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Towards a pro-active model of professional development for tertiary level teachers in the United Arab Emirates

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TOWARDS A PRO-ACTIVE MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TERTIARY LEVEL TEACHERS IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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M.Ed., B.Ed.

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USE OF THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This body of work identifies the professional development needs of teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College in the UAE as their role in the classroom and pedagogical trends change in response to the needs of the 21st century global workforce. The aim of the research was to identify what pedagogical changes had impacted the teaching and learning environment at the college and subsequently to identify strategies and professional development models to prepare the teachers for dynamic developments in their teaching and learning environment. A pragmatic, interpretivist approach was taken in the study, drawing on qualitative data to explore ways to reflect and address the pedagogical challenges faced by staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The study is presented as a three phased case study: a focus group, student results data comparison and a teacher's workshop, formed the basis of this study.

Findings from the study reinforced the perception that teachers need to be prepared to continually respond to the needs of the workforce by embracing lifelong learning and imparting the same philosophy to their students. A framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College was constructed in response to the identified professional development needs of teachers at the College. It was found that working in a collaborative environment improved the professional learning environment and productivity for staff. The active participation of staff in the design of the professional development framework increased the potential for staff commitment to on-going learning.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The aim of this work is to provide further understanding, and ultimately a suggested framework, for practical strategies to ease the successful transition of education into the 21st century, using Abu Dhabi Men's College in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as a case study. The thesis of this body of work is that a clear strategy is needed to ease the transition from traditional teaching and learning methodologies to integrated, technology enhanced learning environments. The success of such a transition depends in part on a pro-active approach to teacher development, in addition to the appropriate funding and technical support that is necessary to create the new technology-rich learning environment (Waterhouse & Rogers, 2003).

Background and Overview

The UAE was founded in 1971 and has since grown into a thriving modern country largely due to its wealth from oil reserves. The UAE comprises seven emirates and is located in the Arabian Gulf. It is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council[1]. The country has undergone rapid change and to a great extent has embraced 'imperial' western systems in areas such as education. It may be considered that Western values have often been imposed on Emiratis as a result of this.

The Higher Colleges of Technology is a college system of twelve campuses, six for male students and six for female students, founded in 1988. Students enrolled in programs with the Higher Colleges of Technology are exclusively citizens of the UAE. They have all completed high school and are subsequently provided with state-funded higher

[1] The Arabian Gulf States comprise: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (also known as the Gulf Cooperation Council or GCC).

education, both tuition and materials, by the UAE government. Diploma, Higher Diploma and Bachelor programs are offered by Business, Engineering, Communications Technology and Information Technology faculties.

From the perspective of students enrolling in college for the first time subsequent to achieving a High School Diploma in the UAE, the contrast in educational philosophies, the expectations of their educators and the delivery methods and media used in the classroom are marked. In spite of great strides to gradually improve the standard of basic government school education in recent years, methods continue to be traditional (for the Arab world) in the sense that much learning is achieved by rote and classes are extremely prescriptive to the point where creativity from teachers, or indeed students, is not encouraged.

Emerging from such a restrictive learning environment students have established beliefs about knowledge and how it is acquired. These preconceptions of knowledge and learning change within a short time of entering a college environment with English as the medium rather than Arabic, which encourages critical thinking and independent learning and which has an international, culturally rich faculty. Add this to the fact that after one semester of basic computer instruction, and possibly their first ever experience of using a computer, students will be required to use a laptop in the majority of their classes, have honed their internet research skills and be able to give a presentation using Power Point, it becomes clear that the transformation will be considerable.

Barlow & Floyd (1999) address the subject of learning materials and the learning environment when they relate the comparatively short history of the Undergraduate Requirements Unit at the UAE University, opened in 1990. The methodology as well as the faculty was "western" and commercially produced materials were passed through a censorship committee. Such topics as sex, religion, politics, drinking, dating, pork and music were censored (Barlow, et al., 1999). The UAE University unit

became responsible for authoring in-house materials that were culturally sensitive, appropriate and relevant to the Emirati students. A few years later the department realized that by providing materials that were culturally sensitive they deprived students of a wide exposure to other cultures and accordingly a well-rounded education. Barlow, et al., (1999, p.12) comment that, 'more recent (UGRU) materials production reflects an adaptation and conversion to the society in which we teach. Materials writers are finding that it is possible to produce engaging culturally sensitive course materials for UAE students'.

Current students at the Higher Colleges of Technology have completely uncensored materials and free access to the Internet. Students in the UAE are living in a fast-moving, rapidly developing environment and embrace cultural diversity as an important component of their education.

Cultural Context

Traditionally, students in the UAE did not attend formal school (Al Fahim, 1995). Those who did receive an education memorized the Holy Quran and learned basic mathematics. Often classrooms were outside, under the shade of a tree. Since the Holy Qur'an is considered by the Islamic world to be the word of God as provided by the Prophet Mohammed, it could be learned with no thought to questioning its truth and reliability. The dilemma now faced by students in the Arab world, and particularly in the UAE, is that current learning materials encourage them to think critically and even to question the teacher. Both these concepts would have been unheard of prior to 1960 when schools more closely representing the western variety were introduced to the UAE.

Eident (2001) suggests that formal education is a key mechanism in passing culture to new generations and that the Arab teaching methods have a significant affect on their culture. He explains that whilst the example of Abu Dhabi represents an extreme, that the Arab tradition continues to be based on religious teachings and memorization. The combination of these

two factors creates a cultural orientation based on unquestioned authority and processes that do not lead to 'Western Scientific' questioning methods (Eident, 2001).

Emirati students are frequently from large families with ten or so children and it is not unusual to have at least one parent who has not received a formal education, and indeed cannot read or write. Culturally, the Emiratis are a tribal people with the Islamic religion and family being high priorities in life.

Challenges Facing Students

A typical First Year Program at the Higher Colleges of Technology, specifically at Abu Dhabi Men's College, comprises of approximately 400 Emirati students who are recent high school graduates from public government-run schools in the UAE, and whose first language is Arabic. The overall emphasis of the first year of the Higher Colleges of Technology programs is to provide students with sufficient knowledge and skills, in an integrated environment and using the latest technology available, to enable them to perform well in any program they may choose to specialize in whilst studying for a Diploma, Higher Diploma or Bachelor's Degree.

Academic Challenges

In the case of freshman students in the Diploma Program at Abu Dhabi Men's College, whilst learning in the English medium, they must simultaneously acquire proficiency in the areas of Information Technology (knowledge of both hardware and software); research and general information skills; teamwork; independent learning; critical thinking and analytical skills. Part of the challenge faced by higher education students in the UAE is coming to terms with being taught by a multi-cultural faculty whilst handling the transition from high school to college. Student progress at the Higher Colleges of Technology is mapped according to graduate outcomes in the areas of communications & information literacy; critical thinking, problem solving and interdisciplinary exploration; global

awareness; information technology; self-management & lifelong learning; teamwork & leadership and vocational competence (see Appendix II).

Challenges Facing Teachers

Classroom delivery in programs throughout the Higher Colleges of Technology is expected to include a high proportion of technology-based learning activities. Approximately one third of each course is prescribed to be project-based, open-ended learning with the teacher acting as facilitator. Increasingly, Higher Colleges of Technology faculty members are directed towards this form of delivery. For staff, this implies a shift in both their role and epistemological beliefs of teaching and learning. Practitioners need to re-examine their beliefs related to knowledge and knowledge acquisition. They also need to examine and explore the opportunities for their own professional development, particularly in the field of technology. In addition to this, they must deliver professional, integrated, technology-based lessons irrespective of their own beliefs regarding what knowledge and education really are.

The transition to a more technologically-based classroom and corresponding teaching methodologies is significant and requires strategic planning. Faculty members, already under stress from increased teaching hours, may find the challenge of remaining abreast of the changes somewhat overwhelming. For more experienced faculty members, who may have received their teaching qualifications between ten and twenty years ago, the provision of a supportive professional development program is essential. In order for faculty members to be responsive, confident and productive, current knowledge and training is vital.

Professional Interest and Motivation

In 2000, laptops were introduced to students, starting with the freshmen as they entered college, by senior management at Abu Dhabi Men's College as an initiative to respond to the rapid changes in the field of ICT. This was Phase One of the three phase implementation which would be

completed in three years, at the same time gradually dispensing with the more traditional computer labs. Subsequent cohorts would need to purchase laptops upon registering for college thus dispensing with the need to provide and maintain desktop computers for student use at the college. Those teachers assigned to teach freshmen students were also provided with laptops and asked to integrate them into teaching and learning activities wherever possible.

As the program manager for the Diploma Year 1 at Abu Dhabi Men's College I am responsible for addressing the issues of training, developing suitable materials, reviewing and suggesting suitable methodologies for adapting to the new teaching and learning approach at the college, and for the successful implementation and eventual outcomes of integrated learning.

Initially, I considered the main challenge to be the adaptation of the learning environment to include the increased and integrated use of educational technology, and read a wealth of literature on the subject of Problem-based Learning and Open-ended Learning Environments (APA, 1997; Blumenfeld, Soloway, Marx, Krajcik, Guzdial & Palincsar, 1991; Butler & Winne, 1995; CTGV, 1991; Duffy & Cunningham, 1996; Hill & Land, 1998; Land & Greene, 2000, Land & Hannafin 1996, 1998; Land & Hill, 1997; Lebow, 1993). These works addressed considerations that would need to be made when creating a framework for a student-centered learning environment which would encourage active engagement, authenticity, collaboration, reflectivity, and to some extent, self-regulation. However, at that time there appeared to be no available literature on setting up this type of learning environment in the context of Middle Eastern students who had previously had little exposure to Western teaching methodologies and concepts.

The next step, prior to the introduction of laptops in 2000, was to review the literature on computer-based, integrated learning systems (Becker, 1994, 2000; Becker & Ravitz, 2001; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1992;

Boyle & Rigg, 2000; Hannafin & Land, 2000; Hill & Hannafin, 1995; 1996; Hokanson & Hooper, 2000; Jacobson & Spiro, 1995; Jonassen, 2000; Jonassen & Reeves, 1996; NCATE, 1997) to determine the most suitable approach for the integration of technology into the learning environment. The literature reviewed related to mother tongue English speakers and highlighted an area that would need further research, i.e. the integration of educational technology into English medium institutions at tertiary level in Arab countries.

The aim at Abu Dhabi Men's College was to create a learning environment where emerging technology and learning theory would be combined to support the building of student-centered understanding. The students would construct their own individual learning by engaging in authentic projects and problem-solving activities. Students would employ the relevant technologies to achieve their goals, which they would identify themselves, and accordingly, understanding would evolve dynamically as theories were generated and explored (Land & Hannafin, 1996). However, due to a shortage of preparation time for these significant changes to the learning environment, teacher development was not given the appropriate priority at Abu Dhabi Men's College. It was assumed that teachers' existing skills sets would enable them to prepare to integrate technology into their classrooms, in addition to transforming the learning environment and creating constructivist frameworks.

The role of the program manager was to provide guidance by suggesting a fundamental framework for the design of the new learning environment, and to share any knowledge of best practices that had been summarized from the available literature. In practice, the level of difficulty of the task proved to have been underestimated. Teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College had prepared for several months prior to the introduction of laptops and a more constructivist learning environment. However, managing a group of twenty relatively undisciplined, freshman students who have limited computer skills and who have had no experience in such a learning

environment proved to be very stressful for many of the teachers. They suddenly found themselves transformed into a combination of ESL teacher, computer teacher and information technology specialist.

Aim of This Study

Since 2000 many lessons have been learned about how to approach the introduction of educational technology in the classroom at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The faculty members were all equipped with the fundamental and, through further study, the specialist knowledge, to enable them to adapt their teaching methods and style to the new paradigm. However, the degree of preparation and materials development involved proved to be significantly more than had been estimated. Whilst not an insurmountable problem, this was exacerbated by the need to spend a great deal of time updating their IT skills and learning new Learning Management Systems, e.g. WebCT. Consequently, the new learning environment was not popular in the staffroom. This challenge is reflected by Straub (2003, p.51) who concludes that,

> A successful transition to a new model in education requires, as a starting point, a shared vision of how to design tomorrow's education and training, and shared commitment from the stakeholders involved. However, the initial priority may be to change perceptions and develop new mindsets (Straub, 2003, p.51).

In retrospect, faculty members should have been included in the early discussions surrounding the introduction of laptop learning at Abu Dhabi Men's College. They had only one semester to revisit their course goals and objectives and rethink their course delivery. This timeframe would have been adequate had some professional development, targeted at the new scenario in the classroom, been made available. However, the outcome was teachers with differing and unclear expectations, who were lacking in confidence and somewhat daunted by the prospect of using a Smart Board or communicating with their students via software. The 'shared vision', that Straub (2003, p.51) mentions, was not in evidence.

Once I recognized that faculty members were less than comfortable in their new roles it became evident that professional development opportunities would need to be planned. Understanding that, due to time constraints, professional development would not be a popular option, time was set aside at the end of our twice monthly departmental meetings for a half hour session on technology or teaching and learning. There was no formal program for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College in 2000, but twice a year a week was set aside for workshops offering staff development. Clearly, this was an area that we needed to address in order to support the faculty members and successful student learning. Straub (2003) supports the theory that critical to the success of the introduction of technology into the classroom is the degree to which teachers accept and adopt the new technologies, and that a central part of the approach to change management must be the sustainable support of professional development. New knowledge and software are constantly being developed and the expertise of the faculty members must remain in tandem with these developments.

The Significance of This Study

This study provides a framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College which will enable faculty members to sustain their momentum and level of expertise in line with developments in the field of pedagogy and educational technology. Faculty members are more likely to take ownership of the professional development program when they have contributed to it from the outset. This cascading of skills and information will provide them with added confidence and kudos in the community.

A pro-active approach to professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College will be a significant contribution to the college and may be shared amongst the twelve-college Higher Colleges of Technology system as a best practice. The challenge of producing graduates who are able to succeed, develop and prosper in the Information Age is widespread.

However, programs to support the faculty members responsible for providing such rich learning opportunities are rare in the UAE.

Boundaries of This Study

Whilst it is possible that the case of Abu Dhabi Men's College may be very similar to the other eleven Higher Colleges of Technology, it may not necessarily be transferable to institutions of higher education in other countries, although there may be many similar scenarios in the Arab world. The students are all Arabic speakers with a relatively homogenous background, i.e. exclusively Emirati. Using the English language as a medium, teachers need to address the balance of using technology in the classroom with the fact that assessments are written by hand and that Arab learners need additional practice at this. Teachers need to be sensitive to the materials they suggest and introduce to their students, and they must also be aware of the scope of the Internet and understand that their students must be responsible and encouraged to make good choices.

An additional limitation of the professional development provided as part of the framework is that it is rather generic. This is by design since the majority of the faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College teach general education and the aim is to appeal to, and support, as many teachers as possible. Specialist areas may be covered by industry leaders visiting the college and discussing developments in their field.

The Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to provide grounded examples of changes which have taken place in classroom delivery at Abu Dhabi Men's College since the introduction of laptop learning in 2000, and how teachers have managed the change in pedagogical approach. A further aim of this study is to develop a framework for professional development to support ongoing change in a pro-active manner. To arrive at the framework for pro-active professional development this study addressed two questions:

1. What pedagogical influences have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College?

2. What models of professional development prepare tertiary teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College for dynamic developments in the teaching and learning environment?

Structure of the Portfolio

Chapter 2 reviews the provision of higher education in the UAE and discusses the dynamic and constantly changing needs of the workforce in this rapidly developing country. Educators at tertiary level have a responsibility to maintain open communication and develop partnerships with industry in order to ensure that they are providing students with appropriate and relevant learning opportunities that will prepare them adequately for careers in the 21st century.

This chapter also provides a background and illustrates the partnerships that Abu Dhabi Men's College has built within the community. It indicates the significant initiatives that the college has implemented since it was established in 1988, such as introducing Program Advisory Committees, Program Quality Assurance measures and how the college has developed in line with the needs of the community and the workforce. Frequent change requires effective change management strategies and a sound staff development plan.

Chapter 3 focuses on two research questions and discusses appropriate methods of investigation that will culminate in a suggested framework for the professional development of faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Teachers require ongoing development in line with the constant changes in their remit in reaction to the needs of the community and the labour market of the UAE. The chapter explores the collaborative development of a platform to assist teachers to remain abreast of the changes in technology and software.

Chapter 4 addresses the impact of globalization on teachers in tertiary education. The chapter draws on a focus group which was held at Abu Dhabi Men's College in December 2003 to discuss the role of the teacher and strategies for managing change. The focus group examines the pedagogical influences which have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at the College.

Chapter 5 builds upon the focus group data which highlighted a number of issues surrounding the use of contemporary pedagogical methodologies versus more traditional classroom delivery methods and compares the actual assessment results of two groups of students at Abu Dhabi Men's College during the academic year 2002/2003. The comparison discusses the delivery methods used in each of the two groups and comments on the value-added aspect of education. The impact of the changing teaching and learning environment on assessment results is reviewed in light of teachers' differing beliefs and approaches to delivery and learning outcomes.

Chapter 6 highlights the need for a framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College in order to meet the needs of the value-added skills which complement the curriculum. A workshop held at the college in December 2004 encouraged participants to reflect upon the skills they had developed during their careers and anticipate the new skills they would need to develop in the coming years. A suggested professional development framework was devised based on the skills identified by the workshop participants. By having input into the planning and perhaps by offering to deliver a professional development session themselves, faculty members were expected to respond positively to this approach and take ownership of the program.

The final chapter provides conclusions and offers recommendations for a professional development framework for teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College to enable them to rise to meet the challenge of pedagogical changes

within a dynamic teaching and learning environment based on the findings of the three phase case study.

Summary

Reforms in higher education are in direct response to developments in technology and to the needs of workforce. The aim of this body of work is to address the needs of the Abu Dhabi Men's College community in maintaining currency and graduating a well-prepared workforce to sustain the economic development of the UAE.

The impact of methodological change in tertiary education on in-service teachers is dramatic. It is critical that a framework for ongoing teacher development be established in order to support and encourage innovative and creative educational opportunities. This case study provides the context for examining the development of a pragmatic, contextual framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

CHAPTER 2[2]

HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UAE

This chapter focuses on the provision of higher education in the UAE in light of the vital role it is playing in the development of the country. Attention is given to the issues surrounding strategies employed by institutions to prepare tertiary level students for careers in the global economy. Dramatic growth and development in the Arabian Gulf region over the past two decades made fundamental changes in the education system necessary. There is a shift in focus from more traditional education and delivery methods, to contemporary approaches to support student learning with the emphasis on preparing students for careers in the knowledge economy. These changes in higher education, and its widespread provision, impact the UAE and its economy in particular. This chapter reviews the provision of higher education, its role in the rapidly developing society and economy of the UAE, and how the community is contributing to and benefiting from emerging partnerships.

The Provision of Higher Education in the UAE

The Gulf Cooperation Council states have witnessed dramatic population growth since the early 1990's. Coffman (2003) reports an annual growth rate of three percent, and that approximately sixty percent of the population in the region is under sixteen years of age. The implications for education are enormous and issues such as funding, infrastructure, staffing, curriculum and keeping pace with the needs of the increasingly global workforce in the knowledge economy are significant. Literature relevant to these issues is scant in relation to the Arabian Gulf region. However, Aungles, Karmel & Wu (2000) identify the likely long-term implications for

[2] This chapter has been published. Nicks-McCaleb, L. (2005). The impact of state-funded higher education on neighbourhood and community in the United Arab Emirates. *International Educational Journal, 6*(3), 322-334. http://iej.cjb.net

education of major demographic change in Australia which serves as a timely alert for governments and educators worldwide. As populations around the world age and live longer, governments' social expenditure worldwide will be put under increasing pressure. Longevity in the UAE has increased significantly in the past thirty years due to dramatically increased living conditions, as has the child mortality rate, and the birthrate continues to increase encouraged by the government and its nation building policies[3].

