

Learning to Teach Workshop 2010 Report

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Academicians from around the globe united at the second Learning to Team Workshop co-organized by the WHO UNESCO FIP Pharmacy Education Taskforce and the FIP Young Pharmacists Group during the 70th International FIP Congress in Lisbon, Portugal.


The second Learning to Teach Workshop (LTT) was held as a pre-satellite half day workshop during the 70th FIP World Congress on Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. More than 30 participants from academia and industry participated in the workshop. This workshop was held after the successful hosting of the 1st LTT workshop in Istanbul during the 69th FIP Congress that drew participants from 28 countries. The workshop was organized by WHO UNESCO FIP Pharmacy Education Taskforce and FIP Young Pharmacists Group, and co-sponsored by the University of Nottingham and MediaPharm. The session offered the participants an opportunity to learn about the successes and challenges of teaching, from the perspectives of both young and senior faculty.

The Chair of the session, Vibhuti Arya (St. John's University), gave the introductory remarks and highlighted the key objectives of the session which included (1) to provide a space for exchange of ideas and tips on effective teaching (2) challenges of balancing academic life: teaching, scholarship/research, and service activities, (3) sharing of novel teaching tools from teaching environments across the world and (4) exchanging perspectives on new faculty development, and senior professional development: how junior and senior faculty can create an empowering exchange.


The first presentation *Young Educators in Pharmacy: Where do we go from here?*, was co-presented by Tina Brock from University of California San Francisco and Yaman Kaakeh from Purdue University School of Pharmacy. The presentation took the participants on a journey through Portugal, from the mountains of Serra da Estrela, to the city of Lisbon, as they discovered and explored their own path to learning. The “East Peak” of the mountains reflected Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs based on Theory of Human motivation (1943) by Abraham Maslow. The “North peak” covered Systemic Capacity building that addresses individual and institutional capacity building. The “West peak” covered different forms of teaching through Dale’s learning cone, which highlights that people remember 90% of what they do, e.g. via simulations or hands on experience, compared to only 20% of what they hear. The presentation highlighted the need to match teaching methods to the intended learning outcomes. The higher level cognitive skills such as analytical, creativity and evaluation abilities are achieved through performing the task, i.e. active participation in learning compared to passive learning methods. Miller’s pyramid, highlighting the development of professional expertise from knowledge to performance to action, was represented by the “South peak” of the mountains. The second stop after the mountains was Cascais - a beach area just outside Lisbon, where the Lisboetas find refuge from city life. In relation to sea diving, participants explored surface learning and deep learning as these apply to both the learner and the educator. Educators, particularly new academicians, were encouraged to seek deep learning to develop the ability to respond to change, be self-directed and motivated, eventually developing versatility and skills transferable to various environments. The 3rd stop was Aqualand Algarve, a well-known water-park and site of the anaconda water slide, which mirrors Kolb’s cycle of experiential learning. The key message from this cycle of learning was the crucial role of self reflection, which can help individuals to learn from past experiences and make progress rather than finding themselves in the same cyclic pattern of repeating old mistakes and behaviors without any time for reflection.

The final stop in the tour of Portugal was Lisbon, a place where, after the remnants of a devastating earthquake, acceptance of the past and a positive outlook on change led to a successful future.

Surface Learning vs. Deep Learning



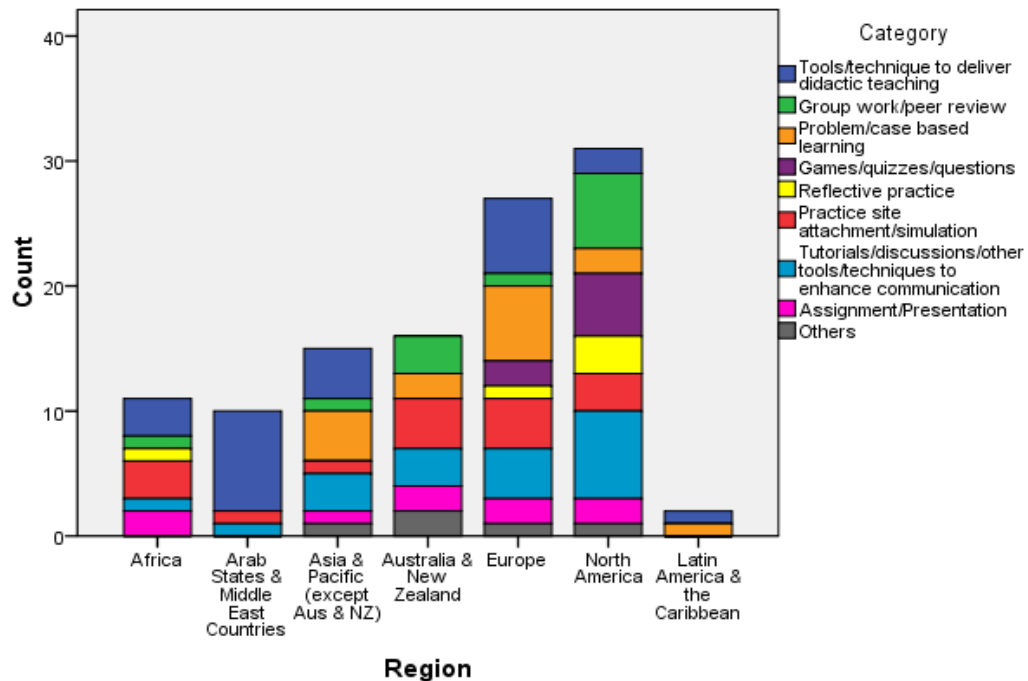
SURFACE	DEEP
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Focus on unrelated parts of the task▪ Focus only on assessment▪ Facts/concepts associated unreflectively▪ Emphasis is external	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Relates previous knowledge to new knowledge▪ Relates knowledge from different sources▪ Relates theoretical knowledge to everyday experience▪ Emphasis is internal



