



Responding to COVID-19:

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR ONLINE LEARNING

As the scale and impact of COVID-19 became clear in late March of 2020, and universities turned to complete online delivery of classes, TIEC recognized that our partner institutions and ministries of education around the world would likely be facing a very tough situation. Texas has advanced experience with online delivery and has vital continuity of education resources and practices to share. Whether the challenge is around ensuring quality and educational standards in a new online classroom setting, navigating testing and assessments, addressing the professional development needs of faculty members, or finding innovative ways to deliver virtual learning in areas with low broadband access – or all of the above – TIEC has successfully leveraged our expertise to help others.

In response to COVID-19, TIEC took on two major partnerships to build capacity among higher education institutions to deliver quality online learning: one with a single university in Ghana and a second, working through the Commission on Higher Education in the Philippines, to train faculty from universities across the country.



KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN GHANA

OPPORTUNITY



TIEC's overall mission is to create lasting partnerships between Texas higher education and counterparts around the world. For this project, the high-level objective is to assist KNUST in establishing a Center of Excellence in online and flexible learning for West Africa and its own campus. With that objective, TIEC and KNUST collaboratively built a plan to help KNUST allocate resources for online education and build faculty capacity to deliver quality, online and flexible learning during COVID-19 and beyond.

Long-term, this project provides for: (a) the strategic alignment of institutional resources to improve online learning, (b) improved quality education that promotes lifelong learning, and (c) increased student engagement in learning. As the project is funded by the U.S. Embassy Accra, a final goal is to establish closer ties between Texas and Ghanaian faculty.

IMPACT



TIEC has completed "phase 1" of the initiative with KNUST. TIEC worked with KNUST's university leaders and administrators to build a "policy playbook" that would support and ensure quality online education across the campus. At the same time, a core group of 30 faculty members was trained in flexible learning foundations, a deep-dive into the pedagogy of quality online learning.

" [The TIEC-KNUST project] propels us in our pursuit of building the needed capacity for the establishment of a more resilient and robust e-learning system that ensures seamless academic work all year round and also offer us the opportunity to transfer knowledge to individuals less privileged to access in-person learning experience from our University"

Prof. Rita Akousa Dickson, KNUST Vice-Chancellor

"Humanizing teaching and learning has taught me to have a sense of social presence, cognitive presence and teaching presence when engaging myself or my students online. This has helped me to improve my learning and teaching experience online. The use of varied learning, summative and formative assessments has enabled me to develop skills in using varied online tools to help assess my students."

Dr. John Serbe Marfo, School of Business, KNUST

RESPONDING AND REIMAGINING EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

OPPORTUNITY



In response to the urgent need for virtual education and flexible learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TIEC assembled a team of higher education professionals from a number of universities in Texas to work alongside officials from the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and faculty from universities across the Philippines to build capacity to deliver quality online and flexible learning.

IMPACT



Faculty across the Philippines have learned to apply new methods of engaging students to transform teaching practices, promote higher-level student learning, and help their students build the 21st-century skills needed to excel in the global workforce. TIEC has also worked with CHED and university administrators to develop and norm an Administrative Policy Playbook, which provides the institutional policies and resources needed to support quality, flexible learning across the Philippines' higher-education landscape.

Phase 1 of the project, the Foundations of Flexible Learning Virtual Conference, is complete, with 166 faculty members from 43 higher education institutions trained across the Philippines. Many of those have gone on to train other faculty members at their own institutions, encompassing an additional 1,980 Filipino faculty members.

"The flexible learning project had a great impact on me as a teacher and to my institution, West Visayas State University. It also made me realize that I had a great role in this transition when I received positive responses from our 140 fellow faculty with whom we shared everything we learned about flexible learning."

*Dr. Candy Celeste, Dean of Instruction,
West Visayas State University - Calinog Campus*

"The lessons provided me with so many realizations about how to best approach online classes, thinking about the situation of our students who might be feeling burdened to learn all the lessons in the modules alone."

*Dr. Genesis Camarista, Campus Administrator,
West Visayas State University - Himalayan
City Campus*