The provision and funding of quality education is a concern in developed and developing countries as governments and other authorities search for a panacea. Reviewing the literature on the marketization (Brown & Lauder, 1996; Friedman, 1962; Ladd & Fiske, 2003; Marginson, 1996) and privatization (Caldwell, 2003a; Fitz & Beers, 2002; Mintzberg, 1996) of education, it appears that no single strategy, solution or formula provides consistent, good quality education on a global basis (Cuban, et al., 2001; OECD, 2001). Aungles et al., (2000) predict an even greater shift in demographics over the next twenty-five years with a significant increase in older age groups at the expense of younger demographic groups, and this would appear to be a worldwide trend, although perhaps less so in the UAE where the birthrate may continue to increase. They point out that governments are likely to focus on providing for the elderly rather than on educational expenditure. Logically, those who have paid taxes should be entitled to a high standard of healthcare and a state pension upon retirement. However, government investment in education and the development of the future workforce, and therefore the economic prosperity of their countries must also be a high priority. Striking an appropriate balance and allocating social expenditure according to a realistic, well-planned and sustainable vision would appear to be sound government policy.

[3] As at 2000, birthrate = 18 births/1,000 population; death rate = 3.68 deaths/1,000 population; infant mortality rate = 17.17 deaths/1,000 live births and fertility rate = 3.29 children born per woman.
http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/United+Arab+Emirates

The worldwide demographic trends and related issues are particularly complex in the UAE where there is no income tax, although there is the clear expectation that the government will provide education, healthcare, pensions, and continue to develop the infrastructure of the country in line with the increasing needs of the community. In the emirate of Abu Dhabi, these social services are funded by oil revenues and other government investment, but in less wealthy areas of the country, resources are under great pressure. In the opinion of this paper, the first signs of strain have started to show in the field of education, due to the immense increase in the number of school and college-aged Emiratis.

Perceived threats to successful growth and development of the country may also relate to the very high expectations that citizens of the UAE have of their government. Generally, citizens of the UAE have the expectation that their children will receive state-funded basic and higher education which will eventually lead to gainful employment and a high level of remuneration. Access to education at all levels is seen as a right rather than a privilege (Bahgat, 1999), and open enrollment has previously ensured a place at either a government funded college or university upon graduation from high school (Sharè, 1999). The socio-economic status of a family is not an issue; in fact there are few and incomplete records relating to family income in the UAE. In the early years of the building of this nation, and with an Emirati population of less than one million during the 1980's and 1990's, the above expectations were reasonable. Previously, young men would be provided with employment opportunities upon leaving school courtesy of a friend of the family, or perhaps even join the family business. Those better placed in society received the more lucrative government and oil company positions, thus perpetuating the cycle. It would seem that in recent years this practice has begun to diminish and more onus appears to be placed upon competence and qualifications, although to a limited extent.

In this chapter the focus is based on three main major issues relating to higher education in the UAE: the provision of higher education

examining available options and educational strategies employed to meet the needs of the community and workforce; the role of the business community in the transformation of higher education programs, and finally, the importance of life-long learning in the information age in the context of further developing the human capital of the UAE.

The Impact of Higher Education on Society

Global trends in education indicate that a serious review and reform of the status quo in education is needed (Caldwell, 2003a). A good standard of basic education is the first step towards building a strong workforce in any country (Cuban, et al., 2001) and there is a major role for the government and community in aspiring to a positive neighborhood effect in an effort to provide and maintain a high quality learning environment, and ultimately strengthen the community (Friedman, 1962). Friedman (1962) writes about the 'neighborhood effect' with education benefiting the individual, the family, the community and eventually the economy and the country as a whole. Education plays a significant role in building and sustaining a country (Brown & Lauder, 1996), and educational leadership should therefore be seen as a key component in that process. Bahgat (1999) provides an overview of the transformation from traditional to modern education in the Arabian Gulf region and comments on how the parameters have previously been unlike those in many other parts of the world, although worldwide trends are increasingly becoming relevant to the Gulf context with the widespread implementation of technology in the information age.

In the UAE strategic leadership of education is particularly essential as socio-economic and political transformation has been significant and dramatic during the past twenty years. Bahgat (1999) asserts that a strategic, well-articulated focus would appear to have been overlooked in the expansion and transformation of education in Arabian Gulf region since changes have been so rapid. Caldwell & Spinks (1992) discuss leadership strategies and provide five statements, which although designed to be

applied to institutions in the Asia-Pacific region, would appear to be equally of value in the UAE at primary, middle, secondary or tertiary level. They claim that educational leadership is strategic when it involves: remaining abreast of trends, issues, threats and opportunities; sharing knowledge in the community; establishing structures and processes; ensuring the community is focused on the strategies, and monitoring and reviewing of the implementation of these strategies (Caldwell, et al., 1992).

Established in 1971, the UAE is a young country. The economy of Abu Dhabi emirate is based on the oil industry but more diversity has recently been introduced in the shape of banking and finance, light industry and tourism. Neither citizens nor expatriates pay income tax to the government and the infrastructure and development of the country is funded directly by the government. State-funded basic and higher education, including textbooks, is free to citizens of both genders. Private basic education in the UAE[4] is often followed by higher education overseas or at one of the recently established private universities in the UAE. However, increasingly within the past five years, overseas universities have begun to open branches in the UAE or develop affiliations with existing private colleges[5]. To some extent, this may be in response to the events of the attacks on the USA on September 11, 2001, since when higher education credentials from the USA and other Western countries continue to be highly desirable and any political differences would appear to be overlooked where the continued economic development of the country is concerned.

Wealthier Emirati families tend to make the same choices as those in other countries, although perhaps for different reasons, and frequently send their children to private schools. There is significant prestige attached to being in a position to send ones children to a private school where they will

[4] Expatriate children are expected to attend private schools, usually community schools such as Al Khubairat British School http://www.britishschool.sch.ae/ and the American Community School of Abu Dhabi http://www.acs.sch.ae/ . Such schooling is available to expatriate and Emirati students who qualify academically and whose parents are prepared to pay the fees.

become proficient in English and mix with students of other nationalities, especially since parents, and certainly their grandparents are unlikely to have attended school at all in the accepted western sense. The international credentials earned at private schools carry great kudos in the community and are an indication of a positive future career.

Higher Education Choices in the UAE

It is important to consider the contextual background when discussing higher education in the UAE. The sector has grown dramatically over the past twenty-five years and now offers two government universities: UAE University in Al Ain which was founded in 1977, and Zayed University, based in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, founded in 1998, and twelve federal Higher Colleges of Technology campuses located in six emirates. There are an additional twenty-three non-government, higher education and training institutions currently licensed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, eleven of which have been accredited by the ministry thus assuring their quality (Tanmia, 2004).

As this chapter reviews the provision of higher education and the strategies being implemented in the UAE to manage changes in the educational environment, it will provide examples to illustrate what is currently being done to address pertinent educational issues from the perspective of the Higher Colleges of Technology, specifically Abu Dhabi Men's College and its immediate community.

In the past ten years the higher education sector has grown four-fold, with the confirmed enrollment figure of 37,548 for the academic year 2001-02, 70 per cent of which are women. The uptake of higher education has also increased dramatically with 95 per cent of all female secondary school leavers and 73 per cent of all male secondary school leavers embarking upon college courses of study. Higher Colleges of Technology graduate

[5] Typically, higher education for the children of expatriates is provided in their home countries.

numbers were modest until 1998 when the graduating class was 1,437. This trend has continued in recent years[6] due to infrastructural improvements in the system, with new campuses being opened in the more rural emirates in order to reach a wider catchment area.

Government run and funded higher educational institutions in the UAE are segregated, although private institutions are frequently co-educational. It is also noteworthy that the combined number of college graduates produced each year is comparable with that of some individual institutions in larger, more developed countries. The table below illustrates the breakdown between private and government institutions, by gender, for the academic year 2001-2002 which saw a total of 7,117 students graduate from college in the entire country (Tanmia, 2004). Based on the number of students currently in secondary school, the expected increase in the uptake and eventual graduation from higher educational institutions for the first five years of the current century is approximately 37 per cent overall (Tanmia, 2004).

Table 2.1
Number of UAE National Graduates from Accredited Federal and Private Higher Educational Institutions, by gender, 2001/2002

Institution	Male	Female	Total
Private Higher Education Institutions	262	624	886
Zayed University (2 campuses)	0	379	379
Higher Colleges of Technology (11 campuses)	1237	2084	3321
UAE University	438	2093	2531
Total	1937 (27%)	5180 (73%)	7117 (100%)

Source: CLMRI (Tanmia), 2004 – from various sources

[6] Recent numbers of graduates from the HCT: 2001 – 2,536; 2002 – 3,321; 2003 – 3,922. Projected growth in number of HCT graduates for 2004 is 4,635 and 2005 is 5,299 (HCT, 2001)

The Position of Private Higher Education

The UAE was the first country in the GCC to authorize private higher education (Coffman, 2003). Private institutions, mostly from the USA and primarily based in Dubai and Sharjah in the UAE, are not seen as a threat by the government, but rather as a positive solution to managing the increased numbers of students in need of higher education. This increase could not have been accommodated had it not been for the on-going growth and development of the international private universities (Robertson, 2000). Private institutions are also viewed in the community as healthy competition (Cerny, 1995; Wade 1996), and as being in tune with the needs of the private sector and international workforce standards (Coffman, 2003). Perhaps more importantly for the students who graduate from these private institutions, they will earn a credential from an international university to help smooth their career path, although it is currently highly unusual for Emiratis to seek employment overseas. Dore (1997), Livingstone (1998) and Lowe (2000) have explored the topic of international credentials further and addressed issues relating to credentialism in a global context.

Post-Graduate Options in the UAE

Post-graduate studies in the UAE are offered at government and private institutions, such as, UAE University, Zayed University, University of Sharjah, the American University of Sharjah, Dubai University College, and the University of Wollongong, all of which offer Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs. Historically, distance education qualifications have not been accredited by the Ministry of Higher Education in the UAE. However, this is set to change with the launch of Universitas 21 Global www.u21global.com/mideast which offers online MBA programs from sixteen different accredited universities worldwide, it would appear that business programs are abundant compared to the opportunities in other majors.

Opportunities for post-graduate studies in the sciences include those offered at UAE University, which runs three post-graduate programs:

Master of Science in Environmental Sciences; Master of Materials Science and Engineering and Master of Science in Water Resources. These programs are offered free of charge to eligible candidates since the university is government run and funded. An example of post-graduate alternatives in the private sector would be the American University of Sharjah which runs Master's programs in Mechatronics and Urban Planning. Further program options for study at post-graduate level are being prepared and developed at Ajman University of Science and Technology and Etisalat Engineering College. In the longer term the proposal is that doctoral studies will become available both in the government and private sectors.

The 21st Century Workforce

At the start of 2004 the total population of the UAE, including expatriates, reached approximately 4 million (UAE-The official website, 2004), with Emiratis comprising 9 per cent of the total UAE workforce, while 2 per cent of them were unemployed, according to the three-part Employment and Human Resource Report 2004, released by the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (Tanmia, 2004). The report focuses on strategies for increasing employment amongst UAE nationals, particularly in the private sector, career development, improving work skills, and highlights the need to reform higher education. These goals are echoed and supported by Al-Suwaidi (1999) who asserts that it is imperative that the UAE pursues more aggressive and diverse human resource development policies.

The Tanmia (2004) report stresses the need for a curriculum that is oriented to the job market. This supports the argument raised by Coffman (2003) in favour of international private higher education which better suits the needs of private sector employers. A similar argument is addressed by Bahgat (1999) and Al-Sulayti (1999) who highlight the mismatch between the needs of the labour force and the educational system in the Arabian Gulf region. A total of 13,361 UAE nationals are expected to enter the job market

in 2004 according to Tanmia (2004), and the projected figures for 2006 and 2010 are 16,187 and 19,610 respectively. Since 57 per cent of the UAE population is currently below the age of twenty those charged with leadership roles in education are examining ways of addressing the needs of this rapidly growing nation for the 21st century.

The UAE state higher education budget has been frozen for five years[7] in spite of a significant increase in population, and this is especially alarming in light of the demographic data relating to increases in high school and college-aged students. Add to this the focus of the government on emiratization and the development of a workforce for the knowledge society of the 21st century, and it becomes clear that parents as well as educators must review their traditional strategies and approaches to providing quality teaching and learning. The situation in the UAE is that the under-funding of higher education has had an impact on a previously liberal admissions policy (Sharè, 1999). This can be equated to the gradual and surreptitious global trend of the withdrawal of support and government funding of schools worldwide. Many schools worldwide are in a poor state of repair, teachers are dissatisfied with their salaries and working conditions, and a perception that state schools are falling short of their responsibilities being nurtured by governments. In the opinion of this paper, such a strategy may be in an effort to abdicate responsibility for a vital, expensive and politically sensitive service which affects a country's entire population and is an easy target in political campaigns. The effects of this reduced level of government support are already being felt in the labour market according to Tanmia (2004) who highlight a number of disturbing facts that need to be addressed by the community as a whole and educators in particular to ensure continued economic success and growth in the UAE.

[7] Funds are occasionally forthcoming from other sources such as sheihks and other benefactors in the community, partnerships in industry and events such as conferences.

Of those registered with Tanmia as unemployed (2004):

- 76.6 per cent are females
- 50.8 per cent have completed their higher education
- 70 per cent are aged between 20-29
- Higher Colleges of Technology graduates in health sciences (1996-2001) say 40.8 per cent of them are unemployed
- The number of UAE University graduates who registered with Tanmia did so in the unemployed and not the job-seekers category
- Males were able to find jobs more easily than their female counterparts, although both had the same educational qualifications
- Tanmia were able to place only 12.6 percent of 6,563 job-seekers in 2003 (Al Rostamani, 2004)

A possible further ramification of the freezing of funding in higher education may also be a subtle move by the government to increase the pace of emiratization. Emiratis lacking higher education would be forced into the situation where they would have to accept blue collar or low-level clerical positions, currently held by workers from the sub-continent who would subsequently be returned to their homelands. The workforces of Oman and Bahrain for example comprise citizens employed at all levels, unlike the UAE where citizens currently expect to be employed at management level.

Future Strategic Development

The significance of the role that schools play in preparing students for higher education, and ultimately for their future careers, should not be underestimated. In the UAE the school system is currently under scrutiny by external contractors with a view to long-term educational reform (Za'za,

2004). However, the quest for an ideal solution continues worldwide and the OECD (2001) supports the opinion that there may be a number of possible solutions, rather than one simple answer, to the future of schools. It is vital that educational reform should be viewed holistically, rather than simply extracting methodologies and curricula which work elsewhere and attempting to transplant them into a different country with a different culture and values set. Addressing educational issues in isolation and with a fragmented approach, rather than holistically, is rarely successful in the longer term. Unfortunately, this method is frequently employed in the UAE where Western culture is highly valued, though not always popular. The latest ideas and technology are often embraced without planning or critique, and may subsequently be abandoned just as quickly and easily in favour of the next new fad or trend. The importance of strategic planning and the long-term, objective monitoring and evaluation of educational processes and technology introduced into institutions needs to be highlighted to educational leaders in the region. 'Transformation means change that is significant, systematic and sustained', (Caldwell, 2003a, p.1).

Wider, broader educational experiences can benefit students greatly, but the challenge is to manage the changes and the funding without losing sight of the focus, i.e. the provision of a solid, meaningful, educational experience with transferable skills and a clear appreciation of the need for lifelong learning (Al-Suwaidi, 1999; Carnevale, 2000; Livingstone, 1997). Global trends in education indicate that a serious review and reform of the status quo in education is needed worldwide (Caldwell, 2003a; Robertson, 2000), and focusing on the UAE, Davies (1999) highlighted the fact that greater investment in teacher training, curriculum development and technology is required to reform schools and higher education and training.

The Business Community and Higher Education

Although there are certain issues which clearly distinguish the UAE from many other countries, it is important to acknowledge that in spite of the differences between, for example, the USA and the UAE in the

composition and background of cohorts, the argument against standardized reform that Cuban, et al. (2001) present, and which is also illustrated by the OECD (2001), would seem to be transferable and particularly valid in the UAE. Each of the emirates, of which there are seven, united in 1971 as a federation, has a separate and distinctive profile as far as terrain, raw materials, trade and indeed tribal origins is concerned. Only one emirate, Abu Dhabi, has its economy based in the oil industry. Dubai is essentially the commercial centre with its economy traditionally being based in merchant trading, and Sharjah is considered to be the cultural center of the country, but is also involved in trading and the fishing industry. The smaller emirates of Ras Al Khaimah, Um Al Quwain, Fujairah and Ajman are much less well-developed, both economically and infrastructurally, and have developed much more slowly as a result. Education, the economy and the workforce is markedly different in the smaller emirates than in the larger, more economically robust centers. It stands to reason then that the distinctive educational issues, needs, and the requirements of the workforce in the various regions must be addressed rather than enforcing a single, across the board policy for state-funded basic education and higher education.

Sharing knowledge in the community at large and the development of human capital in the UAE (Mograby, 1999) is thought to be vitally important to the mission of the Higher Colleges of Technology and the eventual success of its graduates in the workforce. The importance of addressing a possible mismatch between the education provided and the current and ever-changing needs of the workforce is underscored by Bahgat (1999), Benjamin (1999) and Odeh (1993). In order to address the needs of the local workforce in the UAE, Program Advisory Committees were set up when the Higher Colleges of Technology was launched in 1988. Each division in each city established contact with the business community and invited their input, both positive and negative. These committees meet two or three times a year, more frequently in the earlier years, to discuss changes

in the market needs, to inform and to advise colleges on constructive and useful alterations in each of the programs of study.

The business community is a vital link in the UAE where a large proportion of educators are from overseas and often need guidance regarding local conditions and practices. The system of meeting and consulting the Program Advisory Committees works well and builds relationships within the business community which pave the way for Higher Colleges of Technology students to participate in work placement and possibly eventual employment with the companies that are actively involved[8].

Addressing Community Needs

The knowledge society is shaping all our lives and it pervades every avenue of our lives (Drucker, 1993). Caldwell (2003a) points out that there is 'universal recognition that education is the key to the well being of society and of the individual in the years ahead'. Citizens should now be prepared more than ever, and from a very early age, to participate in a meaningful way in society and to be able to integrate their skills in a variety of ways (Davies, 1999). As Drucker predicted in 1994, there are currently very few jobs in any sector that do not demand computer literacy as a basic skill. In the UAE an even more aggressive approach to skills development is required since students need to operate in a bi-lingual environment where the language of business is English whilst also maintaining a high standard of Arabic communications, so respecting the traditions of their country and region. It is clear that schooling, and indeed higher education, will need to adapt to the demands of the workplace in a very dynamic sense (Sharè, 1999). Education will need to transform and educational institutions of the future may take many forms with educators having to adapt to their new roles (Caldwell, 2003b). The OECD (2001) suggests six possible scenarios

[8] The HCT is also supported by the business community in other ways such as companies and government departments who sponsor large numbers of students in programs such as Highway Maintenance, Chemical Engineering and Aviation.

for future schooling[9], however the one thread that seems to run through these scenarios is the need for greater, and possibly wiser, expenditure on and investment in education.

One significant development that has occurred at the Higher Colleges of Technology in response to both rapid growth and the need to gauge the success, or otherwise, of college programs, their graduates, and feedback from employers, is the Program Quality Assurance process, in which academic programs are monitored and reviewed for an entire academic year, every three to five years. Accountability, best practices, outcomes and results are examined, and managers are given an opportunity to defend their written reports in front of a review panel. The resulting reports and evidence are stored in an on-line portal and those authorized to do so may access the data and regularly update it to maintain its currency. The data provides vital information that may be used to address issues relating to the question of the current high level of unemployment in the UAE, and the further development of strategies to ensure that program offerings are in line with the needs of the workforce.

