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Faculty Development in a Pandemic: Design and Delivery of Remote-Based Medical Education

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Background

- SELECT is a 4-year MD program offered by the partnership of the University of South Florida Health Morsani College of Medicine (USF MCOM) and Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN).
- With the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic, the need for the SELECT faculty to be able to design and deliver medical education curriculum remotely has proven to be both challenging and rewarding.
- Schools of medicine across the country have taken approaches such as...¹⁻³
 - Providing faculty with a resource database online for their own personal use as needed
 - Designing trainings, both synchronous and asynchronous to teach faculty how to use certain platforms such as Zoom
 - Building a team or department to construct a system in which faculty can learn what online tools to use for their individualized education plans
 - Giving access to help through experts, like IT support or module administrators
 - Opening forms of online communication for faculty to give and receive feedback from other educators
- The figure below shows how limited time was for SELECT faculty and support to learn the necessary technology to create an effective online learning environment for their students.

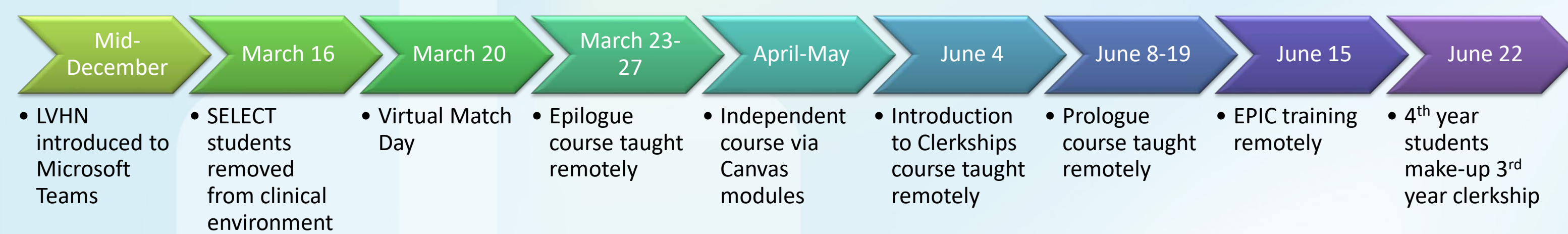


Figure 1. Timeline of medical education events affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

