

Post-delivery Conversation Pilot Results

Summary

Between December 2022 and January 2023, I met with instructors with whom I have previously collaborated. Each of these instructors had recently finished teaching the course we developed or revised together. In these meetings, we discussed how the course went and how the course could be improved going forward. After the meetings, I sent instructors a document outlining what we discussed and sharing recommendations and resources to help with their future revisions. Instructors benefited from these metacognitive conversations because they had a timely opportunity to reflect on their experience with the support of an instructional designer. I benefited because I learned where my work has been effective and how I can better support instructors with whom I collaborate. **I recommend that post-delivery conversations be encouraged but not required for all collaborations.** Conducting these conversations can give us valuable information about how to improve our services on an individual and organizational level.

Preparation

In mid-November, I emailed the instructors from four courses that I worked on in Summer 2022. These courses were then taught in Autumn 2022. I asked if the instructors were interested in scheduling a one-time follow-up meeting where we would discuss whether the revisions we made were effective and brainstorm ways they could continue improving the course. The courses included two MS in Pharmaceutical Sciences, one MS in Translational Pharmacology, and one Master in Plant Health Management course. All the instructors I contacted expressed interest in meeting with me. I scheduled four meetings (one for each course) with a total of six instructors. The meetings were scheduled for mid-December to mid-January. All the instructors attended their scheduled meeting, although one instructor missed their meeting and rescheduled the meeting for another day.

Meetings

Before each meeting, I reviewed the handoff document I wrote when I concluded the Summer 2022 collaboration. I also quickly reviewed the Carmen master course we created in that collaboration. I began each meeting by asking what went well during the course and then used the questions listed below to guide the conversation. I followed this list of questions more thoroughly for instructors who needed more guidance reflecting on their experience teaching the course and less thoroughly for instructors who came into the conversation with a lot of information to share.

All seven instructors appeared to see the value of meeting with me when they came into the meeting. Four of the instructors were particularly eager to have an opportunity to reflect on the course with an instructional designer. Most of the instructors had already begun reflecting on the course with their co-instructor or program director, so they came into the conversation with valuable insights and questions. Three of the meetings lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. One meeting lasted 30 minutes. We ended each meeting

with a list of specific ways the instructors wanted to improve the course going forward and how the instructors could go about making those changes.

All of the instructors understood that I would not be able to provide them with regular support. Three instructors asked what my role would be going forward or if I could provide additional support. When I explained that this was not possible, they accepted those boundaries without question. I made all the instructors aware of the option to sign up for a one-time consultation if they need help with a particular issue in the future, and I shared the link to sign up for those consultations with the instructors.

The questions I used to guide my conversations included:

- What went well?
- What went differently than you expected?
- What did you find yourself wanting or needing to adjust on the fly?
- What are some of the common things you heard from students – things they liked/didn't like, places they had lots of questions or confusion, etc.?
- Were there places in the course where students didn't meet your expectations?
- What technology skills would it have been helpful to have learned or have resources about before teaching the course in order to deliver the course successfully?

Follow-Up

After each meeting, I sent the instructors a follow-up document containing the list of ways in which they want to improve the course. Below each item on the list was a summary of what we discussed about that potential revision along with recommendations for how to make the revisions. My recommendations included information about best practices, resources that might help with the revisions, and/or templates that might be useful. These documents can be viewed in detail in the [Pilot Follow-Up Documents folder](#).

Time Commitment

Conducting these conversations did require a significant amount of time. Because the conversations were conducted between semesters, I had no trouble fitting them into my workload. However, instructional designers with busier workloads may not have the time to have conversations with all of their previous instructors. Here is an estimate of how much time I spent on the post-delivery conversation for each course:

- Sending the initial email – 10 minutes
- Emailing with instructors to schedule the meeting – 30 minutes
- Preparing for the meeting – 30 minutes
- Attending the meeting – 45 minutes
- Writing my follow-up notes – 1 hour
- **Total – Approximately 3 hours per course**

Value

These meetings proved valuable to everyone involved. Every instructor stated that the meeting was a helpful experience when asked at the end of the meeting. They all expressed gratitude and appreciation for me taking the time to meet with them. I believe instructors benefited from this experience in two ways. First, it gave instructors an organized opportunity to reflect immediately after teaching the course. Even those instructors who had already begun reflecting on their experience were able to develop their ideas in far more detail due to our conversation. Instructors who hadn't begun reflecting shared that they might not have otherwise had time to think about how the course went until much later, when they might have forgotten some details about the experience. Second, instructors were able to get advice, ask questions, and gather resources from an instructional designer with knowledge about best practices. Instructors left the meeting with a more concrete understanding of how they can make the improvements they want to see in the course and where they can go to get help making those improvements. Ultimately, I think instructors will be more likely to make revisions to their course because they were encouraged to reflect and given support.

As the instructional designer, I gained insight into which of my practices were effective and how I can improve the support I provide instructors during my collaborations. For example, the assessments we designed were generally effective and engaging and instructors appreciated the structure we applied to their course in Carmen. On the other hand, two areas where I can work with instructors to better prepare them for teaching their course include helping them set up their gradebook in a way that weights their assignments appropriately and building in more opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and provide feedback on the course throughout the semester. I will be able to apply what I learned from these conversations to make my future collaborations more effective.

Recommendations

I recommend post-delivery conversations be encouraged but not required for all collaborations. Overall, I believe these conversations were overwhelmingly beneficial. If we conduct more of these conversations, they will provide us with valuable information about how we can improve our services as individual instructional designers and as a larger organization. I hope that the courses we design will also benefit because instructors will have more support to make further revisions after the conversation. There are, however, challenges to conducting these conversations. Scheduling, conducting, and following-up on these conversations takes time. Although these instructors understood my boundaries, other instructors may see a follow-up conversation as an indication that they can expect more support from our team.

The decision of whether to offer a post-delivery conversation should be up to the individual instructional designer. Factors instructional designers should consider when determining whether to suggest a meeting should include the instructor's level of engagement in the original collaboration, the instructor's willingness to accept boundaries, and the instructional designer's workload. I believe instructional designers

will know best whether a post-delivery conversation would be beneficial based on their intimate knowledge of the instructor and the course.