As a strategic measure responding to Program Quality Assurance feedback, and to ensure continued quality even after graduating from the Higher Colleges of Technology with a Diploma, Higher Diploma or a Bachelor's degree, it became apparent that a facility would be needed to allow members of the workforce to update and build on their skills. Therefore, in addition to the recognized Higher Colleges of Technology programs of study which lead to formal credentials, a branch of the organization was formed to cater to the specific and urgent needs in the workforce and community. The Center of Excellence for Applied Research in Training (CERT) was established in 1996 in Abu Dhabi, affiliated to Abu Dhabi Men's College to develop and support partnerships with industry, and

[9] Scenario 1: "Robust bureaucratic school systems". Scenario 2: "Extending the market model". Scenario 3: "Schools as core social centres". Scenario 4: "Schools as focused learning organizations. Scenario 6: "Teacher exodus – the 'meltdown' scenario". (OECD, 2001)

to provide fee for service programs to complement those offered through the Higher Colleges of Technology. International companies, such as Honeywell and Lucent, have operational branches at CERT and partnerships have flourished over a relatively short period of time.

The educational courses offered at CERT relate to very specific needs in the community and may be tailor-made to suit companies and organizations in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Courses may also be intensive and therefore completed in a comparatively short space of time so that those participating may quickly return to work with the requisite new skills, thus contributing very effectively to the economy and growth of the country. CERT fills a niche in the UAE market which in most instances lacks established training departments within private companies and government departments. This is in part due to the rapid development of the country and the lack of a strategic plan in almost all sectors (Bahgat, 1999). Participants employed by the client company may have previously attended Abu Dhabi Men's College as students, or they may even be non-nationals. State-funded Higher Colleges of Technology programs are only available to UAE nationals. However, CERT courses are funded by employers and may be attended by those the employer chooses to allocate as candidates. By extending the remit of the Higher Colleges of Technology, CERT has helped to strengthen the funding of the college system whilst also establishing new Higher Colleges of Technology Diploma programs in Mapping and Surveying, Food Inspection Technology, Safety Inspection Engineering, and a Higher Diploma in Military Nursing. These credentials were developed and established in response to urgent needs in the workforce, and would have taken significantly longer to reach consensus on and approve, as part of the widespread Higher Colleges of Technology college system, than through CERT.

Higher Education and the Workforce

Brown & Lauder (2003) draw our attention to the implications for education and labour market policy where college graduates cannot easily or

readily be absorbed by the workforce. The issue of there being a limited number of suitable job vacancies for college graduates is a clear indication that tailor-made courses as requested and funded by employers, is a need that must be addressed. In a rapidly growing economy employers cannot wait patiently for new graduates to mature and develop, so they must be pro-active and prescriptive, and support practical training initiatives to complement their employees' more academic education.

In the UAE, 90 per cent of current college graduates have been educated in traditional government institutions, directed by government policy (Tanmia, 2004), and will need to update their skills in line with the labour market as it continues to develop and diversify. Continued development of the workforce, and currency in graduates' fields of expertise, is vital to the economy of the UAE. Ibrahim Assad Odeh (1993), in his discussion on the development of an industrial middle class in Arab countries, makes a persuasive case for the further development of vocational education in the region and highlights cooperation between industry and educationalists as key to such development. CERT courses are under constant review and are updated working in tandem with individual companies and organizations as clients.

The Importance of Life-Long Learning

Initially, the Higher Colleges of Technology established fairly clear guidelines in the form of a mission statement which outlined the expectation and challenge that basically every graduate would be prepared to operate, in English, in the global economy, and participate in the continued development of the UAE. Caldwell (2003a, p.16) states, 'All students in every setting should be literate and numerate and should acquire a capacity for life-long learning, leading to success and satisfaction as good citizens and productive workers in a knowledge economy'. This comment is very close to the mission statement of the Higher Colleges of Technology, and would not be out of place in any educational institution (Luca et al., 2001; McLoughlin, 2001). However, initiatives introduced to ensure that students

are aware of the need to become lifelong learners in an effort to achieve their personal goals and those of their country, are frequently less popular than one may expect.

It is a major challenge to effectively deliver the message to students that the knowledge they are accumulating in order to gain an academic credential may soon need to be updated. This task is exacerbated in the UAE where parents often lack formal education and may largely be unaware of the demands of the workplace, and therefore the need to remain current. The burden of convincing students of the need to adopt strategies for survival in the knowledge society remains with educators, careers counselors and future employers. There is a considerable opportunity for schools and colleges in the UAE to further develop greater understanding in this area in an effort to ensure steady growth in the economy of the country, particularly for the next generation when oil may cease to support the economy to the extent that it currently does. Drucker (2000) maintains that keeping up with knowledge and viewing the world as a whole mattered less in the days of lifetime employment, but knowledge is mobile and transferable and does not belong to ones employer or the state but to oneself, and is highly marketable.

Brown & Lauder (1996), Aronowitz & De Fazio (1994) and Reich (1991) provide a detailed overview of how the major economies of the world, and the USA in particular, have changed historically, especially in the second half of the 20th century. It is apparent that globalization and economic transformation have long-term consequences, and that good quality education is vitally important for future economic growth and prosperity (Brown & Lauder, 1996). The importance of life-long learning in the knowledge society is emphasized by Brown & Lauder (1996), Grabinger (1996), Reich (1991) and Aronowitz & De Fazio (1994), and the latter allude to the inflation of credentials and consequently the need to constantly be acquiring additional qualifications to remain marketable in the workforce. These issues should be considered as matters of strategic

importance for educators who should currently have a mandate to prepare their students for a career, propelled and supported with a philosophy and acceptance that lifelong learning is a necessity (Halloran, 1999).

Al-Hussaini (2001) reports that, 'Globalisation, skills in information technology, the shift from teaching to learning, a lifelong learning culture and the need to involve private sector in higher education' were recurring themes during 'The University of the 21st Century' conference in Oman, March 2001. It seems that educational issues are similar the world over, although focusing on the oil producing economies of the Arabian Gulf region Al-Hussaini (2001) emphasizes that in twenty years from now, in a 'post-oil economy, a highly educated and trained manpower will most probably be the only reliable economic resource' in the region. A nations' Intellectual Capital is seen as the driving force for future wealth and development (Edvinsson & Malone, 1997).

Summary

The UAE is managing to keep abreast of trends, issues, threats and opportunities in education and the job market, implementing innovative changes, for example laptop learning, and welcoming outside influences in the form of the latest technology and methodologies, and international private universities. The government has also benefited from the support and expertise of the international community and clearly appears to have recognized that progress would have been much slower working in isolation and without significant contribution from educators and business partners. The emergence of unemployment in the UAE has prompted the government to rapidly develop Tanmia with a certain amount of guidance from overseas experts to arrest the growing trend and address the evident mismatch between the skills sets of prospective employees and the current job market (Bahgat, 1999; Odeh 1993).

The business community in the UAE has proved to be invaluable in the gradual transformation of teaching and learning, and the preparation of

the workforce of the 21st century. They provide continuous and supportive advice in the form of Program Advisory Committees at the Higher Colleges of Technology, and this is particularly vital to the IT-related programs which are under constant review. These Program Advisory Committees now include in their membership graduates of the Higher Colleges of Technology who recognize the importance of their role and wish to contribute to the learning of current students. Odeh (1993) describes a rather different scenario when discussing vocational education only a decade ago, which highlights the significant progress which has been made in the region.

Processes such as the Program Quality Assurance at the Higher Colleges of Technology are in place to monitor the quality of education in the UAE, however quality assurance needs to be more widespread and should not be confined to higher education. With the introduction of Program Quality Assurance, or similar processes, to increase the level of accountability into government schools there may be a significant improvement in the preparedness of high school graduates to enter higher education. This in turn would reflect very positively on the quality of college programs and their eventual graduates, and ultimately impact the workforce and economy of the country.

Underpinning all the strategies and processes described in the literature reviewed is the evident need for educational systems, government-funded and private, to produce students with a clear understanding of the necessity for lifelong learning. This learning is by no means restricted to the classroom, and the community as a whole can and should, provide and share valuable and timely information. The neighbourhood effect (Friedman, 1962) is reflected in the construction of meaningful education, engaging careers, a strong economy and the continued generation of knowledge, partnership and prosperity in the communities of the UAE. Change is constant in the knowledge society and affects the entire community.

In a relatively young country with a comparatively small population of four million, and a citizenship of approximately one million, the UAE

appears to have accepted change more readily than in other more established and developed countries. Emiratis at all levels are keen to embrace the latest technology and practices from the West, although often at the expense of successful existing systems. However, it is widely accepted in the UAE that education needs to transform itself in line with the demands of the workplace and the knowledge economy. This is not a new strategy or demand for a country where basic education has only been mandatory for a generation, prior to which, schools' main aim was to teach the Holy Qur'an

Competition in the global marketplace has a significant impact on tertiary education all over the world. Kapitzke (1999) concludes that higher education is influenced by social, economic and technological changes and that such changes are central to the philosophical and pedagogical shifts we are experiencing in the early years of the 21st century. The issues surrounding the transition into the Information Age and its impact on teaching and learning are magnified in the society of the UAE which until recently was referred to as a developing country. It is rapidly growing into the main commercial hub of the Middle East and its citizens must be prepared to support and participate in this dramatic economic grow and development. Whilst the availability of good quality higher education is increasing in the UAE, a well-planned, strategic focus for tertiary education (Bahgat, 1999), with ongoing input regarding industry needs from the business community, will ensure that graduates are well-prepared for careers in the knowledge economy (Bahgat, 1999; Benjamin, 1999; Odeh, 1993) and that the UAE continues to manage economic and political transformation and sustains the present rate of growth.

The key issue raised in this chapter is the need for a practical and flexible approach to change management for educators in the dynamic learning environment of Abu Dhabi Men's College. The next chapter discusses the two research questions and the methods of enquiry used to ascertain the impact of educational technology on the teaching and learning environment, and as a consequence, the professional development needs of

faculty members in support of the dynamic educational progress of the 21st century using Abu Dhabi Men's College as a case study.

CHAPTER 3
METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

The successful creation of a dynamic and challenging educational environment such as that described in the first two chapters requires thoughtful planning and a realistic strategy. Student preparation and success relates closely to teacher development, pro-activity and creativity. This chapter will outline the rationale and methodology underpinning the exploration of key issues to be considered by Abu Dhabi Men's College management when implementing and subsequently, frequently upgrading, educational technology in line with the demands of the ICT-rich educational environments of the 21st century.

There are a range of factors impacting on ongoing teacher development at Abu Dhabi Men's College. First of all, there is a demand for the appropriate and competent use of educational technology and the ongoing upgrade of computer skills in order to cope with such aspects of the role of the teacher as online administration and online materials development. In the case of ESL teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College, delivery of the curriculum via contemporary methodologies needs to be reconciled with more traditional benchmark assessments (e.g. PET[10] and IELTS[11]) which are required for graduation from the programs offered at the Higher Colleges of Technology.

Achieving a high student success rate when compared with the eleven other Higher Colleges of Technology is another important factor to consider since competition between the institutions is a matter of pride. Additional challenges facing all faculty members at the Higher Colleges of Technology include the need to raise global awareness and to nurture

[10] Preliminary English Test (Cambridge, UK)

[11] International English Language Testing System (Australia)

critical thinking amongst students. Students are expected to develop a range of hard (technical or job-related skills) and soft skills (communication or human skills), and faculty members in all disciplines consider it one of their major goals to encourage independent learning and lifelong learning amongst their students.

In order to support teacher development at Abu Dhabi Men's College, the provision of a framework for teacher development and an adequate time allowance to participate in professional development, was urgently needed. Using Abu Dhabi Men's College as a case study to assess the professional development needs of in-service teachers, and to develop a framework for practical in-house training, responses to the following two questions are ascertained:

1. What pedagogical influences have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College?

2. What models of professional development prepare tertiary teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College for dynamic developments in the teaching and learning environment?

One of the greatest challenges that teachers are faced with in the 21st century is maintaining their professionalism, integrity and credibility in the classroom (Boddy, 1997; Sammons, 1997). Educational technology has advanced dramatically over the past decades. Students need to be prepared in line with the demands of the workplace. Classroom methodologies have also altered and there is a continuing trend towards integrated, constructivist learning environments (Hannafin & Land, 1997; Lowyck & Pöysä, 2001; Nicks-McCaleb, 2005). Consistent with this view of teachers' professional needs, this study focused on exploring ways to maximize opportunities to present targeted professional development to address the particular needs of the staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

An Appropriate Research Methodology

In order to address the two research questions posed it was necessary to devise a mechanism through which to encourage the co-construction of an understanding of the professional development needs at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The most appropriate approach to address these research questions in this setting was an interpretavistic methodology of mixed method presented as a case study in the context of Abu Dhabi Men's College. It was considered that a pragmatic approach (Punch, 1998) to encouraging collaborative, active, participation, reflection and co-construction to address the issues highlighted by faculty members would generate rich, deep, descriptive data with which to develop a framework for professional development at the College. The pragmatic approach focuses on the research question and then considers appropriate methods to develop data and knowledge about the situation in context (Punch, 1998).

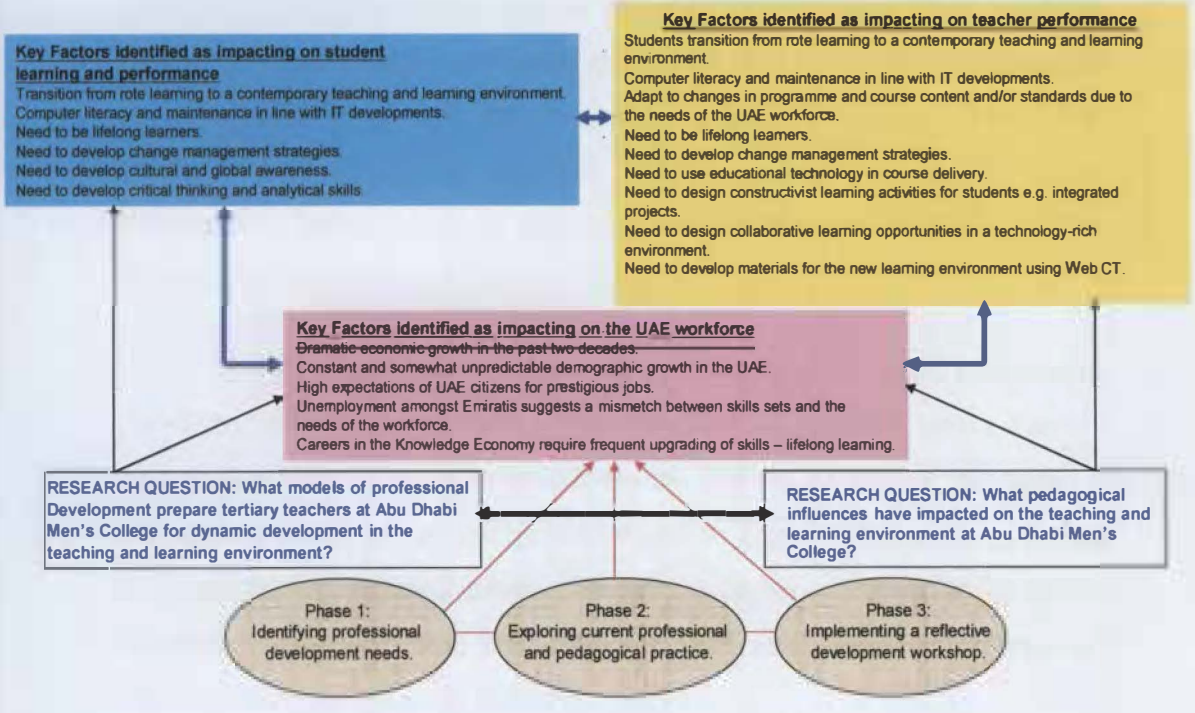
Becker (2000) discusses the patchwork quilt approach to research suggesting that, any strategies, methods or empirical materials at hand may be used in the context and setting of the study. According to Flick (1998), the combination of multiple methods in a study adds, rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry. Although positivists may argue that such research is not scientific, qualitative inquiry provides real world information about actual experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This form of enquiry was considered the most appropriate approach to ascertain experienced teachers' feelings about professional development and to sensitively encourage them to develop personalized future professional development plans in response to the research questions posed.

A case study approach was chosen to present the study as it provides an opportunity to examine the educational environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College in context and with the particular targeted outcome of developing a suggested framework for professional development at the institution. Case study as a genre suited the aims of this body of work as the study could be designed to address a number of issues impacting on the teaching and

learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The case study approach provided an interpretive, bounded platform for an intensive, contextual study, helped to define the issues, and ultimately answered the research questions. The study was designed in three phases, each informing the eventual construction of a framework for professional development at the institution. Figure3.1 provides a conceptual framework to illustrate

Figure 3.1

Illustration of the Conceptual Framework for the Three Phase Study Conducted at Abu Dhabi Men's College.



Developments in Research

In the field of education the currently predominant trend appears to be in the qualitative research method, although frequently more than one method is applied in an effort to validate the enquiry (Burke Johnson &

Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Chatterji, 2004; Howe, 2004; Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005; Shaffer & Serlin, 2004). Qualitative research has gained in popularity in the past twenty years and authors such as Brenner (1985, p.150), discuss how,

> "Once gathered, accounts have, however, not only the advantage of providing massive qualitative knowing about a form of social life than would be unobtainable by other, structured interview methods, but also the advantage that the material, once transcribed from tapes, can be analyzed qualitatively as well as quantitatively" (Brenner, 1985, p.150).

This supports Howe's (2004) view that the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods may be advantageous. There has been an increasing tendency to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches in research (Burke Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Chatterji, 2004; Hill & Hannafin, 1996; Ioyoshi & Hannafin, 1998; Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005; Land & Greene, 2000; Land & Hannafin, 1998; Shafer & Serlin, 2004; Windschitl, 2002).

Qualitative techniques emerge from phenomenology and interpretive paradigms and the emphasis is on constructivist approaches where there is no apparent objectivity and scientific reality. For the purpose of this study, it was appropriate to use an interpretive model to gather rich, meaningful data to gauge the professional needs of faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Quantitative data were also gathered to illustrate the impact of contemporary pedagogy on students' results.

Benefits of an Interpretivist Approach

The validity of knowledge as sought in the interpretivistic method of enquiry has been discussed over the past three decades and is valued as the ultimate goal of research (Argyris, 1980; Burke Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Chatterji, 2004; Deutcher, 1966; Howe, 2004; Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005; Phillips, 1971, 1973; Shaffer & Serlin, 2004). Interpretivistic studies are based on logical accounts rather than laws, and values and attitudes are

considered in context. The emphasis of these studies is on validity, and the causes and effects are considered to be mutually interdependent. Qualitative methods put the onus on validity since they encompass the social values, realities and attitudes of the research subject and allow the researcher to gather deeper, richer data. According to Fryer (1991, p.4), qualitative researchers are characteristically concerned with attempts to accurately describe, decode and interpret precise meanings of occurrences in their normal social contexts and are often 'pre-occupied with complexity, authenticity, contextualization, shared subjectivity of researcher and researched, and minimization of illusion' (Fryer, 1991, p.4).

Under the interpretivistic research paradigm data collection constructs knowledge as the researcher makes use of the self reports of participating subjects blended with the researchers' own observations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.18-19). Irrespective of the researchers' point of view, although possibly because of it, research questions are constructed and framed (Janesick, 2000, p.382) As with the case of the professional needs at Abu Dhabi Men's College, institutional conditions, resources and related issues assist in constructing rich, interpretive data as participating subjects explore their everyday reality and search for practical solutions (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000, p.497).

