

Needs Assessment: Instructional Resources

Onboarding Resources

Launch Pad

What is it?: A repository (in Canvas and Coassemble) with teaching principles and general learning theories.

What is it used for?: To provide instructors during onboarding with teaching frameworks so that they can apply these to their teaching.

Pros: A lot of detailed and very important teaching theories to engage students and facilitate learning.

Cons:

- It is too much information for a novice instructor to process on their own.
- Not specific enough to the content that is being taught by each instructor.
- Assessment is limited to quizzes, which does not reveal how deeply these concepts are understood and if the instructors have a plan to apply to specific lessons.
- Members from other teams are not aware that this is part of the onboarding process.

Ongoing Resources

Slack Channels

What is it?: A place to communicate issues or emergencies.

What is it used for?: To get help in-class, become aware about company wide announcements, etc.

Pros: It centralizes the communication with instructors.

Cons: Instructors' fulltime jobs do not allow them enough time to read in detail the announcements/communications.

Playbooks

What is it?: A repository (in Canvas) of course materials (e.g., instructor guides, learner guides) per module. Most of this material also appears in the canvas of each course (module level).

What is it used for?: To provide instructors with all the content of their assigned course ahead of time.

Pros: It allows instructors an opportunity to know ahead of time the content of the course, giving them more time to prep.

Cons:

- It contains a massive amount of information that it difficult for new instructors to digest on their own.
- The content of the assets vary in structure across programs.
- Some of this content includes very long videos that are difficult for instructors to follow/pay attention to.
- Not all instructors are aware about this resource.

Classroom Observations

What is it?: Observations that take place once per course term.

What is it used for?: To provide feedback to instructors about their teaching.

Pros: Feedback incorporates very detailed examples about teaching strategies along with solutions.

Cons: Since only one observation per term takes place there is no opportunity to track improvement and verify if instructor was able to apply tips.

Ticket System

What is it?: A method to submit course content issues.

What is it used for?: To ask questions about curricula or alert about errors.

Pros: Able to easily report issues.

Cons: Resolution status is unknown.

Bi-Weekly Instructor Meetings

What is it?: Optional meetings for instructors.

What is it used for?: To discuss a topic that helps them to teach.

Pros: Great potential for continuous professional development.

Cons:

- Not all instructors are able to attend.
- Provided during times that are odd, e.g., Friday afternoons.
- Content is too general and there is no assistance to help them apply it to their specific course.

Mentorship

What is it?: Mentorship between senior and novice instructors.

What is it used for?: New instructors are paired with a more senior instructor to teach a course.

Pros:

- Helps to prepare for class.
- Helps to troubleshoot issues in class.

Cons: This is not consistent and there is no specific method for pairing or training to successfully mentor. No clear contrast between this approach and with instructor coaches' program.