD opportunities was needed. Prior to the pandemic, online resources were minimal, and instructors relied heavily on one-on-one consultations and workshops. The insufficiency of online resources likely contributed to the overwhelming amount of work by the CLT and CFD and the frustrations of instructors unable to get the information needed in a timely manner.

Contextualize PD

Quantitative and open-ended responses in this survey showed a strong preference for one-on-one support consistent with findings in other studies (Grover et al., 2016; Philipsen et al., 2019). One-on-one support offers instructors contextualization of information within personal teaching environments. Workshops should offer similar contextualization by engaging instructors in an online environment in an active, hands-on way using case studies (McGee et al, 2017) or creating a useful product (AlexiouRay & Bentley, 2016; Gregory & Salmon, 2013; Philipsen et al., 2019). Contextualization also includes creating opportunities for instructors to critically reflect on their roles as educators and their educational philosophies (Baran et al., 2011; Lane 2013; Philipsen et al., 2019). Self-assessment and reflection on online teaching practices can reshape faculty members' perceptions of the value of online learning (Glass, 2016) and empower them (Baran et al., 2011; Lane 2013).

Provide Opportunities for Peer Support

During the transition to ERT, participants were highly satisfied with community support over any other type of support. Open-ended item responses revealed instructors valued interactions and shared experiences with their colleagues more than any other type of support which is consistent with results from other studies (Grover et al., 2016; Lackey, 2011). These findings demonstrate the human need for social and emotional support from peers during a time in which all aspects of life were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Feeling isolated from others, by the requirement of maintaining physical distance from others, is likely the driving factor behind instructors' impulses to collaborate with colleagues (Golden, 2016; Lackey, 2012). A strong desire to informally connect was found in participant responses and also highlights the suggestion to incorporate community support in all levels in the PDFOT (Scarpena, et al., 2018). Peer supports are critical and evidentially, this university could build community support by strengthening or developing

additional ways for instructors to connect with each other. Opportunities for social engagement should be facilitated by teaching and learning centers that provide opportunities for peer collaboration, sharing of experiences, and mentorship (AlexiouRay & Bentley, 2016; Baran, 2015; Glass, 2016; Philipsen et al., 2019; Trust et al., 2017).

Establish Clear Communication at the Organizational Level

Support for PD at the institutional and leadership levels enhances acceptance of online teaching by instructors (Philipsen et al., 2019). Therefore, communication of this support is important. The data in this study highlight the need for improved communication at the organizational level. Participants pointed to the need for improved communication regarding rewards and dissemination of information.

Rewards are critical to faculty buy-in and continued support for online courses (Herman, 2013; Lackey, 2012), but several (n = 6) respondents indicated unawareness of them. As part of a faculty-driven institution, colleges and departments determine which, if any, rewards will be offered to instructors to develop and teach online courses. These responses could also be due to the spending freeze put in place by the university at the beginning of the pandemic in response to uncertainty about future revenue sources. The freeze resulted in no course releases granted, adjunct hiring suspended, and other rewards made unavailable to online developers and instructors. Nevertheless, participants' responses highlight the university's need for improved coordination and communication about rewards.

In addition, respondents to the organizational and overall open-ended items (n = 5) described frustration with a lack of centralized communication strategy for disseminating information about the availability of PD opportunities during the transition to ERT. Another lesson learned by this institution was the CLT and the CFD should coordinate communications about PD to faculty to prevent confusion and redundancy. The success of PD initiatives is based on creating and clearly articulating an institutional strategy addressing PD standards, resources, and guidance for implementation (King & Boyatt, 2015; Philipsen et al., 2019; UPCEA, 2020). An internal needs assessment could help this university determine PD needs and align support efforts with online faculty competencies (Frass et al., 2017; McGee et al., 2017).

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The PDFOT survey shows adequate to robust internal consistency, and its use in this study elicited information useful to the university for increasing PD support for web-enabled environments. The survey was customized to the support provided by a particular university; therefore, the results are limited in scope and not generalizable. Another limitation of this study is the small number of participants, who, understandably, were exceptionally busy transitioning to ERT during the time data was collected.

The institution in this study learned valuable lessons about the types of PD support needed by its faculty during the rapid transition to ERT. Many changes and improvements to PD were made by this university while this study was conducted, thus, a follow-up study using the same PDFOT survey to assess faculty satisfaction with new teaching, community, and organization support initiatives could provide valuable insights for additional improvements.

For future research, it may be possible to standardize the PDFOT for studies across multiple universities. The PDFOT survey could also be customized for individual HIEs looking to identify areas for improvement in PD offerings. In the current study, open-ended items on the survey provided valuable context to the quantitative data. Future qualitative or mixed-methods studies using interviews could provide richer data for HEIs seeking to improve their PD for those teaching and developing technology-enabled courses.

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