Research Framework

As a program manager at Abu Dhabi Men's College, with twelve years of experience in the Higher Colleges of Technology college system, I considered it timely to address professional development needs in the context of our college. In order to respond to the research questions raised above, and as a step towards designing an appropriate framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College, a study was undertaken in three phases (see Table 3.1, p.44).

The ESL faculty at the College has been grappling with issues relating to professional development since the introduction of laptops in

2000. Identifying appropriate materials, training or professional studies, particularly for teachers in the UAE, has long been an issue. The use of a case study in which data was collected in the particular context of Abu Dhabi Men's College provided an in-depth look at the issues directly affecting this group of faculty members and provided a concrete illustration of the most appropriate strategy to address their professional development needs in their constantly changing roles as 21st century teachers. The ESL teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's college are representative of the profile of the entire college teaching staff since the English language is used as a medium in all disciplines and similar challenges are faced in every classroom.

The use of an interpretivist approach to research using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data in the interests of establishing validity was considered appropriate. The three-phase interpretive study of mixed method was designed to address teachers' needs collaboratively and cooperatively was approached by initially using a focus group as a platform to explore changes in their roles. The second phase of the study observed current classroom practice, reviewed and examined comparative, quantitative data to assess the impact of contemporary pedagogy on students' results. Subsequently, phase three of the study was designed as a workshop which was convened to assess the skills and professional needs of the teachers with the ultimate result of co-constructing a suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

The interpretive study addressed the research questions and provided in depth knowledge and understanding (Costello, 2003; Johnson, 2002; Johnson & Johnson, 1995, 1999) on the issues surrounding professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College. With the shared, common objective of addressing the issues surrounding the changing role of the ESL teacher in the 21st century, the theory was that they would be more likely to work together to achieve it (Dewey, 1938; Lewin, 1948, 1951; Johnson & Johnson, 1995, 1999; Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005) and to reflectively participate in and contribute to discussion and to ultimately be more

productive (Johnson & Johnson, 1995, 1999; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). An atmosphere of trust between departmental faculty members, including myself as their manager, had already been established over a five year period with open and frank exchanges considered the norm, and confidentiality being respected and expected whenever requested. Participants in the case study were all assured that any data collected would have no negative impact on their position at the College and that they could withdraw at any time. Data collected was stored securely and was analyzed off campus to ensure strict confidentiality. All documentation, including forms of consent and the audiocassette relating to the research project was handled with strict confidentiality in mind and locked away. Professional roles at the College were not compromised by the research project since a clear understanding had been established early on in the process and participants were well aware of their rights in connection with this.

Table 3.1

Case Study of Abu Dhabi Men's College in Three Phases

Case Study	Focus Issue	Method	Timeline	No. Participants
Phase 1: Identifying Professional Development Needs	Assessing the impact of globalization on the role of the ESL teacher in higher education in order to identify professional development needs	Focus group collecting qualitative data to gauge teachers' perceptions of their changing role	December 2003	9
Phase 2: Exploring Current Professional and Pedagogical Practice	Assessing the impact of contemporary pedagogy on student learning in the changing teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College	Comparative study of students' results via quantitative data collection	Academic Year 2002-03	39
Phase 3: Implementing a Reflective Development Workshop:	Identifying the perceived needs for teacher development in the development of value-added skills and support contemporary pedagogy	Interactive workshop to assess teachers' skills and needs, and to collect qualitative data. Survey collecting quantitative data on teachers' skills sets.	December 2004	25

Data Collection - Phase 1

In order to examine more closely and develop an understanding of the changing role of the ESL teacher at Abu Dhabi Men's College and to gain an appreciation of their professional concerns and perceived needs, I conducted a focus group with nine faculty members. This method of investigation was chosen since it involves organized discussion (Kitzinger & Kreuger, 1998) with the expectation of rich anecdotal, qualitative data

offering a variety of perspectives on the topic (Costello, 2003; Greenbaum, 1998; Johnson, 2002; Kayrooz & Trevitt, 2005; Kreuger & Casey, 1998; Litosseliti, 2003; Powell, Single & Lloyd, 1996). It should however be noted that focus groups are limited in that there are usually only six to ten participants and findings may therefore not be used to generalize a theory on an entire group of people. Neither is it possible to compare findings between focus groups since they vary in composition, discussion and experiences.

The discussion was recorded by audiocassette and a two-hour time limit was set due to timetabling constraints of the teachers involved. The participants were invited to be frank and open in their discussion and were assured that their comments would be treated with complete confidentiality. The ultimate goal of the focus group was to identify the actual needs of the teachers and to provide professional development opportunities in areas that management had not previously perceived to be lacking.

Focus Group Data Analysis

The recorded focus group was documented (see Appendix I) and participants were numbered on the written transcript for reference purposes. Once the transcription was completed the document was reviewed, manually annotated and colour-coded with a highlighter pen to show recurring themes, issues and arguments. A computer software package was not discovered to help in the analysis and interpretation of this data. Off-screen coding was done on the entire script and helped to organize the data in a way that participants' comments could be used to inform the research questions posed in relation to the changing teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College and the appropriate professional development to support them in their careers. Comments were categorized into the areas of:

1. Technology in the classroom

2. Technology: at what price?

3. Life-Long Learning

4. Appropriate Use of Technology

5. Professional Development and Training

The one theme which pervaded the entire discussion was the need for a more pro-active approach to professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College in light of the push towards the use of contemporary pedagogy and frequently changing educational technology.

Data Collection - Phase 2

In order to assess the impact of contemporary pedagogy on student learning the second phase of the case study involved examining the results two groups of students in their first year at Abu Dhabi Men's College over an entire academic year. Cumulative and summative data of their mid-semester and final assessments was collected over the academic year 2002/03, and compared in light of the fact that the faculty responsible for the groups chose to use quite different methodologies to reach their goals. One group was taught in a relatively traditional way in order to ensure a high success rate in assessments and progression to the next level in the Diploma program. The other group participated in project-based collaborative learning for approximately half of their English classes with more traditional skills based instruction for the remainder, again by way of assessment preparation. Both groups were of similar size, age (18) and background, and all were Emirati with Arabic as their first language. All the students were male and in their first year of higher education after graduating from high school. They were taught exclusively in English across the subjects in the Diploma Program. Both faculty members had comparable qualifications and experience and had taught in the Arab world for at least ten years. A common goal of both groups of students is to pass the PET external benchmark assessment as a graduation requirement from the Diploma Program.

The dichotomy alluded to in the focus group in Phase 1 of the case study was how to balance the provision of learning opportunities in a constructivist environment, whilst also providing students with the best possible tried and tested methods of external examination preparation and strategies. In practice and on paper, this has been working at ADMC and the students have consistently outperformed those at the other eleven colleges[12] in the system in both system-wide and external benchmark assessments in English. The aim of this phase of the case study was to review the results of assessments to determine whether or not they validated the learning to learn approach taken in half of their course contact hours since the two quite different methodologies appeared to compliment one another. The students seemed to apply and implement their new-found learning skills in exam preparation and strategies, and had clearly developed information skills which had been lacking when they joined the college from high school. However, ESL teachers were concerned with carefully balancing between the traditional and constructivist methods, knowing that if students were to perform less-well in their assessments it may reflect badly on the program, the faculty and the methods employed. There is also a concern that such a compromise, where one can ill afford to take too many risks, is costly in terms of student learning, continuity and creativity.

Comparative Study Data Analysis

Data from assessment results was analyzed with a statistical software package (SPSS) and used to generate information which would inform decision-making at Abu Dhabi Men's College and determine the affect of pedagogy on student performance in traditional forms of assessment. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features, key facts, patterns and trends of the data in this study in relation to student performance. The descriptive statistical data provided simple summaries regarding the sample and measures, in this case assessment marks, to form

[12] The 12th college in the system, Fujairah Women's College, opened in September 2004, and is therefore not included in this data.

the basis of quantitative data analysis and comparison between the two groups of students under focus in this phase of the study. Although this is a quantitative approach, informal, anecdotal feedback from ESL teachers was also considered when analyzing the data in an exploratory way to discover the trends and aspects the data was informing on in the simplest form. The data was compared and the range of students' assessment results, along with the group means for those assessments, was examined to determine if there was any obvious or remarkable trend arising from the differing pedagogical approaches used in their classrooms.

Data Collection - Phase 3

The third phase of the case study involved a half day interactive, reflective workshop for twenty-five faculty members to determine their professional skills and professional development needs and to collaboratively work towards a framework for pro-active professional development. Although the qualitative methodology, and interpretive activities used in this study were not traditional in their approach, the combination of seeking data in the form of survey, i.e. worksheets completed in answer to short questions, as a follow up to discussion in groups, is inspired by Burke Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004), Chatterji (2004), Denzin & Lincoln (2000), Hammersley (2000), Howe (2004), Punch (1998) and Shaffer & Serlin (2004) who discuss the increasing tendency to combine a wide variety of research methods. Punch (1998) implies that it is possible to develop ones' own specialization of method to suit the circumstances and sample.

Workshop Data Analysis

Workshop responses were viewed as qualitative since they were as a result of provoked discussion, however the survey forms were designed to be completed independently eliciting short responses which were collated into a quantitative format for ease of reporting. Punch (1998) asserts that the best and most practical approach to research is to focus on what one is

trying to find out from the research activity, then to fit the methods to suit. Responses were manually colour tagged and categorized as formally or informally acquired and were further grouped into using EXCEL software:

- Professional
- Personal
- IT-related

Trends identified in these three categories were examined to establish how they could be used to inform the construction of the suggested framework for professional development of staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Interestingly, a wide variety of skills were shown to have been acquired during the participants' careers and the reflective recognition that they had achieved so much was thought to inspire confidence to build on their metacognitive skills by preparing a program for their future professional development.

Possible shortcomings of data collected at this workshop were that during discussion participants could have had their opinions swayed slightly by their peers. However, the simple, anonymous surveys were quickly completed and were done relatively privately. A further shortcoming which had been predicted was the fact that the data collected related to a very specific group of educational professionals, those with approximately two decades of service and who were originally trained in the pre-educational technology age.

Summary

The rationale for the case study at Abu Dhabi Men's College was the need to support teacher development as their role in the classroom changes. In order to maintain the level of academic success at the institution during this transitional period, teachers' concerns regarding the use of technology in the classroom and the shift in educational paradigm needed to be addressed.

Table 3.2

Case Study Phases and Focus Issues

Case Study	Focus Issue	Purpose of Focus
Phase 1: Identifying Professional Development Needs	Assessing the impact of globalization on the role of the ESL teacher in higher education in order to identify professional development needs	To establish the need for a plan for professional development during the focus group. Data would be used to determine the impact of recent teaching and learning initiatives and teachers' perceived professional development needs. Concerns regarding student learning made evident the need to examine students' success rate in formal assessments in Phase 2.
Phase 2: Exploring Current Professional and Pedagogical Practice	Assessing the impact of contemporary pedagogy on student learning in the changing teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College	To establish findings regarding the impact of the recent change in pedagogical approach on student outcomes to determine the extent and range of professional development needs to be anticipated in Phase 3
Phase 3: Implementing a Reflective Development Workshop:	Identifying the perceived needs for teacher development to encourage lifelong learning and career development and support contemporary pedagogy	Themes and concerns about professional development needs would be collated and used to inform the framework which would be designed after the workshop data was analyzed

This three-phase study, using the interpretivistic method of enquiry, provided a constructive platform to explore the practical issues surrounding teachers' professional needs. Their contribution to each phase of the construction of the framework enhanced the chances of a high level of participation in the professional development program and that it would endure (Brown, 2002; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Guskey, 2000; Newman, 2000; Sandholtz, 2001; Schön, 1987; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999). Data from the three phases of this case study inform the eventual construction of a suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College as in the table below.

The three phases of the case study illustrated in this chapter are detailed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 with conclusions and recommendations set out in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 4
PHASE 1: IDENTIFYING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

This chapter focuses on the issues surrounding external influences and expectations as educational institutions prepare tertiary level students for careers in the global economy. Graduates entering the workforce in the Information Age of the 21st century need to be equipped to manage constant change throughout their careers and to recognize the need to become lifelong learners in order to reach their goals. Tertiary institutions, such as Abu Dhabi Men's College, have been wrestling with this challenge for quite some time to devise strategies that not only fulfill student and workforce expectations, but also support their faculty members in the development of appropriate, aligned, programs and curricula which keep pace with the rapidly evolving technology. Thus teachers' roles have altered as these changes have impacted their students and communities. Over the past decade pedagogy in educational institutions has shifted in focus from more traditional delivery methods to student-centered, problem-based, technology supported learning and the emphasis has been firmly placed on educators to adapt their teaching styles and methods to the demands of their new role Berube, Gaston & Stepans, 2004; Clarke, 2002; Kinshuk, Oppermann & Russell, 2000; Mulford, 2003; Nicks-McCaleb, 2005). These changes in higher education to satisfy the needs of the various stakeholders, and in the wider interests of the global economy, clearly have a dramatic impact on in-service teachers (Bryce, Frigo, McKenzie & Withers, 2000; OECD, 2000). The question is: how much, and how do teachers manage these changes? This chapter focuses on the perceived needs of the ESL teacher at Abu Dhabi Men's College and explores their concerns in relation to managing change as they prepare students for careers in the global economy of the 21st century, embracing and promoting lifelong learning.

Revisiting Higher Education in the 21st Century

Increasingly, higher education institutions are forced to reexamine their role in preparing students for meaningful and rewarding careers in the global economy of the 21st century. Institutions are accountable to a range of stakeholders including government, industry, funding authorities and students, with continual pressure to place a greater emphasis on developing the more generic skills than specialist knowledge which quickly dates (Luca et al., 2001). In contemporary education generic skills, core competencies and graduate attributes are currently becoming a deliberate focus of universities and are also featuring in their mission statements, in response to employer expectations and economic demands. Further, the importance and flexibility of e-learning and knowledge production are highly valued in contrast to more traditional, restrictive programs of study. Developments in the global marketplace mean that the competence and skills of the workforce may depend on rapid responsiveness to industry needs and opportunities (McLoughlin, 2001; Nicks-McCaleb, 2005).

Globalization impacts all areas of our lives being, 'political, technological and cultural, as well as economic' (Giddens, 1999). In order to equip students for the workplace of the 21st century institutions should foster cultural and global awareness, and such skills as time management, interpersonal, technology, critical thinking and problem-solving, and of course an appreciation for the need to update their skills throughout the course of their careers. Employers are searching for graduates with strong problem-solving, teamwork, communications, and leadership abilities, and that tertiary education should therefore provide students with the necessary skills, attitudes, and values that are critical to navigate the dynamic complexities of the business world (Jones, 2002a, 2002b). Students educated in environments where diversity is encouraged become better critical thinkers, better communicators, better problem solvers and better team players (Sugar & Bonk, 1998). In the global economy life long learning is the one area of certainty that current students have: they know

that they will need to move with the times continually updating their skills and knowledge, showing flexibility and a keen appreciation for the need to be life long learners. In the knowledge society we now recognize that most workers must be computer literate (Druker, 1994; Mograby, 1999). Even in advanced industrial market economies this means that employees have had to learn, and keep up with, the latest technologies, possibly with no formal IT training, in order to remain competitive in the workforce.

During the course of ones working life it might become necessary to prepare for a change in career (Livingstone, 1997). This could arise either because the originally chosen career path is no longer possible due to illness or incapacity of some description, or because ones area of expertise may become outmoded or obsolete (Mograby, 1999). Flexibility, trainability and the need for life-long learning are fundamental to ones employability in the 21st century. In market-driven societies, and with the advent of the decline in trades' unions, redundancies are a real threat to employees at all levels.

Institutions of higher education are obliged to prepare their students with the wide range of skills necessary, hard (technical) and soft (interpersonal and communication), to participate in the new economy (Carnevale, 2000). Within this broad expectation, institutions need to ensure that in-service teachers feel confident about their own skills sets and their ability to rise to the challenge of educating and preparing their students for careers in the 21st century. Certainly, the role of the ESL teacher in tertiary education has certainly changed dramatically with the teaching of a language no longer being their only challenge. ESL teachers are now expected to encourage the practical use of technology in the classroom and the development of the full range of so-called soft skills and information skills. Equipped with a second language and these additional transferable skills Abu Dhabi Men's College graduates should be in a position to navigate their unpredictable future careers. Due to this recent, worldwide change in pedagogical focus, recently graduated teachers, as with graduates in other fields, are increasingly better prepared to enter the workforce.

However, it is important to consider that changes in existing practices within institutions, and beliefs about pedagogy, present challenges to the institution and to the individual.

In the last decade people in the West invested an increasing amount of time in formal education, resulting in double the uptake of tertiary education in the previous twenty years (Livingstone, 1997). However, there appears to be little empirical evidence to suggest that the quality of the education received has shown widespread improvement in preparing students for the workplace (Neef, 1999). It appears to be amongst working adults that most of the time and energy is being invested in studying work-related subjects to develop the necessary skills to compete in the job market in advanced industrial market economies (Drucker 2000; Edvinsson, 2002; Neef, 1999).

The importance of on the job training and professional development are now widely recognized by training departments in organizations and institutions around the world, although Neef (1999) presents the argument that very little money was allocated toward employee training and that training budgets had been cut in recent years (Neef, 1999, p.185). It is unrealistic to imagine that the attainment of a high school diploma or a first degree will be the conclusion of ones education in whichever field one is employed. Livingstone (1997, 2001) indicates that there is generally little correlation between people's levels of formal schooling and their participation in continuing education courses. Based on data generated by the national survey of learning and work by the research network on New Approaches to Lifelong Learning (NALL)[13], he also claims that any such relationship in gradually narrowing further in Canada due to educational and training reforms which have introduced flexible course scheduling, tuition

[13] http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/depts/sese/csew/nall/res/33working&learning.htm or http://www.nall.ca

fee subsidies, child care provision, prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) and a more responsive curriculum (Livingstone, 2001).

Consideration of these factors needs to be incorporated into the personal development plans of students and teachers in the knowledge society of the 21st century. A well constructed plan for life long learning is a necessary consideration for future and continued employment (Bryce, Frigo, McKenzie & Withers, 2000; Bryce & Withers, 2003; OECD, 2000). This chapter reviews education and employment in the UAE and considers the impact of globalization and the ever-changing needs of the Emirati workforce on the changing role of the ESL teacher in the UAE.

Focusing on Education in the UAE

In the UAE the challenges differ from many Western countries in that students are frequently ill-prepared to enter higher education. As a rapidly developing nation the UAE provides basic and tertiary education to all citizens but the standard of education in the GCC[14] region is inconsistent and patchy at best (Al-Sulayti, 1999; Mograby, 1999). Therefore students enter tertiary education with widely differing levels of experience and knowledge, and are usually lacking in basic study skills and work ethic. As outlined by Neef (1999), a strong basic education is an essential foundation for a competitive economy, laying the foundation for future skills development and life-long learning within the workforce. Employers have the expectation that college graduates will have the core skills to build upon as the knowledge society develops. Schools are responsible for shaping children's personal expectations, interactions with others and their world outlook (Neef, 1999), therefore, in addition to the core skills of literacy and numeracy, there is an expectation that education will prepare students in areas such as teamwork, time management, inter-personal skills and flexibility.