Objectives

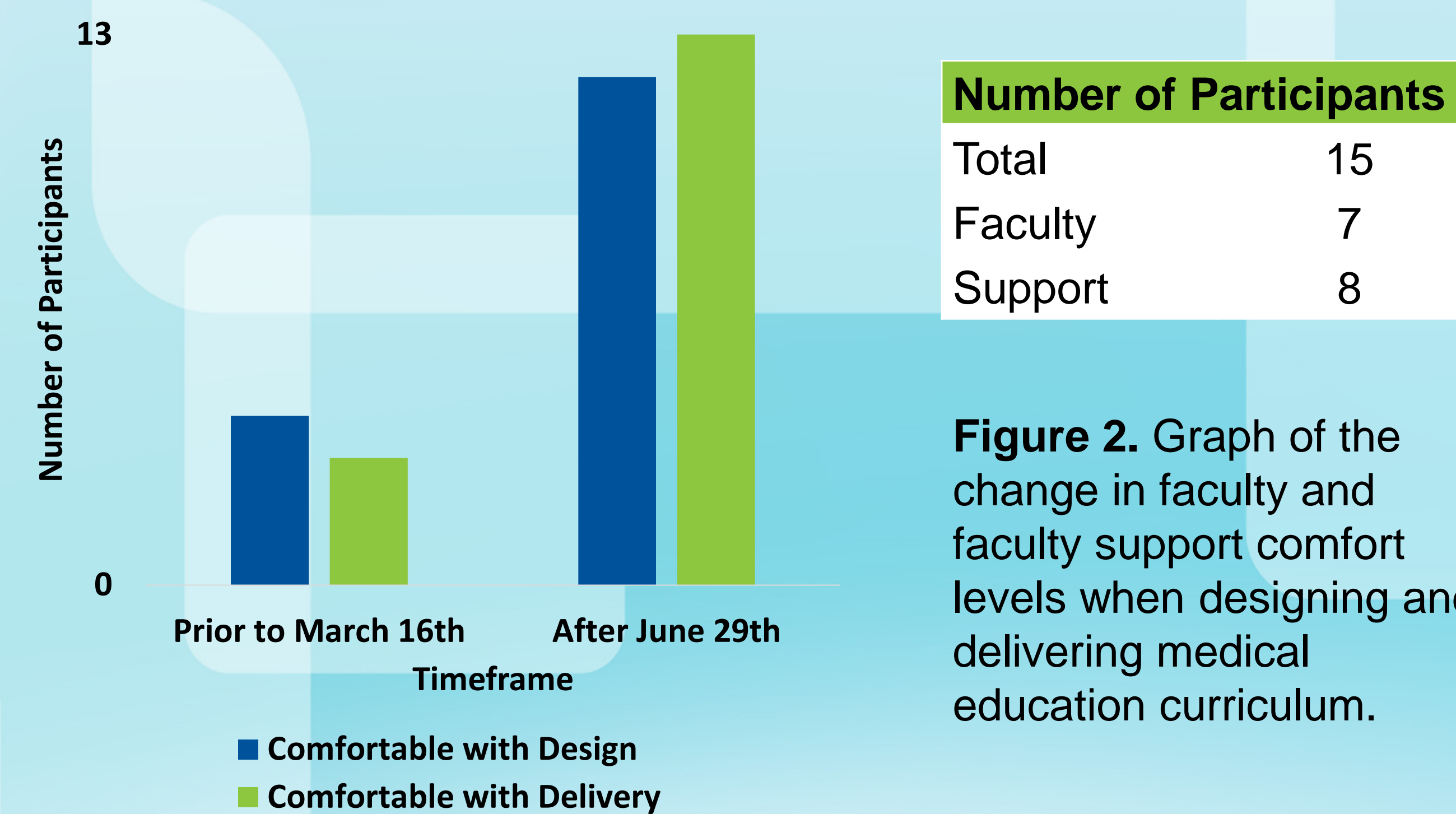
The purpose of this quality improvement project is to:

- Explore faculty perceptions of remote-based medical education
- List the tools and resources faculty utilized to deliver medical education curriculum during a pandemic
- Identify faculty development training needs to effectively design and deliver remote-based medical education

Methods

- Comprehensive literature review on published articles since the start of the pandemic
- Survey tool, delivered digitally, consisting of both Likert-scale and open-ended questions
- Follow-up interviews by phone utilizing a semi-structured questionnaire

Results



Number of Participants	
Total	15
Faculty	7
Support	8

Figure 2. Graph of the change in faculty and faculty support comfort levels when designing and delivering medical education curriculum.



Figure 3. Word cloud in which the font size correlates to the frequency of the word spoken in follow-up interviews. Faculty themselves had to learn in order for their students to learn, so therefore the word "learn" was spoken most often.

Challenges

- Obtaining user access for remoting into the network
- Not having prior experience with the online platforms for teaching

Areas for Improvement

- Advanced planning
- Tailored curriculum towards online learning
- Continual training for faculty and faculty support

Successes

- Familiarity with programs for virtual meetings
- More effective collaboration with colleagues

Conclusions

Themes

"It was like building an airplane while it was flying."
– USF Faculty

- Faculty and support prefer to have planning done in advance but noted just-in-time or independent searches were adequate
- Faculty and support do not want lengthy trainings and prefer trainings to be tailored to their needs
- Faculty and support prefer to have access to resources to learn on their own time
- Faculty and support are more inclined to receive help or training amongst fellow faculty and support.

"We didn't know what we didn't know."
– USF Faculty

- Varying levels of knowledge and experience with the online platforms made training design difficult
- Faculty and support relied on staff, such as an instructional technologist, to understand the platforms they were learning
- The decision to have trainings delivered virtually rather than in-person does not have an impact on whether faculty and support will attend
- Remote access into the network was a problem for faculty, which is a systems-issue and not directly related to the pandemic

Future Directions

- Continue the use of online learning management systems and platforms like Canvas, Teams, and WebEx
- Schedule debriefs/meetings with faculty and support team members to highlight successes and discuss lessons learned
- Explore innovative ways to engage faculty and provide continuous training and access to development resources
- Build an interactive guide of online educational tools for faculty to access as a resource for remote education

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