CREATING EXCELLENT LEARNING EXPERIENCES:
A Gap Analysis of a University Extension Program
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INQUIRY QUESTIONS
1. What are the knowledge, motivation and organization causes that are barriers to instructors achieving their goal of creating curriculum that produce excellent learning experiences and increasing student satisfaction?
2. What are the recommended knowledge, motivation, and organizational solutions to those barriers?

KEY LITERATURE
• Increased demand, competition, and accountability impacting postsecondary education
• Continuing education programs must compete
• Excellence is not clearly defined
• Design of course affects learning experiences

METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Participants
• 330 BLP Instructors; must have taught one class in 2013-2014 academic year

Data Collection
• Survey: 25 items; online; 75 respondents
• Interview: 9 items; 9 interviewees; purposive sampling
• Document Analysis: 30 syllabi reviewed; institutional website reviewed

Data Analysis
• Descriptive analytics
• Eight-Step coding (Creswell, 2004)

SIGNIFICANCE & FINDINGS

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<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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| **Factual**
Instructors possess sufficient factual knowledge about the components of curriculum design, but factual knowledge not evident in application | **Choice**
Despite having high self-efficacy, instructors were choosing to spend time because they found value in the process | **Cultural Setting**
The institution does not foster a sense of accountability amongst instructors, but instructors feel personal accountability to students |

| **Conceptual and Procedural**
The lack of evidence of factual knowledge application indicates insufficient conceptual and procedural knowledge about applying curriculum components in their course syllabi | **Effort and Persistence**
Instructors find value in the feedback of course evaluations and IDP workshops, but actual use of information to improve courses was not confirmed | **Cultural Model**
There is not a strong sense of shared instructor community |

| **Metacognitive**
Instructors demonstrated that they possess metacognitive knowledge needed to reflect on the effectiveness of courses based on student learning | |

SOLUTIONS
1. Define and establish standards of excellence
2. Allocate resources to establish comprehensive Instructor Development Program
3. Instructor learning communities
4. Measures of excellence
5. Rewards and incentives

AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH
• No motivation causes validated but potential for motivation barrier in findings
• Comprehensive gap analysis to include other key stakeholders
• Explore student perspective of learning excellence