[14] GCC – Gulf Cooperation Council: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

Historically, basic education in the UAE is of a much lower standard than in either Europe or North America. It is built on the traditional use of rote learning as a generation ago students went to school to learn only the Holy Qur'an. Although this is changing, students are still not encouraged to question the written word, and schoolteachers still do not deviate from textbooks in class. Consequently, students entering tertiary education at the Higher Colleges of Technology are ill-equipped for the constructivist, technologically sophisticated learning environment that they find themselves in. If the basic educational system does not prepare students adequately for higher education this increases the complexities and challenges experienced by all teachers in delivering classes to such students. The expectations and outcomes for these students are the same as for all others graduating from an institution of higher education. International benchmarks are firmly adhered to and so strategies to make up for any shortfall are needed in addition to the usual challenges associated with educating 18-21 year olds. These issues are mirrored by a recent report from the OECD (2005a) which provides a list of priorities and challenges for educators in their review of education, 'assisting members and partners to achieve high quality lifelong learning for all that contributes to personal development, sustainable economic growth and social cohesion' (OECD, 2005a). They have six strategic objectives developed from emerging educational policy concerns:

1. Promoting lifelong learning and improving its linkages with other socio-economic policies
2. Evaluating and improving outcomes of education
3. Promoting quality teaching
4. Rethinking tertiary education in a global economy
5. Building social cohesion through education
6. Building new futures for education (OECD, 2005a)

Employment in the UAE

The workforce of the UAE continues to be supported by expatriate workers with an educational background which enables them to sustain rapid changes in technology and the global economy. Whilst the country is determined to maintain its momentum in participating in the global economy of the 21st century, its politics also demand that 'emiratization' be supported with quotas in the workplace. With the gradual phasing out of expatriate workers, the UAE will need to address the quality of basic education in line with the expectations they have of tertiary institutions to produce employees equipped to maintain their level of currency and keep pace with the competition on the global stage (Al-Sulayti, 1999; Mograby, 1999). Grabinger (1996) reinforces the importance of competing in today's complex world and stresses the fact that simply knowing how to use tools and knowledge in a single domain is not enough to remain competitive, emphasizing that people must also learn when to use tools and knowledge in new domains and different situations. Fourteen years ago, Lynton (1989) advised that industry specialists were reporting that people at every organizational level must be creative and flexible problem solvers and that the education system (in the United States of America) was not producing a potential workforce of well-prepared, critical thinkers, yet only now are certain institutions of higher education taking such advice seriously.

In the UAE most of those holding positions both in the government and the private sectors have been educated in the west. These employees may either be expatriates or wealthy Emiratis who have been sent abroad for their education. Since 1988 when the Higher Colleges of Technology was formed, and a western-style tertiary education was been made available to students in the UAE, students have increasingly chosen to remain in the UAE to complete their studies. The UAE may be unique in that there appears to be very little correlation between education and personal wealth, as the personal wealth is often not earned as such. Oil revenues account for a large portion of the income of the leading families in the country.

However, with the advent of the knowledge society and the global economy this should open up the market to more entrepreneurship and a closer relationship between educational background and economical rewards.

Educational Issues and Strategies

Since it was established in 1988, the Higher Colleges of Technology has provided its employees with professional development opportunities in order to remain abreast of the changes in education and technology. Such activities include in-house professional development, conferences, on-line courses, guest speakers and the provision of a wealth of current educational technology hardware and software, including guidance in the development of tailor-made, in-house, on-line courses. The design of on-line courses is greatly encouraged at the Higher Colleges of Technology. However, although teachers are provided with certain remuneration for their creativity, there is little uptake of this challenge due to the amount of time which must be invested in developing a quality product.

Professional development is key to the reputation of the college and indeed to the job security of its employees. The latest technology is expected to be available and used to a high degree in the classroom. Professional development is extremely popular in the UAE, especially amongst expatriates. The currency of qualifications and skills are highly regarded, and job security hinges on the demonstration of predetermined goals and objectives. Professional development is becoming increasingly popular amongst more recently qualified Emirati workers who have acquired an appreciation for life-long learning. One of the areas in high demand is the Information and Communications Technology sector which requires frequent updating and refining personal skills. Formal professional development is popular among employees, who are remunerated for their formal, credentialed professional development qualifications, rather than actual performance.

The Changing Role of the ESL Teacher in the UAE

Educational technology has become a focus in the ESL classroom over the past five or six years in the UAE, coinciding with the dot.com era and the widespread demand for computer skills. An outcome of this change in focus is that many ESL teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College have found themselves with inadequate technological training. Examples of participants' concerns in Focus Group No.1 reflect this uncertainty about educational technology:

> Have we been given enough support with the on-line (teaching and learning), or the technology that we're supposed to be using in our classrooms? I don't, I think we have in one sense. … when I came here is when I first started to using all the technology. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.5)

> That seems to be the direction that the college as a whole wants to go, I do feel pressured to use the laptops more often and I sometimes find myself feeling very anxious about finding good useful ways of using it in the classroom because I feel like I have to. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4)

In order to develop the IT skills of ESL teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College and adapt existing pedagogical approaches to current demands, it was necessary to prepare rather hurriedly, and in a somewhat ad hoc way, for technological changes in the classroom, as well as to prepare for the provision of scaffolding and individual guidance to steer student learning. According to Gagne et al., (1992) teachers need special training for conducting and managing individualized instruction, and they cannot be expected to function adequately, let alone enthusiastically, without such training. In the future, as such training is more frequently included as a regular part of pre-service teacher education the problem will likely be handled at that point in a teacher's career rather than later on (Gagne, et al., 1992). As a creative solution to easing the burden on teachers, Newhouse (2004) recommends technological support for teachers to maintain high quality teaching and learning data, administer the curriculum and in the assessment of learning outcomes. However, he also indicates that such support would require 'careful and wide-ranging research' to ensure that it

is suitable for the learning environment and the users (Newhouse, 2004, p.5).

In 1992, Becker found that over half the future teachers he surveyed never used a computer in any of their college courses (Becker, 1992). This presents a challenge for educational institutions and their teachers to participate in in-service training programs and to acquire technology skills that may have meant nothing more to them than an elective in the past. Pre-service teachers can no longer be prepared for future careers in the classroom with a competency based approach to their education, but instead need to be competent in both content and a range of rapidly changing skills (Herrington & Standen, 1999). A review of any current pre-service teacher course in Western countries, and many non-Western countries, will show Graduate Attributes including ICT and the skills and adaptability to integrate technology into the learning environment thus enhancing curriculum delivery. The capability to update skills and knowledge has become increasingly vital in the Information Age and education is described by Castells (1998) as:

> (T)he process by which people....acquire the capability constantly to redefine the necessary skills for a given task, and to access the sources fro learning these skills. Whoever is educated...can reprogram him/herself toward the endless changing tasks of the production process (Castells, 1998, p.341).

Technology skills are now, and will remain, integral to the role of the teacher. However, Hill & Hannafin (1995) point out that teachers continue to fall behind the "technology curve", and that they are often resistant to acquiring technology skills. To overcome this resistance, the primary focus should be the integration of technology rather than technology itself (Borko, 2004; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001; Hill & Hannafin, 1995; Resnick, 2005). Reflective practices and a supportive, collaborative, technology-rich environment appear to be a recipe for teacher success (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Herrington & Standen, 1999).

Examining the changes in classroom delivery and the new skills that both teachers and learners should now acquire, Häkkinen (2002, p.467) indicates that instructional designers should consider the 'cognitive, affective and social dimensions of learning' in computer-based learning environments. The point is made that learning outcomes or instructional goals in a constructivist learning environment are not met by a teacher imparting new knowledge, but by teachers facilitating new learning (Herrington & Standen, 1999; Häkkinen, 2002). Constructivism in the context of Abu Dhabi Men's College can be defined for the purposes of this study as student learning in an active, rather than passive, way supported by a technology-rich environment and having a degree of autonomy over that which they choose to learn about and how they choose to learn it, although within a scaffolded framework designed to provide guidance and support.

Issues surrounding the acquisition of new, transferable skills in technology-rich learning environments are highlighted by Luca, et al., (2001, p.1) who claim that such skills are now a 'priority issue and can no longer be ignored'. Concerns are also raised on the subject of assessment in the new learning environments of the 21st century with the recommendation that it should be incorporated into the design process and integral to learning activities (Luca et al., 2001). Assessments at Abu Dhabi Men's College are in a transitional phase and although integrated projects are reviewed as assessed coursework components, high-stakes, formal, handwritten, traditional examinations continue to be used for mid-semester and final assessments. This represents clear a mismatch between the pedagogy and assessment practices in use at the College.

Focus Group Discussion

In order to explore these issues in more depth, a focus group was held with ESL teachers from Abu Dhabi Men's College, to consider challenges and constraints faced within the changing educational environment, and strategies used to remain current in their field. Nine teachers joined the co-ed focus group; all were educated to Masters level in

their various fields of education. The focus group discussed professional development, professional training and the changing role of the ESL teacher in the UAE. Issues related to educational philosophy, time constraints and institutional support were discussed in the broad focus on how to remain abreast of change within the profession.

The initial focus of the group discussion was to establish perceptions of how the role of the ESL teacher had altered since the participants had qualified in their field. The particular emphasis was to identify the professional development needs of the focus group participants within the UAE context. The ultimate goal of the focus group was to identify the actual needs of the teachers and professional development areas that management had not previously perceived to be lacking at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Most of those present had qualified as ESL teachers in the 1980s or 1990s and emphasized the dramatic change in delivery methods currently used in the ESL classroom from the basic communicative approach to teaching ESL that they had initially practiced. The communicative approach to teaching language was developed in response to Chomsky's criticism of the theories of language structure and focuses on the semantic and communicative dimensions of language rather than emphasizing the grammatical characteristics (Widdowson, 1981).

Emerging Focus Group Themes and Trends

Initially, the focus group participants reflected upon how their roles as teachers had altered since they had graduated, and highlighted the following areas as the most significant changes:

- Shift in pedagogical approach, for example:

> Are there changes that are not technology-based? Or has just technology overridden everything, anything else?.....Technology is obviously a part of that, when in fact the most interesting part of it is how the change of understanding as to the creation of

knowledge and how we develop our knowledge as professional teachers has changed, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.2).

- Strategies for approach to teaching and learning (clear definitions needed), for example:

It (the new pedagogical approach) is in conflict with how we assess ourselves. If you look at the way we assess, the system-wide exams and our, within our own departments, they are completely separate and in conflict, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No. 4).

- Less teacher control over delivery methods, teaching tools and use of materials, for example:

I know from talking to other people that some of us feel we have been working in the dark a little bit, and that when we trained as teachers we were given a model lesson and we were told this is the way you do it……Now we have on-line learning there is no such model…We are very much feeling our way about, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No. 1).

- Introduction of educational technology, for example:

I don't think necessarily laptops are the answer. I think that becomes a classroom management thing and how the role of the teacher has changed within it, within the classroom, for laptop teaching, (Focus Group No. 1, Participant No. 6).

The group discussed current changes in pedagogy, with the expected shift away from introducing students to drilling in the classroom, and using language labs which had distinctly behaviorist software such as gap fill exercises, as the primary student activities. Such drilling was at odds with the principles of the communicative approach and the carrying out of meaningful, real-life tasks and activities in order to promote the application

of authentic language. However, it seems that one strength in the methodologies used a decade ago was that teachers felt secure in what they were delivering since they had been provided with a model lesson and given clear guidelines as to what was expected to be delivered in the classroom.

Focus group data indicated a sense of loss of control over the learning environment with the expected change to an IT-rich, integrated approach to teaching and learning, rather than the distinctly communicative approach of the 1980's and 1990's which provided increased freedom to interpret materials to suit the character of their particular group of students rather than be bound by grammar exercises and repetitive drills or translation. Group work and pair work were introduced as effective classroom activities, realia (e.g. travel brochures) were incorporated into classes and textbooks were designed to be more appealing to students. The contents of the commercial ESL support and teaching materials towards the end of the last century became more student-centered and colorful, and emphasized an increasingly international flavor. Participants in Focus Group No.1 lamented their perceived loss of control over classroom delivery in light of the introduction of educational technology into the classroom at Abu Dhabi Men's College:

> I think as well, if communicative competency of the learner is our aim, socially, in the workplace, everything else, we've got to look very, very carefully at the type of tasks that we are giving them for on-line learning and ensure that we're not moving backwards and actually preventing communicative competence. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.2)

> I mean, even now with these chat rooms and discussion board possibilities, they are fine but, why would we want them to discuss (in chat rooms) when they're there face to face? I mean, that makes no sense. It's inappropriate use, isn't it? (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.6)

Group work and pair work were introduced as effective classroom activities, realia (e.g. travel brochures, train timetables) were incorporated into classes and textbooks were designed to be more appealing to students. The contents

of the commercial ESL materials became more student-centered and colorful, and emphasized an increasingly international flavor.

Technology in the Classroom

Participants considered that technology in the classroom across the subject areas was often introduced with little preparation, and no apparent plan or strategy. Information appeared to be lacking as the technology was new for everybody, and the teachers were all feeling their way forward. Informal discussion and inquiry was, in their experience, the most effective means of establishing how the new technology should be handled and incorporated into the ESL classroom. However, the following discussion points could not be handled informally, and would need management intervention, guidance and clarification:

- Clear strategy and preparation for the new pedagogy
- Definition of terms and expectations
- Pressure to use the available technology (how much?)
- Mismatch between delivery and expected learning outcomes
- Professional development and support (building teacher confidence)

Concerns were raised about the definition of terms such as 'on-line learning' and 'blended learning' and how these terms were sprinkled into announcements and policies in the College without clear explanation of the institutions' expectations. Comments from participants reflected the fact that in the past two or three years Abu Dhabi Men's College had initially made a great effort to encourage on-line learning, but then appeared to react to feedback from students and teachers, and changed tack slightly suggesting a more blended approach to teaching and learning, although again without

clearly outlining what was meant by that term. One member of the focus group commented:

> We don't really know what on-line learning means..... and how that is compatible with a communicative approach. .....I think we've actually stepped backwards in terms of our approach (to teaching and learning) in our hurry to embrace technology. You know .... I think, possibly you've got to go two steps backwards before you can move forwards. And I think that's what we're in the process of doing at the moment, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.2).

All students and teachers at the college have laptops in a wireless environment and are expected to use them on a daily basis, but the appropriate use of the technology still needs to be addressed. Concern was expressed at the compatibility of on-line learning with the communicative approach to teaching ESL, and the mismatch with expected learning outcomes of their students appeared to denote a mismatch. Giddens' (1999, p.6) description of globalization as, "....emerging in an anarchic, haphazard fashion, carried along by a mixture of influences", captures participants' perspective of the way technology and educational reform is approached in many institutions of higher education in the UAE.

The level of support from the management team and professional development initiatives at Abu Dhabi Men's College was recognized by participants as a key measure of support. All agreed that they had improved their own IT skills dramatically, over the past two years in particular. The participants are all highly computer literate and able to use advanced classroom technologies such as Smart Boards, digitally recorded CDROM's for listening activities and the various drives on the computer network with relative ease. This level of proficiency gained through in-house professional development appeared to be an area with which the participants seemed particularly satisfied, although several members of the group mentioned that they would like to build more confidence in their skills by further refining them. The ESL teachers regularly provide their students with opportunities to use technology in the classroom and design activities that incorporate the

use of the internet and the submission of assignments electronically. There was agreement within the group that teachers appear to have sufficient autonomy as far as their classroom delivery is concerned, but that before exercising this freedom they need to feel confident and be well-prepared. However, the issue of a concrete strategy and framework for teacher development at Abu Dhabi Men's College, which also made provision for adequate time allowance to facilitate a high level of participation, had still not been addressed.

Technology: At What Price?

The cost of focusing on technology in the primarily communicative environment of an ESL classroom emerged as a key factor in to be considered when promoting the quality assurance of the teaching and learning environment. One of the teachers expressed her concerns openly saying:

> …my teaching has changed a lot in the last two years, but I wouldn't actually say it's for the better……..I don't think I'm teaching as much English as I used to in a classroom with a blackboard and a piece of chalk, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.3).

The perception was that the price to be paid for the development of students' IT skills was a lower standard of English. One focus group member discussed using laptop technology for listening and speaking activities stating:

> As far as listening exercises and speaking activities go, they lose what to me is the essence of learning a language, which is to be able to communicate with other students and with the teacher, because they're so focused on using the laptop, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4).

The key issue to be considered here is whether technology in the classroom supports and enhances the learning objectives (Eib, 2001). With the advent of educational technology and the focus on using technology in the classroom, it is possible that teachers and students have been

preoccupied with the 'bells and whistles' and lost sight of the essence of their subject and skills development (Eib, 2001). It may be possible that materials have been simplified in order to accommodate the technology, or that assessments have been adapted to enable on-line testing. Contact hours in the classroom have not been increased with the introduction of the IT-rich learning environment and teachers continue to have a curriculum to cover, but how have they managed to balance this with the new pedagogy (Pulkkinen, 2003; Richards, 2005)? The focus group wondered whether the communicative element had gone by the wayside to a large degree because of the use of laptops in the classroom. One group member supported the idea that to some extent part of the communicative approach had been lost in the hurry to embrace technology. Overall, it would appear that something has to be lost with the increase in the additional skills that must be developed in the classroom, and that may be concrete, subject-specific content knowledge. As we were warned as long ago as 1997, 'As new technologies enter the education scene, always keep the focus on learning. Is the technical enhancing the process?' (Nay et al., 1997, p.9).

Skills for Life-Long Learning

The purpose of education in the UAE is shifting in the 21st century due to the exponential growth in access to information and the needs of the workforce to maintain the rapid economic development in the region. This is in line with the worldwide focus of fostering life long learners, to transform the value of what is already known, and to create new networks for dialog, reflection, and contextual applications of learning in the real world (McCombs, 2000; Thornburg, 1999). This perspective was mirrored by the participants in the focus group who had real concerns about the amount of work that needs to be done in this area.

Focus group participants raised issues regarding the changed expectations in the role of the teacher and indicated that the following areas needed further development:

- Support structures to develop independent learners
- Classroom strategies
- Classroom management
- Integration of educational technology

The need to support the development of independent learners underscored the changes in the new role of the ESL teacher. Classroom management and the design and setting up of classroom activities no longer matches with the model lesson that had been suggested prior to the introduction of educational technology. Several participants made very open comments on the reality of the situation in the classroom:

> I think it comes straight back to what I said earlier, that if the tasks set are realistic and related to the students, and are going to help to develop communicative competence, then we can't argue with it (the integration of technology). But if the tasks set are bad, we're using technology purely for the sake of saying we've all got laptops, then it's possibly worthless, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.2).

It takes a great deal of time to motivate effective, independent use of technology amongst our particular population of tertiary level ESL students in the UAE. They have relatively unsophisticated epistemological beliefs, meager study skills and extremely limited global awareness due to the shortcomings of their basic education system. Commenting on this aspect of integrating technology across the subjects, one participant opined:

> I think too that you have to have a level of student that is sophisticated enough to use the technology appropriately, and I have to be honest, I have had classes that the students are not. I'd be happier if they had a pencil and paper rather than their laptop. I think we've all been in this situation where I would have liked to have waited a while, (Focus Group #1, Participant No.5).

It is therefore an enormous task to guide such students towards effective use of the internet and other information tools and to help them to

be selective in their search for information. However, it was felt by the group that the basic teaching and classroom management techniques they already possess enable them to set up classroom-based or web-based activities for their students, although in the case of web-based activities more scaffolding is required to maintain control over the desired learning outcomes.

The question of definition arose repeatedly with participants in the focus group searching for reassurance on the nature of on-line learning and its' position in the curriculum. A somewhat exasperated member of the group reacted:

> .....the subject of on-line learning, it needs to be defined. It's position in the curriculum and in the class, in any given class, needs to be defined. Where is it going to fit in? We've had this term blended learning that's come along now, and which seems to me to be a reaction, sort of reflecting that on-line learning is not the answer to everything. Woah! Wait a minute! Where are we going? Let's stop! Let's go back to what we were doing before, and let's put on-line learning, in along with our more traditional learning methods, and try and combine the two. So we've come up with this, again a term, blended learning, which I think we all have a rough idea what it is but I think it hasn't been defined any more than on-line learning has been defined, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.1).