Adapted from Marton and Säljö (1976), Ramsden (1992), Biggs (1987, 1993) and Entwistle (1981)

After exploring the learning journey of young faculty, Zoe Lim (University of Nottingham), Majid Ali (University of Hertfordshire) and Yaman Kaakeh (Purdue University) went a step further to discuss the tools and techniques for learning and teaching. The discussion was introduced through a case study of a young faculty who had just received a low satisfaction score on her teaching from students on her first annual appraisal. She had to come up with an explanation on how she would improve her teaching in the future. A potential solution to this perplexed young faculty was to consider new ways of teaching amongst other potential solutions. Zoe then presented results of a global survey which captured an overview of tools and techniques employed by schools/education centers of pharmacy to supplement or substitute traditional teaching. Although technology was increasingly used in current teaching, it was not perceived as a must in enhancing learning by most pharmacy educators around the world. Indeed,

most responses from the survey discussed tools/techniques that enhanced didactic teaching, which included tools as simple and widespread as Microsoft Office PowerPoint for presentations. Other methods that were perceived as effective include feedback system, practice site attachment/simulation, and problem-based learning. Based on the survey results, participant then engaged in a debate on whether technology was necessary to enhance teaching/learning, and how technology could be used in a global framework for exchange of ideas and strategies.



Types of tools/techniques used in pharmacy education in different regions of the world

After a break, a panel discussion of 5 young faculty members – Zoe Lim (University of Nottingham, UK), Yaman Kaakeh (Purdue University School of Pharmacy, USA), Luther Gwaza (University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe), Vibhuti Arya (St. John’s University, USA) and Conan MacDougall (University of California San Francisco, USA) – had an opportunity to share their own experiences and thoughts on the importance of creating a learning plan. Key issues discussed were (1) importance of consulting with a mentor and how to identify mentor(s), (2) strategies to help juggle competing priorities, and (3) feeling of

isolation/disconnect from other faculty. In order to balance competing priorities, such as effective teaching, maintaining clinical evidence-base knowledge, research, and other projects that may include serving in committees, creating a self learning plan can be quite beneficial. A first step may be to know what one's own priorities and goals are, and what the institution expects of a young faculty member. Seeking mentorship can be quite critical; though having a mentor in a similar discipline is important, young faculty should not hesitate from seeking mentors outside of their institution and/or discipline. A critical piece about creating a learning plan is that of setting goals that are attainable within a realistic timeframe, and taking the time for self-reflection to revisit set goals and focus on personal and professional development. Another critical issue discussed was taking initiative as a young faculty member to seek resources, mentors, and opportunities that enhance learning and skills to be an effective educator, researcher, and successful individual.

The workshop concluded with a problem-based learning case study about "Dr Victoria Ideal", a young academic with a recent appointment as a Lecturer at the "Great University". Vibhuti Arya of St. John's University led the case discussion along with the session presenters, who served as small group facilitators. The case study highlighted "typical" situations that young academics often find themselves in as they start their careers – heavy workload, especially where there are shortages of academic staff, challenges in prioritizing competing responsibilities, need to do "good" at the expense of self and lack of mentorship/help when needed.

The case study allowed the participants to explore opportunities for "Dr Victoria Ideal" to be an effective educator, discuss work-life balance and how to prioritize issues, particularly in balancing teaching load and requirements for service and scholarship/research. The case discussion also explored strategies and options for young faculty to seek mentorship when in need. An important aspect of learning emerged

when “Dr. Ideal” was challenged by taking on additional responsibilities that were proving to be overwhelming; one of the key messages that was prevalent among the group was the recognition for young academics to learn how to say no to extra workload when one is overwhelmed with responsibilities. This was noted as a challenge for new young academics, and a possible solution was to discuss with a mentor who may serve as an advocate for the young faculty member.



Participants during the LTT workshop

Overall, this session provided the space for an exchange of ideas and strategies for new and experienced faculty, recognizing self reflection and commitment to lifelong learning as an important aspect for educators to adopt themselves as well as pass on to students. Participants and presenters also agreed that making such a workshop available annually would be a valuable addition to the FIP congresses. The consequent workshops will be similarly planned with the efforts of the FIP Young Pharmacists Group and the FIP Global Pharmacy Education Taskforce. For more information and interest to join the online community of practice, please email education@fip.org.

Key Points from Learning to Teach Workshop

1. Self reflection and feedback are important for personal and professional growth among new academics
2. Use of a variety of tools and teaching techniques, whether with advanced technology or not, can be important enhancements for effective teaching and global information exchange
3. Creating an individual learning plan with attainable goals in a realistic time frame can be useful in prioritizing tasks
4. Young academics should strive for deep learning in order to be lifelong learners and effective educators
5. It is important for young academics to take initiative themselves to seek guidance via mentorship – within or outside of their institution – and keep connected with a support network