

Project Name

Tools of Engagement Project (TOEP): On-demand Discovery Learning Professional Development

Principal Investigator Roberta (Robin) Sullivan

Campus Buffalo, University at

Year of Project 2012

Tier Tier One

Project Team

- Beth Burns, Buffalo State
- Kathleen Gradel, SUNY Fredonia
- Shufang Shi, SUNY Cortland
- Cherie van Putten, Binghamton University
- Cindi Tysick, University at Buffalo

Overview Summary

Pilot the Tools of Engagement Project's (TOEP) on-demand professional development model among faculty across SUNY campuses, investigating its effectiveness in expanding their pedagogy as they integrate free online Web 2.0 tools into their courses and research.

Outcomes Summary

TOEP has transitioned from a \$10,000 IITG award to a fully scaled SUNY Center for Professional Development offering in addition their [website](#). Several publications have resulted, including the [2015 NMC Horizon Report Higher Education Edition](#).

Project Abstract

The goal of this project is to pilot the Tools of Engagement Project's (hereafter, TOEP) on-demand

professional development model among faculty across SUNY campuses, investigating its effectiveness in expanding their pedagogy as they integrate free online Web 2.0 tools into their courses and research.

Need/Relevance: Evolving instructional technologies are changing the ways we collaborate and communicate. Faculty must learn to adapt to this rapidly changing landscape. TOEP's self-directed professional development gives faculty a platform to experiment with cutting-edge technologies, integrating them into their curricula to engage students and improve learning. Self-directed activities encourage faculty to be lifelong learners, as they become familiar with blogging, wikis, podcasting, online collaborative, and the latest web-based instructional technology tools. After acquiring deeper knowledge about how to use these tools, they will become more adept at embedding 21st c. skill expectations of their students. They will also be able to use these tools to diversify assessment of student learning, going beyond traditional strategies.

TOEP will facilitate collaboration among 4 campuses, as the model is further tested for sustainability. UB will serve as the hub, through implementation via the Teaching & Learning Center and the UB Libraries. SUNY Cortland, Buffalo State College, and SUNY Fredonia will serve as collaborators, extending TOEP's Year 1 pilot to 3 SUNY comprehensive colleges, as the model is tested. Pending funding, 4 potential additional collaborators expressed interest to be involved. Beyond collaborators listed in this proposal, faculty and staff from a number of other SUNY campuses have expressed interest in using TOEP tools, as a result of the PI's outreach at CIT over 2 years.

How does TOEP address SUNY needs?

- A current SUNY focus is addressing online learning in the evolving higher education landscape, to ensure relevance to today's students. TOEP enables faculty and support staff to become more technically savvy in their use of online tools, empowering them to meet the needs of today's college students who demand convenient and flexible learning methods.
- TOEP addresses 2 of the 6 Power of SUNY big ideas (Seamless Education Pipeline and SUNY and the World), through its identification of these cohorts: early adopters of innovative technology; incoming faculty; faculty who are new to or interested in online and/or hybrid instruction; and faculty who provide training for preservice teachers. Ultimately, it will be an open-access resource to faculty.
- TOEP is Creative Commons-licensed, as will be all project work. This consistency with Open SUNY will contribute to sustainable, shared services that can be replicated throughout SUNY and the world, core to the IITG initiative.
- TOEP's learning sequences promote transliteracy. Someone who is transliterate is literate across multiple media, reading, writing, and interacting across platforms, tools, and media. Transliteracy has evolved from information literacy, one of the SUNY General Education Requirements.

Background: The original concept for this project is a modification of Blowers' "Learning 2.0" professional development activity initiated by Blowers, which was transformed into an assignment for the Introduction to Information Technology course in the University at Buffalo Department of Library and Information Studies/Graduate School of Education. Over the past 2 years, all students who completed course evaluations rated the activity as first or second in its level of importance to their learning. This positive response has inspired TOEP's customization to the needs of faculty. The core TOEP site is already established, comprised of tutorials and discovery exercises relating to Web 2.0 communication/collaboration tools (<http://sites.google.com/site/ubtoolsofengagement>).

TOEP's Operations:

TOEP self-directed learning activities provide faculty with:

- Practical knowledge regarding a variety of freely available online applications for teaching/learning.
- Background for developing their own innovative uses of online instructional technologies within their own teaching.
- Means to reflect on their learning and how these tools can impact their teaching practices.
- Greater comfort with collaborative instructional technologies, enabling them to incorporate 21st c. skills into student expectations in their courses.

A conservative estimate of TOEP's impact in Year 1 includes these constituencies:

- 2 collaborators at UB, coupled with one each at Cortland, BSC, and FSU (5).
- 4 "early adopters" at each of 4 campuses, who would be recruited to help disseminate information on the model and advise the project locally (16).
- 20 "late adopters" at each of 4 campuses who will use the materials as a primary source of professional development (80).

Primary project collaborator responsibilities include:

- Sullivan/UB (PI): Overall project coordination; funder coordination; collaborator coordination.
- Tysick/Sullivan/Grade/Shil/UB, BSC, FSU/Cortland: Build out existing modules and literature review of evidence/implementation.
- Tysick/Sullivan/Gradel/Burns/UB, BSC, FSU: Recruit faculty; establish "early adopters" as recruiters and advisors; provide technical assistance to participants; manage incentive distribution; do outreach.
- Sullivan/Gradel/Shi/UB, Cortland, FSU: Compile assessment tools; collect/analyze data; compile reports.

Feasibility: Because the core TOEP site is established, funding can be focused on assessing its value with faculty. Minimal compensation for the PI is requested, to facilitate focused time to coordinate efforts across campuses and collate/report data. Funding will also be used for incentives to encourage faculty participation. Collaborators will be supported with a small budget for securing apps or a mobile device, to facilitate their mentoring and technical support work of faculty.

Reports and Resources

- [Project website](#)
- [Project poster](#)
- [TOEP Phase 1](#) – press release & participant recruitment announcements
- [Video](#) introducing TOEP Phase 1
- [Audio recording](#) of an introductory session about TOEP
- [Recorded presentation](#) of an introductory session about TOEP
- [Prezi presentation](#) used at TOEP introductory sessions
- [TOEP poster](#) to hang in your department
- [TOEP postcards](#) to share with colleagues
- [Comments](#) from TOEP participants
- A [parallel](#) IITG project through Empire State College ran concurrently.

Faculty Development

- Faculty Digital Literacy
- [Organizational Models of Faculty Support](#)

Instructional Technologies

- Cloud-Based Teaching & Learning Environments