A variety of comments from the participants pointed to the fact that as teachers they draw upon their original training in classroom delivery by introducing the lesson in the traditional way before launching into a less traditional, computer-based learning activity. This hybrid of methodologies, or blended learning, is intended to gradually guide students towards independent learning in the longer term. The participants stated that recent papers written on teaching and learning methodologies suggest that the focus on independent learning with a communicative learning support is what generates the best knowledge creation. This in turn may indicate that a combination of proven methodologies, coupled with adequate scaffolding, would provide students with the best possible chance of success in their studies and in their quest to become life-long learners.

Appropriate Use of Technology

Focus group data indicated that technology has its place in the ESL classroom and that it can be effective when used to reinforce and review student learning. Most teachers agreed that they would prefer students not to use their laptops as frequently during class as they tended to be more of a distraction than a learning aid. However, laptops were acknowledged to be a powerful tool in the search for information and ongoing research is being conducted in relation to the teaching and learning environment (Newhouse, 2002, 2004). The group concluded that the appropriate use of technology in the ESL classroom can be beneficial to student learning and in certain situations, using laptops in the classroom may be a significant motivational factor, providing visual appeal where text books may be less inspiring. Pike (2000, p.64) cites Tucker (1990) who asserts that, "teachers, not textbooks, appear to be primary carriers of the global education culture", and the multi-cultural, multi-skilled faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College are very likely the colleges greatest asset when it comes to the delivery of global knowledge embedded in ESL teaching.

There was a level of anxiety in the Focus Group about finding new and different ways of using educational technology. This stems from pressure exerted by senior management at Abu Dhabi Men's College for students and faculty to be seen to be using the technology in innovative ways, and from the students who have purchased their laptops at great expense and want to get full use out of them. It is important to continually reevaluate and reflect on the application of technology in the classroom in order to realize the full potential on offer (Nay et al., 1997). Technology may be beneficial when used to:

- Review and reinforce learning
- Support learning activities through planned integration
- Enhance existing teaching and learning practices

It was unanimously agreed that the traditional workshops that are offered are too formal a platform for the practical exchange of ideas and examples of what has worked well in the classroom. Comments from focus group participants sparked a new initiative. For example, one participant described the situation in the following way:

> ....the range of things I feel comfortable doing with the laptops is actually quite small. And I would like to have somebody give me some really great, different ideas that I may not have thought of..., and ....we should join together sometime and just share the (classroom) activities that have been successful, and maybe come up with a pool of activities that we could draw from, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4)

The idea of arranging Swap Shops where participants could take five to ten minutes to demonstrate an activity that had been well received by their students and resulted in the desired learning outcomes emerged several times during the discussion. This could be a possible step on the road to identifying the tasks that are best suited to the use of laptops in the classroom.

Another recurring issue was the fact that learning a language is a social activity and that interacting via a computer may be one form of communication but that it is limited in its development of the skills required to pass external benchmark examinations such as the PET and the IELTS which continue to be paper-based assessments. One focus group participant stressed the need to revisit the mismatch between curricula and developing methodologies, stating, "we've still got benchmark exams that require them (the students) to write (by hand). We've either got to find exams that are compatible with their learning, or change their learning", (Focus Group No.1, Participant No. 2).

Writing skills need to be methodically developed, particularly with Arab learners who are heavily disadvantaged in international assessments if they have insufficient practice at handwriting. This indicates an apparent mismatch between the suggested methods of delivery at Abu Dhabi Men's

College and the mandated benchmark assessments of the institution. Another discussion for a future forum!

Professional Development or Professional Training?

The distinction was made by focus group participants between professional training or the development of skills directly job related, and professional development, which is related to working toward a higher degree or other formal qualification. Concerns were raised about finding the time to attempt both in a demanding work schedule:

> If you have multiple preps that can multiply your prepping and your marking and, and as you say, giving the students the time that they need at your workstation, so that takes away from your time to do professional development and on top of now making a distinction between professional development and professional training. If you're doing professional training like I'm doing this semester that further takes away from doing professional development. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No. 7).

Participants felt that in their current situation they must focus their time on professional training since new innovations in educational technology are rapid and frequent, and there is much to learn. They also felt a need to maintain and improve their own personal skills in order to confidently present new developments to their students.

However, in addition to the daily rigors of teaching English in the contemporary classroom, many of those present would like to pursue professional training to doctoral level in a particular area of professional interest, but feel that there is no time to do both. In other words, it seems that their present environment and the need to sustain their level of technological currency influence their choices as far as their own life-long learning is concerned. The participants indicated that if their workloads were not so demanding they would welcome the opportunity to pursue both professional training and professional development, and one of the members pointed out that it was possible to combine the two approaches. An interesting response came as an expression of frustration, "I'm not sure if

that's professional development, or professional struggle!" (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.6).

Table 4.1

Overview of Findings of the Focus Group

Main Focus Group Themes	Focus Issue
Technology in the classroom and its appropriate use	Strategies for a sound approach to the new pedagogy and the introduction of educational technology. Clear definitions and expectations are needed for the new approach to teaching and learning.
Skills for lifelong learning	The impact of dynamic, contemporary pedagogy on the teaching and learning environment requires constant upgrading of skills
Professional development or professional training	Identifying the perceived needs for teacher development, formally or informally, to meet the challenge of the new pedagogical approach. Support from management needed to ensure the smooth transition and continued improvement in delivery

Summary

In order for higher education institutions to satisfy the needs of the various stakeholders, and in the wider interests of the global economy, teachers are faced with the challenge of being at least one step ahead of their students, at the cutting edge of technology. Teachers in the 21st century also have a responsibility to encourage students to develop a wide range of hard and soft skills, and to awaken an appreciation for global awareness in their students. In addition, students graduating from institutions of higher education in non-English speaking countries need to be equipped with a level of English language, communication skills and cultural awareness that will allow them to operate effectively in the global economy.

The role of the ESL teacher has clearly altered radically as a result of globalization and the necessity to prepare students for careers in the global economy. Since the role now encompasses not only English language teaching, but also the integrated use and development of IT, presentation and information research skills, continual professional development is not only desirable but essential.

Interestingly, the challenges facing ESL teachers were perceived to be very similar to those of teachers in general, across the subject areas. This point was summarized by one participant who reminisced that:

> I was talking to a history teacher, a friend of mine back in England, and he was complaining that as a History teacher, ... a lot of what he does now is involving technology and the fact that he has to prepare students in a way to get information and be able to critically assess information on the web. So in fact quite a lot of his time is technology based, so I don't think it's just English language teaching, is it? I think it's teaching as a profession that has become technical, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.6).

As technology is integrated throughout industry and commerce, it therefore has to be integrated into tertiary education. Such integration would appear to be an excellent preparation of our students for their future careers in the knowledge society. Overall, this was considered by teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College, as a positive development since students would develop skills through English, which is an authentic use of the language. This educational strategy matches the overriding philosophy of Abu Dhabi Men's College and supports the assumptions that student-centered learning is fundamentally constructive and situated (Hannafin & Land, 1997; Hill & Hannafin, 1995; Jonassen, 2000 & 2002, Jonassen, Howland, Moore & Marra, 2003; Land & Hannafin, 1998), and would also encourage them to constructively develop more global awareness, communicative competence and proficiency to achieve the external benchmark target levels in English. The figurative bar has also been raised with the need to further develop and polish classroom delivery methods with the focus on slick presentation skills and the ability to step outside of the traditional role of the teacher, and

into the role of facilitator or workshop leader. The honing of these soft skills, and the transition to the new leadership role in the classroom, may be a source of anxiety in some teachers. However, this appears to be in the initial stages of the transformation, and due to the fundamental communication and interpersonal skills that teachers usually possess, such concerns seem to be quickly and easily overcome. The group acknowledged that a similar expansion of the basic role of the teacher and the required skills set is probably widespread, at all levels, across all disciplines and in all countries.

The outcome of Phase 1 of the study provided insight into the changing role of the teacher, thereby addressing in the part first research question by highlighting the pedagogical influences which have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College. One of the key concerns raised by teachers in the focus group was the need for further professional development opportunities to support them in this dynamic educational environment. Participants in the focus group suggested several initiatives which would assist them in remaining current in their field including the informal sharing of ideas and practices with their peers.

Guskey (2000) highlights the need for care when assessing the quality of teacher development initiatives since a great deal of such evaluations are based upon individuals' reactions to workshops rather than the acquisition of new knowledge and skills, and the subsequent affects on teachers' classroom practices. Overall, the feedback and comments recorded during this focus group highlighted the eagerness and willingness of teachers, with adequate support and guidance, to remain abreast of the technological changes and to impart their newly acquired skills to their students. Participants in the focus group clearly felt that teachers should be provided with opportunities to apply their new skills and to discover what works, in a practical sense, for them and for their students. Skills development is clearly a critical factor in managing change and Straub

(2003, p.44) claims that there is: 'broad consensus that people and their skills are the most important assets in the knowledge economy'.

Responses from the teachers participating in the focus group also indicated that they recognize the need to respond quickly to changes in technology and delivery, although there are frequently limitations such as time constraints and other obstacles to timely, formal or informal professional development, notably accessibility in the case of ESL teachers in the Middle East.

The next chapter explores the challenges involved in embracing contemporary pedagogies in an IT-rich learning environment whilst addressing existing learning and graduate outcomes and fulfilling the requirements of external, benchmark assessments in English.

CHAPTER 5
PHASE 2: EXPLORING CURRENT PROFESSIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

This chapter considers the challenges faced by teachers when introducing contemporary pedagogies in an IT-rich learning environment. Students at the Higher Colleges of Technology continue to be assessed using the PET and IELTS external benchmark assessments as graduation requirements, course outlines which indicate that they should address existing learning outcomes and fulfill the requirements of system wide progression assessments in English. The focus group data reported in the previous chapter indicated a number of issues impacting the ESL teacher at Abu Dhabi Men's College and this chapter aims to review their concerns in the context of classroom practices.

This body of work seeks to answer the research questions:

1. What pedagogical influences have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College?

2. What models of professional development prepare tertiary teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College for dynamic developments in the teaching and learning environment?

It became evident during the focus group discussion that teachers recognize that they must face the challenge and react quickly to the demands of the 21st century workforce, preparing graduates with the necessary skills to operate in the Information Age. Participants also identified the need to develop their professional skills in line with demands of their changing environment. However, there are also teachers with more traditional attitudes towards teaching and learning who are reluctant to change what appears to be working well for themselves and their students, and that which

is indicated by the existing course outlines and learning outcomes. The expectation of Abu Dhabi Men's College is that technology should be used to some degree in the classroom and interactive whiteboards have replaced that traditional whiteboards and marker pens. The move towards more a constructivist learning environment is being encouraged at the college in order to develop the soft, especially the critical thinking and communication skills of the students, in line with the perceived basic needs of the workplace. It is therefore appropriate to make a comparison between two groups of Abu Dhabi Men's College students working from the same syllabus but from a different pedagogical focus in order to gauge its significance and impact in the learning environment of the college.

In order to illustrate the impact of contemporary pedagogical methodologies on student learning data from two groups of students in their first year at Abu Dhabi Men's College is explored. Cumulative and summative data of mid-semester and final assessments in English was collected over the academic year 2002/03. Faculty responsible for the groups chose to use quite different methodologies to reach their goals. Both groups were focused on reaching a level of proficiency in English to enable them to pass the PET the following year as an external benchmark requirement for the Diploma. Therefore mid-semester and final assessments closely resemble the format of that external assessment instrument in order to allow these students opportunities for examination preparation. One group was taught in a relatively traditional way with classroom activities based on three core textbooks, supplemented by the occasional use of technology in the classroom, and with the teacher working methodically through an institutionally designed work plan.

It was hypothesized that the traditional pedagogy would ensure a high success rate in assessments and progression to the next level in the Diploma program. The other group participated in project-based collaborative learning as well as more traditional, skills based instruction. Both groups would use CTI but the Traditional group in a more directed

way for skills practice and word processing and the Constructivist group as a tool to locate new information and construct their own learning.

Expectations were that the technology skills of the Constructivist group would increase dramatically with the Traditional group developing more slowly, although it was beyond the scope of this study to measure. This is a new area of research for the college and this chapter will explore any possible areas of compromise for the college and its students in changing pedagogical focus whilst striving to achieve the desired learning outcomes and maintaining high rankings in the league tables.

Healthy Competition

Educational institutions in the UAE compete keenly to be well placed in national and international league tables. Institutions afford a great deal of credibility to these indicators since the impact of such results on their accountability, reputations, volume and quality of student applications, and even funding, is considerable. In light of this fierce competition, it is necessary to examine the strategies employed to achieve high league table rankings, and ultimately to address the concern that some degree of quality of teaching and learning may be lost along the way since there appears to be a conflict between learning outcomes and high stakes assessments. It could be argued that in focusing on high ranking in league tables, educational institutions compromise other qualities in the educational experiences offered to their students in light of recent developments in education and the implementation of learning or graduate outcomes by forward-thinking departments of education around the world.

This chapter provides an exploration of the competition dilemma faced by Higher Education Colleges in the UAE and reflects upon the shift in focus from traditional educational input to greater integration across subject areas. The intention of the Higher Colleges of Technology graduate outcomes is to foster teacher and student ownership and creativity across the curriculum in a dynamic, global environment. However, parameters for

assessment, and therefore comparison and league tables, still remain in place and must be accommodated.

As a result of the existing methods of assessment at the Higher Colleges of Technology, results of high stakes external benchmark assessments are recorded and in competitive situations may become the essence of an institution rather than an indication of positive student learning of enduring and useful skills and concepts. Even in a relatively homogenous population of students from a similar social class, with cultural equality and comparative educational experiences, student performance results will vary from one institution to another. The variation in results would appear to originate from the educational philosophy of the individual institution and as a result the ethos and approach of the faculty they select. Clarke (2003) claims that as far back as the 1980s teachers argued that traditional forms of assessment were inadequate for measuring valuable skills in authentic situations. Teachers communicate to their students those outcomes and competencies they value most highly through what they assess (Clarke, 2003). However, institutions worldwide continue to assess in individual domains and in formal, written examinations, particularly at national level (ACER, 2002; CERI-OECD, 2001; PISA, 2002), which Newhouse (2004) reports as frequently having statistical errors, and weaknesses in the areas of context and test construction. Curriculum reform and changes in the learning environment, including assessments and standards are continuing issues in contemporary education (Fullan, 2002; Gandal & Vranek, 2001; Sparks, 1999).

In the Higher Colleges of Technology system of colleges the student population is relatively homogenous since all students are Emirati, all speak Arabic as their first language, have had largely had the same educational experiences during their compulsory education and a similar socioeconomic background. With a common curriculum, similarly experienced and qualified, international staff and therefore a comparable quality of higher education, supported by unlimited access to technology and resources at

each college, it may be expected that students would achieve similar results from one campus to the next and league tables would be irrelevant. However, the competition factor remains and strategies are adopted in the search for high ranking in the externally assessed league tables. Educators may be tempted to employ a variety of methods to achieve the desired outcomes, whether by "culling" students who may not pass their assessments; by distorting the curriculum; by teaching students how to produce the "right" answers, perhaps without understanding why; but more hopefully by encouraging students to think for themselves, reflect upon their learning and teaching them how to learn. There may be a significant impact on student learning as a result of contemporary pedagogical methodologies, although it is possible that the value added skills may not become apparent in the very short term, nor may they be reflected in traditional assessment results.

Models of Pedagogy and Assessment at Abu Dhabi Men's College

The Higher Colleges of Technology mission statement for the twelve college system demands that faculty, 'are dedicated to the delivery of technical and professional programs of the highest quality to the students, within context of sincere respect for all beliefs and values' (HCT, 1988/2002, p.3). Graduates 'will have the linguistic ability to function effectively in an international environment'. The mission statement stresses the importance of technical skills in an increasingly complex technological world, together with the 'capacity to adapt to constant change' (HCT, 1988/2002, p.3). The overall expectation is that graduates will have 'the leadership potential to make the fullest possible contribution to the development of the community for the good of all it's people' (HCT, 1988/2002, p.3).

The evolution of the Higher Colleges of Technology college system led to many new initiatives and developments resulting in successful outcomes and international acclaim. However, in September 1999 an in-house report produced by the Higher Colleges of Technology Academic

Services Division providing test results for external benchmark assessments (PET and IELTS) and system-wide progression assessments placed Abu Dhabi Men's College last in the league table in the system of ten colleges[15]. Addressing this issue became an urgent priority for management of the college. Some immediate changes were made including

- Developing a Three Year Plan
- Introducing a Peer Tutoring Program
- Setting up the Enhanced Learning Program
- Providing "off-sequence" courses and exam preparation classes
- Introducing educational technology and wireless technology, using laptops.

By the end of AY2002/03 Abu Dhabi Men's College had advanced its standing in the league tables, with greatest improvement in PET and IELTS scores. Enrollment at Abu Dhabi Men's College had more than doubled. However, the philosophical question defining educational aims continued to be unresolved for staff. Is it possible to judge a college by exam results and league tables alone? Are such things a true measure of real success, or does the learning experience of the students play an equally important role?

Although a significant improvement in assessment results was seen as a positive development by the leadership at the College, the strategies which had been employed to facilitate this improvement were driven by the nature of the assessments. Students had been coached in the skills and strategies which would ensure them of the best possible chance of success in the final assessment, e.g. Peer Tutoring, exam preparation classes, tutoring in the Enhanced Learning Program. In this sense success means passing a

[15] The two Fujairah colleges, the 11th and 12th in the HCT system, have since been opened

formal, traditional, written exam with the highest possible grade, and via means that are in conflict with the constructivist approach to education that was simultaneously being promoted by the College. The confusing dilemma for teachers and students was the mismatch between an increasingly constructivist approach to pedagogy and a stubbornly traditional approach to assessment. The graduate outcomes descriptors introduced by the Higher Colleges of Technology (see Appendix II) in 2002, allow teachers to interpret their outcomes-based curriculum from a constructivist perspective. However, although teachers have managed to alter their coursework assessment strategies, away from traditional testing, to reflect the new pedagogical philosophy and to link assessment and teaching (Clarke, 2003; Fishman & Duffy, 1994; Newhouse, 2004; Sparks, 1999) they are still grappling with the need to prepare students for external benchmark assessments.

As clients, students expect faculty and management to educate and prepare them for successful careers in line with the Higher Colleges of Technology Mission Statement. They expect to pass their exams and culturally they lose face if they fail, so this is an important cultural consideration. Students need to be well prepared for their exams, not only in terms of the content and language, but also in terms of strategies, especially time management. In addition, students must learn to function in the international world of business with increasing appreciation for globalization and how to deal with the international community. In the UAE English is not merely a foreign language but an operational second language. Success in an Emiratis' career is largely dependent upon their proficiency and ability to operate in the English language. Therefore, students must attain a high level of English, passing external benchmark assessments in order to fulfill the graduation requirements of the programs.

Luca et al., (2001, p.1) indicate that 'over the past decade has been growing concern about the role of higher education institutions and how they are meeting the needs of employers'. They report that industry,

governments and governing bodies are demanding graduates with 'versatile workplace skills, as well as subject-specific skills' and as a consequence higher educational institutions are reappraising their purpose (Luca et al., 2001, p.1). Such issues are vitally important in a relatively young country like the UAE as the role of the college is to support the building of a nation by graduating well prepared, high quality employees to serve and further develop their country. The acquisition of qualifications smoothes the pathway to employment in the knowledge society, however it is the actual knowledge one has gained, together with the skills to maintain current knowledge which ensures sustained success.

The 21st century is regarded as the knowledge society, where education will become the main focus. Education, though not necessarily in the traditional sense, will become a lifelong challenge. Within this changing concept of a knowledge base, course delivery in higher education is often inappropriate preparation for the dynamic workforce of the post-industrial knowledge society (Drucker, 1994; Hargreaves, 2003). Drucker (1994, p.12) extends this thinking by predicting that, 'Increasingly, an educated person will be somebody who has learned how to learn, and who continues learning, especially by formal education, throughout his or her lifetime' (Drucker, 1994, p.12).

Accountability

The role and responsibility of the English faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College is to provide quality teaching and learning experiences to students registered in the Diploma Program whilst ensuring that these students achieve the best possible results. The divisional plan of action (see Appendix III) has been to:

- Actively participate in writing and carrying out the annual Action Plan(s)
- Provide and support teachers' Professional Development

- Support Educational Technology initiatives
- Initiate the Peer Tutoring and Enhanced Learning Programs
- Review and facilitate classroom delivery and assessment strategies
- Address and support trends towards more constructivist approaches
- Prepare a Program Quality Assurance report on the General Education Division
- Address issues arising from Program Quality Assurance feedback at all levels
- "Reconstruct" the Diploma Program according to the evolution of delivery methods and needs
- Appreciate the importance of the "benchmark assessments" to the students' progression and the status of the college

There are issues worldwide surrounding outcomes-based curricula and the perceived difficulties of designing an appropriate assessment strategy (Newhouse, 2004). Key assessments leading to progression within the Higher Colleges of Technology college system are formal and traditional in nature, presenting something of a mismatch between classroom activities and outcomes, and the assessment tool. These high-risk assessments determine the level of proficiency of students in English and as such are forms of assessment which do not relate directly to, or reflect the outcomes-based learning activities of the courses. Proficiency assessments take a snapshot of the students' knowledge in the four skills areas of English, on a given day at a given time, and may frequently be at odds with the educational beliefs and practices of the teachers. Clarke (2003) explores the disadvantages of traditional pen and paper assessments and makes a strong case for assessing what we value in an open process with student

engagement. However, accountability in many educational institutions in the UAE appears to focus on assessment results rather than students' learning experience. Data is readily available after each examination period, comparisons can easily be made, and competition between institutions to have the best examination results is often fierce.

Funding of institutions, recruitment, admissions and even job security may be affected by results and an institutions' position in league tables. Achieving the best possible results is also of great importance to students and faculty as they are a measure of success and allow students to progress to the next level. Clarke (2003) explains, but does not advocate, the use of formal assessments stating that their purpose is to inform parents, prospective educational institutions and employers, and that they may even be a motivating factor for students. However, the results are only part of the picture and do not provide a complete evaluation of what has been learned during a course of study. In the UAE, assessment results are an all too popular measurement tool, but they do not measure or reflect the frequently more meaningful aspects of teaching and learning often referred to as the value-added skills which students will need in the studies and in the future careers.

Value-Added Skills

Despite the high-stakes assessments at the conclusion of each English course, the primary focus of the English language curriculum at Abu Dhabi Men's College is the provision of eclectic learning opportunities designed to reach learning outcomes whilst empowering students to address their own abilities and interests. Students are encouraged to develop a range of computer, communication, information and critical thinking skills in preparation for dynamic careers in the 21st century. However, since the learning outcomes, as expressed in course outline documents, do not identify value-added skills, all outcomes may be interpreted as pertaining to specific linguistic goals and ultimately to passing the final assessment. Consequently, students may consider these additional skills as unimportant

since they are not formally assessed (Clarke, 2003; Goldstein & Speigelhalter, 1996). For the purpose of this study, the term value-added skills are defined as those things of value that students learn through their educational experience, rather than the expressed goals and objectives of the formal curriculum of their educational institution (Haralambos, Heald & Holborn, 2004). This type of learning may change their attitudes towards learning and their approach to living (Meighan, 1986) through a process of learning how to learn via socially-constructed environment (Jackson, 1968). Value-added skills in the context of a tertiary educational institution and future employment in the UAE currently have a similar impact on social class, gender and culture in the socialization process of learning as originally suggested by Jackson (1968) as the country continues to develop and embrace globalization, and as such are highly valued by future employers.

Interpretation of the course outline is the domain of the teacher who may deliver classes systematically, according to a work plan, or may present more constructivist learning opportunities to students. In both cases, apart from a formal, pen and paper mid-term assessment, formative evaluation is based on classroom activities and may include a project or portfolio of work completed either independently or collaboratively, although Newhouse (2004) reports feedback indicating that this type of assessment is frequently considered by teachers to be too labour intensive. The challenge faced by teachers is to provide a rich and engaging learning experience to students who need to develop skills to sustain them in the Information Age whilst simultaneously grooming them for success in a high-stakes written assessment. The dilemma in such a learning environment is that not enough value is placed on what actually goes on in the classroom, and a final assessment is usually only based upon a limited test on a specific day and time, under conditions that are often not conducive to bringing out the best in a student (Clarke, 2003; Luca et al., 2001; Schwab, 1989).

With regard to students at Abu Dhabi Men's College, critical thinking, information and time management skills are just some of the additional skills being developed during the learning process, particularly when project-based learning is incorporated into the curriculum. In a student-centered learning environment where students are motivated and encouraged to construct their own learning for the first time, a whole range of new skills the value-added opportunities and experiences and skills development. Computer, leadership and presentation skills are gradually developed when students work collaboratively. Students depend less on faculty members who in this type of learning activity take on the role of facilitators, offering suggestions, and particularly in an ESL environment, supporting language development. Additionally, faculty offer effective and timely advice on technology, an area where intervention is frequently required since students quickly become frustrated if technology fails.

Educational Philosophy: Getting the Balance Right

Contemporary educational scenarios no longer seem to fit neatly into any of the traditional teaching and learning paradigms. The postmodernist approach allows educators to reflect upon the needs of their learning communities and respond appropriately. Richardson (2000) claims that to work within a postmodern paradigm is to, "understand ourselves reflexively as persons writing from particular positions at specific times.....nurturing our own voices releases the censorious hold of 'science writing' on our consciousness, as well as the arrogance it fosters in our psyche", (Richardson, 2000, p.929).

Given the assumption that there is no single truth, and that all truths are partial, there can be no single, conventional paradigm to which researchers and educators can give common terms with common understanding. Waterhouse & Rogers (2003) discuss flexible delivery and the emerging 'hybrid' model where faculty use technology based activities to enhance face to face classes and student centered activity, thereby integrating 'e-learning' with classroom based courses. Educators are in the

position of having to balance theories and practices that they are comfortable with and which they are confident will produce the desired results, at least in the short term, with those theories and practices that they instinctively feel are right for their students, and which will produce long-term results. It is this balance which Abu Dhabi Men's College is trying to achieve.

Rogers and Freiberg (1994, p.37) remind us that, 'Significant learning combines the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feelings, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning'. In these terms the role of the Abu Dhabi Men's College faculty is not to reinforce students' experiences of education from a school system that encourages rote learning, but to develop enthusiasm to learn for the sake of knowledge and to encourage them to become life-long learners. The entire English faculty is concerned that by creating a constructivist, problem-based learning environment on the one hand, yet preparing students for formal assessments in the four separate skills of English on the other, mixed messages are being sent. Again the pedagogical dilemma presents itself and the need to address the mismatch between classroom practices and formal assessment (Clarke, 2003; Newhouse, 2004).

The English faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College must clearly address the balance, or achieve a compromise, in order to fulfill the needs of the students, faculty, management and indeed the educational system. Some faculty feel this could be done by effectively dividing up English hours taught in each course between problem-based learning activities and more formal, traditional classes providing examination preparation. However, other faculty members feel more secure delivering the curriculum in the traditional way and are given the freedom to do so, although with a certain amount of educational technology incorporated into each lesson in line with the philosophy of the leadership. Windschitl (2002) acknowledges the possibility and Häkkinen (2002) the necessity of combining constructivist methods with more traditional, direct instructional methods as a strategy for

teaching and learning. Other authors, such as Lebow (1993) and Rieber (2002) advocate extending or adapting traditional instructional design methodologies to better accommodate diverse perspectives and contemporary research and theory.

Constructivism at Abu Dhabi Men's College

Introducing a constructivist learning environment into a tradition bound society is quite a challenge. Nevertheless, it is the challenge presented to faculty. Faculty members are accountable to the UAE government, the Higher Colleges of Technology governance and of course the main clients, the students, and the expectation is that the challenge will be met. External benchmark assessments will validate the job done in the classroom, and faculty will be recognized according to system-wide results in summative assessments leading up to the international external benchmark assessments of English proficiency, the PET and IELTS, depending on the level of the program. To achieve the organizational goals a pastiche of methodologies and learning theories appears to be the way forward, in this postmodern age.

> We have come and gone in the "great paradigm wars". The wars are over. While we were fighting, the boundaries and borders over which we were fighting were redrawn until they were meaningless. We are not free to choose post modernism. It is the historical moment when the modernist epoch ends: contingent, pluralistic, ambiguous, freed (or jettisoned) from the certainties of yesterday, decentred, noisy with previously unheard voices (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, p.1060).

Postmodernism is a term which Lincoln & Denzin (2000) believe is not a choice, rather a moment in history. According to Anderson (1995), postmodernism is presented in different versions by such French thinkers as Baudrillard, Derrida, Foucault and Lyotard. Lyotard (1984) describes the postmodern age as one where there is disbelief in universal systems of thought. The postmodern philosophy emphasizes contextuality and the construction of meaning, and indeed the reality and validity of multiple

perspectives. It has now become acceptable to doubt, question, or even disbelieve, what was formerly referred to as 'the truth'. It is now believed that knowledge and truth are grounded in everyday life, social relations and activities. The idea that all we do can be value-laden and that these experiences, found in a constructivist learning environment, enrich students' learning and future careers, is the motivation for developing a constructivist learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

The theory of social constructivism, according to Vygotsky (1978) is that optimum learning takes place in a collaborative environment, requiring teamwork skills and the acceptance that individual learning is related to the success of the group. Piaget (1968) theorizes that learners respond to their own interpretation of stimuli rather than the external stimuli itself. Vygotsky (1978) asserts that Piaget (1968) had overlooked the social nature of language and therefore failed to understand the collaborative process, a role which Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes. Social constructivism as a philosophy and learning theory covers a broad set of principles allowing for flexibility of implementation and facilitating authentic, collaborative learning experiences, using a variety of tools (Wilson, 1996). Learners build understanding through a process and their personal interpretation of the experiences with conceptual growth being fostered by collaboration and cumulative experience (Bednar, Cunningham, Duffy & Perry, 1995).

In general, the English faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College is keen to practice constructivism, and the curriculum at the Higher Colleges of Technology provides faculty with freedom to interpret the goals and objectives in a meaningful way. Groups of students vary in their interests, especially between the Men's and the Women's colleges, so it is necessary to allow a certain license for the faculty to prepare rich, authentic learning experiences for their students. The only proviso is that the students should be adequately equipped to pass the final assessments in English. It is therefore necessary to discover effective strategies for this population of students. As Wilson (1997) suggests, the post-modern era encourages us to

'take a second look' at the gadgets and toys, such as laptops, and see if they have improved our lives. Aside from English, a great many other skills are taught, though perhaps discretely, in the classroom. Students learn how to search for information and then how to present it. However, at Abu Dhabi Men's College critical thinking remains one of the most important incidental skills developed by our students who have previously been taught not to question the truth as presented in the only book available to them until recent times, the Holy Qur'an.

The English faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College invests heavily in professional development and whenever possible embraces the opportunity to utilize the latest technology, encouraging students to construct their own learning. If one were to drop into an English class at Abu Dhabi Men's College, the most common type of activity would be project-based learning with students participating in group work or collaborative learning and faculty acting as facilitators. However, the washback from external benchmarks examinations is a tension that is felt by faculty and students, who ultimately want the security of being prepared for such high stakes assessments. The concept of project-based learning is still relatively new in the UAE and there is a paucity of empirical research in this field. As a consequence, students, faculty and managers are unwilling to depend on constructive methodologies alone to prepare for the PET and IELTS.

Initially, the role of faculty as facilitators is difficult for students to come to terms with. They start out with the idea, reinforced by approximately 15 years of sitting in a classroom, that teachers stand before a class and teach. This has worked for generations, as far back as anyone can remember. At Abu Dhabi Men's College traditional teaching methods have not been totally abandoned, rather, faculty attempt to offer a variety of teaching and learning experiences to their students. The challenge is to encourage them to become life-long learners, to use technology, and to think critically, yet the environment they have come from provided little preparation for this work. Although the school system is improving

gradually, Abu Dhabi Men's College is still in the position of having to start from scratch with freshman students. Windschitl (2002) offers sound advice regarding the implementation of constructivist learning environments in the classroom, although he acknowledges elsewhere in his paper that even experienced educators find it difficult to put constructivism into practice.

ESL Assessments

The Higher Colleges of Technology Learning Model has its focus on the theory that language is built on a proficiency construct, and therefore external benchmark assessments such as PET and IELTS are crucial to ensure that the Learning Model is in line with international standards. It is a given that Diploma students at Abu Dhabi Men's College will need to pass the PET in order to graduate from the program, so similar final assessments are introduced at the outset.

Considerable improvement in the performance of Abu Dhabi Men's College students taking the PET was made during the period from June 1998 to June 2002 when there was a dramatic increase in the pass rate for the PET from 56 per cent to 85 per cent. This success was very popular with upper management and the community. Enrollment at the college increased as an immediate result, and students who had previously been sent abroad to study were enrolled in Higher Colleges of Technology programs.

In spite of this success the college system is currently reviewing the external benchmarks used as graduation requirements. In the rapidly evolving information age it is necessary to ensure that the education delivered and the qualifications gained provide the desired outcomes with respect to ever-demanding employers and careers (CERI, 2001). Whilst the curriculum may be relatively flexible, the exit requirements of the programs, e.g. the PET, are not. This corresponds with the worldwide situation which Newhouse (2004) describes where the purpose of assessment is typically for educational progression, group comparisons, or to inform parents, colleges, employers rather than to assess actual student learning.

It is clear that assessment should match the curriculum and not vice-versa. However, the use of proficiency tests in English, which will test all four skills and assess underlying general language skills that underpin subject specific performance, continue to be widely used internationally. Increasingly, construct validity comes into question when extensive use of educational technology in the form of on-line course components tips the balance. The dilemma is that something has to give as it is important that students are provided with a variety of educational opportunities using a range of methodologies, with faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College determined to teach students how to learn, to apply knowledge and to remain current in their knowledge. The challenge in the Higher Colleges of Technology mission statement is to produce graduates with superior linguistic ability, and with the technical skills, and capacity and adaptability to manage change (HCT, 1988/2002). Getting the balance right is the challenge.

Methodology vs. Marks

Students in the Diploma Program must achieve a pass in the PET as a graduation requirement. The dichotomy alluded to in this chapter is that of providing the students with an opportunity of learning to learn in a constructivist environment, whilst also providing them with the best possible methods of external examination preparation and strategies. In practice and on paper, this has been working at Abu Dhabi Men's College and the students have consistently outperformed those at the other eleven colleges in the system[16] in both system-wide and external benchmark assessments in English. It would seem that the results of these assessments validate the learning to learn approach taken in half of their course contact hours since the two quite different methodologies appear to compliment one another. The students seem to apply and implement their new-found learning skills in exam preparation and strategies, and have clearly developed information skills which had been lacking when they joined the

college from high school. However, as a faculty, the concern is that one is continually faced with carefully balancing the traditional and constructivist methods, knowing that if the students perform less-well in their assessments it will reflect badly on the program, the faculty and the methods employed. There is also a concern that such a compromise, where one can ill afford to take too many risks, may be costly in terms of student learning, continuity and creativity. During Focus Group No.1 this was a recurring topic with one participant highlighting the frustration she felt when trying to balance the classroom methodology with the desired exam results:

> I think though that it's not only in conflict with outside exams like PET and IELTS. It's in conflict with how we assess ourselves. If you look at the way we assess, the system-wide exams or our own, within our own departments, they are completely separate and in conflict. You know, and it goes back to this difference between, doing writing assignments on the laptop and doing writing assignments by hand. We feel we need to use the laptops, so a lot of us, myself as well, will have them do it for writing and do it in Microsoft Word, and do all the editing. But when it comes down to the test they have to do it by hand, so trying to find time to teach them how to do both, is very time consuming, (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4).

An Illustration

In order to compare the successful achievement of learning outcomes in English of two groups of first year students in the Diploma Program at Abu Dhabi Men's College, the formative and summative data relating to their coursework and final assessments was collected over a period of one academic year. The intention was to monitor these two groups of students since they were being taught the same courses but by two different teachers with different beliefs and approaches to the curriculum. The groups will be known as Traditional and Constructivist for this comparative study. Both groups are of similar size, age (18) and background, and all are Emirati with Arabic as their first language. All the

[16] The 12th college in the system, Fujairah Men's College, opened in September 2004, and is therefore not included in this data.

students are male and in their first year of higher education after graduating from high school. All the students are taught exclusively in English across the subjects in the Diploma Program. Both faculty members have comparable qualifications and experience and have taught in the Arab world for at least ten years.

The 18 students in the Traditional group were taught in a relatively teacher-led manner from the start of the academic year. They received a solid foundation in grammar and the four main skills in English: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Lessons were frequently introduced using Power Point presentations, students used laptops as learning tools, and were often asked to use the Internet to search for information. In addition, they used in-house materials on WebCT to reinforce their learning and in some cases for remedial work. There was an abundance of activities to draw upon and educational technology was used in a very practical way to enhance the classroom experience, reinforce learning and to provide a change in pace of delivery.

The 21 students in the Constructivist group studied in a more student-centered learning environment. They were encouraged to work in groups, on projects and the faculty member acted as a facilitator rather than a traditional teacher, guiding students towards information and learning. Introductory topics were presented using Power Point with a certain amount of scaffolding provided in the form of Internet links to recommended web sites and book references. This guidance helped to ensure that certain goals and objectives in the existing curriculum were reached. Field trips were also encouraged to trigger ideas for project development and curiosity about the world of work. Collaborative learning was strongly encouraged although each group member was expected to write a reflective conclusion to each project independently. The faculty member divided the English contact hours into project-based learning sessions and traditional English class sessions where grammar, reading, writing listening and speaking were practiced according to the format they would eventually be assessed on.

Formal student feedback mechanisms within the College indicate that both groups were satisfied with the approach to learning English, despite exposure to quite different learning experiences during their courses: one group with an essentially Traditional approach and the other with a more Constructivist approach. The Traditional group was taught via a methodical assessment preparation curriculum with every grammar point delivered and practiced until they felt completely confident in their skills, and timed reading and writing practice according to assessment strategies. They also practiced listening using a variety of media, but also preparing for the rather unnatural format used in assessments, i.e. listening to an audio cassette with few visual aids or prompts. Meanwhile, the Constructivist group was learning in a less structured, more dynamic classroom, preparing projects and collaborating with their peers. Only 50 per cent of their classroom time was spent in formal English classes fine-tuning their self-constructed knowledge in English to a more grammatically correct and formal form to be used in assessments. Both groups had a full range of learning support tools at their disposal and all students had laptop computers which could be used in a wireless campus environment.

The question of risk-taking is an obvious issue when faculty are afforded the freedom to interpret curricula and course outlines according to their own beliefs, and the faculty members were made to feel secure in that the assessments given at the end of the first semester would not exclude students from continuing in their program. However, faculty members are often reluctant to take such risks knowing that assessment scores are reviewed along with classroom performance. In such cases the program manager must accept full responsibility for affording freedom of curricular interpretation to the faculty members and must also provide on-going professional and emotional support for the initiatives and the methods used. In the event that such initiatives are clearly not in the best interests of the students, alternative strategies must be adopted as a matter of urgency.

Results – Semester 1

At the mid-point of the first semester all students were assessed in a common assessment of the English skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The written assessment tool was in three parts with a variety of questions types and conducted in an auditorium with each of the assessment components timed. The speaking assessment was conducted with each individual and a teacher other than their usual English teacher and was timed. The content of the four assessments reflected the grammar and vocabulary as indicated in the course outline and the work plan for the English course being taken. As outlined in the table below, the Constructivist group performed slightly better than the Traditional group at that stage. However, both groups had a similar profile and the traditional group had a profile consistent with a group undertaking a similar assessment in English the previous year.

Table 5.1
October 2002 Mid-semester Results

Result	-60	60-64	65-74	75-89	90-100
Mid semester Grade	F	D	C	B	A
Constructivist Group	2	1	1	10	7
Traditional Group	2	1	5	7	3

Assessment results shown in Table 5.1 indicate that although the Constructivist group performed slightly better than the Traditional group overall, there was very little evidence to support any claim that either group had gained any particular advantage over the other from the different teaching and learning styles being used in the classroom.

The faculty members and program manager concluded from these results that there was no reason to change tack and by the final English

assessment of the first semester (Table 5.2) the following results seemed to confirm the fact that similar outcomes could be achieved using different classroom methodologies.

Table 5.2
January 2003 Final Results

Result	-60	60-64	65-74	75-89	90-100
Semester 1 Final Grade	F	D	C	B	A
Constructivist Group	0	0	6	13	2
Traditional Group	1	1	6	9	1

Results – Semester 2

By the mid-point in the second semester the students were assessed again and a slightly different pattern had emerged. Table 5.3 shows that both groups were performing within the expected range, with students in the Constructivist group achieving 15 A and B grades as in the previous assessment, and students in the Traditional group achieving 12 A and B grades, an increase of 2 in that range since the previous assessment.

Table 5.3
April 2003 Mid-semester Results

Result	-60	60-64	65-74	75-89	90-100
Mid semester Grade	F	D	C	B	A
Constructivist Group	2	1	3	8	7
Traditional Group	1	1	4	10	2

At the conclusion of the academic year 2002/03 both groups were assessed according to a final system-wide English examination. Table 5.4 shows that students in the Constructivist group achieved the highest number of passing grades with 13 students in the A and B range. Students in the Traditional group achieved fewer high grades and more F grades than expected.

Table 5.4
June 2003 Final Results

Result	-60	60-64	65-74	75-89	90-100
Semester 2 Final Grade	F	D	C	B	A
Constructivist Group	4	4	0	10	3
Traditional Group	6	0	3	6	1

The comparison between these two groups of students set out to determine the impact of contemporary pedagogy on students in the freshman year of the Diploma program at Abu Dhabi Men's College. This data was shared with the entire team of faculty members to illustrate that whilst students progress well and have a good degree of success using more traditional methods of teaching and learning, there may be some evidence that a more constructivist learning environment would provide richer, deeper learning opportunities resulting in a higher level of proficiency in English. The difficulties of implementing appropriate assessments as education moves towards a more outcomes based curriculum is highlighted by Newhouse (2004). In a more constructivist learning environment the approach to assessment needs to be addressed and the purpose of assessment challenged (Goldstein & Speigelhalter, 1996; Hacking, 2004; Newhouse, 2004; Sparks, 1999). At Abu Dhabi Men's College passing formal, traditional, external benchmark assessments in English language will continue to be the ultimate goal of every student since they are graduate

requirements. Until the PET and IELTS systems are altered in line with contemporary pedagogy, the College will need to prepare students for such assessments and provide a compromise in the form of a combination of methodologies that suits this particular set of circumstances.

Although the use of a compromise, or combination of teaching and learning methodologies in the otherwise constructivist classroom, addresses the balance between achieving high league table rankings and providing Abu Dhabi Men's College students with problem-based learning opportunities where they can experience meaningful learning, it is clearly not a panacea. Day (2000) expresses a concern that teachers take substantial risks when using a considerable amount of time in the classroom to assist students who have little experience or knowledge of technology, and who subsequently may do less well in assessments. This opinion is reflected in a report by Morrison (1997) who attributed poor student evaluation to the integration of technology in the classroom. The two groups of students monitored in this study at Abu Dhabi Men's College used technology as a learning tool in different ways. The Traditional group, purely for word processing and for directed skills practice, but the Constructivist group used technology to locate information and to construct their own learning through new knowledge acquired.

Much of the available literature agrees that context is a cornerstone to deep and enduring learning whether described as: authentic learning (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; McLoughlin & Luca, 2002), project-based learning (CTGV, 1992) or a student-centered learning environment (Choi & Hannafin, 1995; Land & Hannafin, 1996). Rao & Sylvester (2000), Scardamalia & Berreiter (1999), Stigler & Hiebert (1999); Strommen & Lincoln (1992) describe in depth the value added skills developed via computer-based, constructivist learning, and other prolific writers in the field expound on the virtues of the use of computers in learning (Atkins, 1993; Becker, 2000; Becker & Ravitz, 2001; Hannafin & Land, 2000; Hokanson & Hooper, 2000; Horwitz & Barowy 1994). Indeed, over the past

ten years much has changed in education. The computer as a learning tool has become a fact of life and been embraced where economically viable.

The literature reviewed on co-operative learning points to extended student potential (Cushman, 1996; Duffy & Cunningham, 1996; Hooper, Temiyakarn & Williams, 1993; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Land & Greene, 2000; Land & Hill, 1997) suggesting that students who become engaged in meaningful learning, often supported by technology, and assisted by a dynamic support group may ultimately acquire a deeper understanding of their learning. To illustrate the benefits of cooperative learning Duffy, et al., (1996) and Land & Hannafin (1998) cite Vygotsky (1978) referring to the zone of proximal development when they discuss meaningful learning which occurs as a result of students engaging in learning activities where 'scaffolding includes the support of other individuals, any artifacts in the environment that afford support, as well as the cultural context and history the individuals bring to the Zo-ped', (Duffy et al., 1996, p.183).

Although studies carried out in the field of constructivist and problem-based learning environments may well be transferable, they do not appear to relate closely to the population of students, or indeed the environment that one is presented with in the UAE. However as the government high schools gradually improve, such comparison becomes increasingly more plausible. It is apparent that there is a paucity of empirical studies regarding ESL medium colleges and their students in the Arab world and this provides and excellent opportunity for future research.

Meaningful Learning

The study of the English assessment results of two sections of first year students in the Diploma program at Abu Dhabi Men's College provides little evidence of dramatic advantages or disadvantages in the methods used to deliver the course. Although the Constructivist group with their project-based background achieved higher grades amongst those students who passed, neither group was found to be particularly disadvantaged when

taking the final assessment in English, even though more students than anticipated in both groups failed the course. However, it appears that the value-added elements of the learning experience, those which are not assessed, or perhaps sufficiently valued (Clarke, 2003), may well be the areas where the group using problem-based learning will eventually discover that they experienced deeper, more meaningful learning. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the new skills they were charged with developing, the group of students participating in the course offering a variety of methods appeared to be more motivated and marginally more successful.

The group of students being taught by more traditional methods may well have lacked motivation due to under-stimulation or boredom. They may also have assumed when hearing other students discussing their projects and learning activities that their assigned faculty member was exerting less effort in preparing and delivering classes. This may have resulted in diminished response, participation and cooperation in the classes. Traditional teaching methods of progressing through an assigned textbook and focusing on achieving goals and objectives in an orderly manner as per a course outline may appear to be less motivating and offer fewer opportunities for deep learning to occur. However, many educators feel more secure using methods that work for them and are generally proven to be effective.

Educational Reform

Farrell (2001) asserts that in spite of extensive and expensive educational reform initiatives, especially in the United States of America, large-scale reform usually does not work. He acknowledges however that smaller scale teacher-driven reform has been more successful, presumably because the teachers themselves have to wholeheartedly embrace new methodologies in order for them to endure. Cited in Farrell (2001), Ravitch & Vinovskis (1995); Tyack & Cuban (1995) offer the overall opinion that lasting changes are developed and adapted locally by those who best know their population of students – the faculty. Stigler & Hiebert (1999) echo

these sentiments, adding that culture plays an important role in education and may explain why attempts at educational reform are largely unsuccessful. Educational reform on a large scale is frequently seen as a mere trend and due to its top down approach is often doomed to failure. However, the opinions cited above ring true at Abu Dhabi Men's College where more subtle changes in the classroom, from a bottom up perspective, appear to be more likely to last. Faculty members take ownership of their initiatives and develop curriculum modifications and improvements where they are given the freedom to do so.

Much of the available literature appears to encourage educators to buy into educational reform, however many are reluctant to do so until there is concrete evidence in the form of extensive empirical studies that show an alternative methodology to be superior to others in existence, and which produce the desired results on paper. Faculty members are not encouraged to explore their creativity and this leads to mediocrity and eventual "deskilling" of faculty who repeatedly deliver the same materials year after year. Firestone & Mayrowetz (2000) report on job security and rewards, and the occurrence of teaching to the test when faculty members feel pressure in conjunction with assessment of their students. Until there is a significant change in the way educators and educational institutions are judged, funded and rewarded, new initiatives will be viewed largely as fleeting fads or trends, creativity amongst students and faculty will continue to be stifled and mediocrity will pervade all we do.

By focusing on high league table rankings Abu Dhabi Men's College students and faculty are somewhat restricted from fulfilling their potential or their creativity. The importance of the high stakes external assessments as a graduation requirement dictates what goes on in the classroom, particularly during the weeks leading up to the assessment. In the eyes of the students this implies that their learning experiences in problem-based learning activities are of less importance and therefore need not be taken so seriously. This is an obstacle that faculty need to overcome by

stressing the value of the skills the students develop during their constructive learning experiences.

Summary

At a quick glance the answer to the question that this chapter poses, 'Is there any significant impact on student learning as a result of contemporary pedagogical methodologies?', would appear to be no. However, a closer look indicates that although the results of English proficiency assessments over an academic year were similar, the group of students who were learning in a largely constructivist environment performed slightly better than those being taught in a more traditional way. Although both groups of students achieved similar results and outcomes, feedback from the two English teachers indicated the following concerns regarding the imbalance and mismatch between the curriculum and assessments at the College:

- The perceived lack of importance of the value-added skills acquired through project-based learning activities (because these are not assessed)
- The limited amount of time afforded to students to independently create and take pride in their own learning (because examination preparation classes are mostly faculty-led)
- The quality of the experience of working in a group, independent of a "teacher" (because in traditional classroom activities they must work alone and usually do not construct their own learning)
- The amount of time spent on teaching technology in addition to their own subject of English as a second language

- Teaching to the test and test strategies need to be taught in addition to any project or group work assigned (this can prove to be disruptive)

Although league table rankings for Abu Dhabi Men's College have improved as a result of a variety of changes in the approach to teaching and learning since September 1999, by focusing on examination preparation the college appears to be risking:

- Maintaining a high level of motivation in their creative faculty members (because they revert to chalk and talk methods and stifle their creativity)

- Maintaining a high level of motivation in their students who are keen to create their own learning and become life long learners (because the idea that assessment results are more important to the College than deeper, more meaningful learning, is reinforced at the end of every semester)

- The possibility of achieving even better assessment results if faculty felt confident enough to risk sticking to their guns and basing complete English courses on project-based learning (because students are assessed according to their proficiency in English which may well increase with more extensive exposure to problem-based learning)

Changes in the educational process in the UAE will not necessarily radically alter the traditional beliefs and practices surrounding teaching and learning. It is likely that more traditional methods will endure alongside new initiatives although the role of technology in the classroom appears to be widely accepted. It would seem that educators should take what works for them in a practical sense and use the best of both worlds for the good of their students (Ingvarson, 2002; OECD, 2001, 2005b; Richardson, 2000, Stigler, et al., 1999; Straub 2003).

For the foreseeable future, the English faculty at Abu Dhabi Men's College will continue to offer students the solution of compromise, providing a combination of traditional methods and project-based constructivist learning opportunities. The conclusion being that, at least in the UAE, these methodologies are mutually beneficial, enabling students to succeed in their assessments and in progression to the next level and eventual graduation whilst nurturing somewhat a wide variety of skills and to some extent encouraging lifelong learning. In this way the faculty is doing its best to fulfill the challenge set out in the Higher Colleges of Technology mission statement to prepare students to be graduates with, 'the linguistic ability to function effectively in an international environment', in addition to a wide range of technical and leadership skills, and 'the intellectual capacity to adapt to constant change', (HCT, 1988/2002, p.3).

The outcome of Phase 2 of the study provided insight into the influences of contemporary pedagogy in the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College in relation to student outcomes, thereby addressing in part the first research question reflecting upon the impact on student learning. The data indicates that there appears to be no strong evidence that one particular methodology should be dictated to teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The argument that teachers should have a certain amount of autonomy over delivery methods continues to be valid, although outcomes should continue to be closely monitored in the interests of maximizing student success.

Building on the data illustrating the changing role of the teacher as outlined in Chapter 4, and the comparative study illustrating the impact of contemporary pedagogy in this chapter, the next chapter will address the provision of a program for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College in line with the developments and changes in the professional role of the teacher. The challenge presented to teachers and highlighted in this chapter is how to adopt contemporary pedagogy, integrate technology and prepare their students for traditional external benchmark assessments as

graduation requirements. Such a mandate requires a wide range of skills and competencies which have not always been included in pre-service teacher education. It is therefore essential to offer support and training in areas that will allow teachers to build confidence in their ability to rise to this challenge.

CHAPTER 6
PHASE 3: IMPLMENTING A REFLECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTWORKSHOP

Managing the provision of professional development for in-service teaching staff grappling with changes in pedagogy requires an in depth understanding of teachers' perceived needs for professional development. As outlined in Chapter 4, data indicated this is particularly relevant for staff managing the dynamic methodological developments in education in the UAE. Building on the positive experience of the focus group held at Abu Dhabi Men's College in December 2003, this chapter focuses on an in-house workshop conducted at the same college in December 2004. The rationale behind organizing this workshop was to address professional development issues raised by teachers in the focus group. The key issue to address was the continued experience of increased workload and levels of stress in the workplace. Informal, anecdotal feedback appeared to indicate that increased levels of pressure coincided with the frequent introduction of new technology and expected changes in pedagogy in the classroom. Faculty members felt the swift introduction of new technology in the College left them under additional pressure to perform in the classroom without adequate preparation or training. The workshop was designed to enable faculty members to reflect on how much they had developed their skills in the areas of IT, pedagogy, curriculum design, etc., during their careers so far, and to appreciate that they are able to build upon the skills they have. Participants were encouraged to recognize their metacognitive skills whilst formulating a pro-active professional development plan as part of the workshop.

Reflective Development

Over the past twenty years educational technology has increasingly been introduced into educational institutions with the expectation that

professionals in the field of education will adapt their teaching methodologies and skills sets to meet the challenge of the new learning paradigms. A pragmatic approach to professional development is needed in order to efficiently prepare teachers for the timely introduction of contemporary practices. In-house professional development and workshops, rather than more formal courses are becoming increasingly practical, especially since the rapid developments in educational technology have been so dramatic in recent years. Schön (cited in Bain, et al., 2002, p.8) supports the idea of practical professional development remarking that, "most professionals learn through a cycle of practice and reflection, not through formal study of intellectual, scientific and rational knowledge". A positive, pro-active approach to the development of additional skills is a combination of reflection upon ones' own skills set, the demands of contemporary learning paradigms and methodologies, the desired learning outcomes of the institution and thoughtful, predictive forward planning. Zeicher (cited in Killen, 2003, p.49) discusses the development of experienced teachers, "who have the skills and dispositions to continually inquire into their own teaching practice and into the contexts in which their teaching is embedded". Reflective practices are a vital component in assessing ones' own skills and development needs, and in situating oneself and ones' approach to teaching and learning in a contemporary learning paradigm (Graham, 1998).

Dynamic Teaching Careers

Classroom practices have evolved through the use of such aids as textbooks, flash cards, flip charts, word-processed handouts, TV and video, language labs, personal computers and now to electronic notebooks or laptops, and Smart boards with LCD projectors. Experienced teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College, as established with data collected during the December 2003 focus group, have managed to maintain their skills and develop in line with these advances, whilst also adjusting their teaching and learning principles according to contemporary thinking in the field of

education (Bonk, 2003; Jones, 2002a, 2002b; Waterhouse, et al., 2003). Many teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College welcome these changes and are stimulated by the challenges presented to them. This was illustrated in Chapter 4 through comments and data collected in the focus group held in December 2003. The issue is again illustrated in Chapter 5 where examples of contemporary pedagogy are described comparing two groups of students taught via different methods. However, it was also the case that some teachers may have felt stressed and intimidated by such technological and methodological change as with the teacher who chose to deliver English language classes using a more traditional approach in Chapter 5. The successful transition to contemporary learning environments requires teachers to embrace the new model and participate in building a strategy for managing these changes (Straub, 2003).

The Role of Professional Development

Three common barriers to the integration of technology into educational institutions are access, training and support (Sandholtz, 2001). Educational institutions are increasingly looking for effective models of professional development as a means of supporting teachers in the use of technology in the classroom (Sandholtz, 2001). Adequate training needs to be provided prior to introducing new technologies or methods in the classroom so that teachers may feel secure and confident in their delivery. Recent research suggests that teachers need new forms of professional development as well as new attitudes that encourage them to be more willing to take risks with technology and to fear it less (NCATE, 1997). A deeper understanding of what makes an effective professional development program and how teachers may best incorporate technology into the classroom is needed (Sandholtz, 2001). Becker (2000) and Becker & Ravitz (2001) express the concern that there are significant challenges involved in integrating educational technology into the curriculum, even amongst competent users. This issue may be addressed through peer modeling and the sharing of effective teaching and learning strategies in the context of

integrated educational technology leading to increased confidence and competence amongst teachers (Ross, Johnson & Ertmer, 2002) .

One of the aims of the Reflective Development workshop which was held at Abu Dhabi Men's College in December 2004, was to encourage more confident, in control teachers with a positive and pro-active attitude towards planning their goals and objectives, and their personal and professional development. Ideally these teachers would impart their appreciation of career planning and lifelong learning to their students as part of their professional roles and responsibilities. Another objective was to more closely examine the skills sets that experienced tertiary level teachers have, discover which skills they value most, and then to design a pro-active professional development program to assist them in remaining current and confident in their roles.

As outlined in Chapter 4, a focus group was held in December 2003 to discuss the changing role of the ESL teacher with the main objective of allowing participants to 'have their say', to provide an opportunity to brainstorm on the changes that had affected the teachers, and additionally to gauge how these changes were being managed. The main outcome of the focus group was the realization that many teachers were under considerable stress, finding change difficult to manage and feeling uncomfortable with their skills sets. Research suggests that when teachers share ideas and collaborate with their peers they provide emotional as well as practical support in the classroom (Dwyer, Ringstaff & Sandholtz, 1991; Hadley & Sheingold, 1993; Volman, 2005). Following the focus group, Swap Shops were organized at three week intervals allowing teachers to spend ten minutes or so each sharing ideas, web links, games, warm ups and new software with their peers. A web site was set up with details of each of the activities so that potential participants who had not managed to attend, due to time constraints, could access the information at a later time. The site is also used to download notes and web links, and teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College are now using it as a resource for classroom activities.

A recurring theme during departmental meetings and one on one Performance Enhancement Program (PEP)[17] meetings is that teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College continue to feel uncomfortable when faced with new technology in the classroom. The ethos of the college is to be 'cutting edge' and to constantly update the hardware and software with the latest available on the market. This is a source of pride to the leadership, but there is considerable struggle amongst some faculty members, particularly those whose primary area of expertise is not based in technology, to keep up with these developments. Staff developers are a catalyst for change and should examine underlying mental models and personal theories in order to improve the effectiveness of the institution (Killion & Harrison, 1997; Schön, 1987; Senge, 1990). Stager (1995) claims that there is no one approach to staff development that works for all teachers, and suggests a combination of workshops and in-class collaborations, mentoring, and conferences to empower teachers to develop.

From consideration of the data, it appears that there are two ways of approaching this dilemma:

1. Develop a strategic plan including training workshops prior to introducing new hard or software. This requires faculty members to formulate a personal and professional development plan to be followed during the academic year. This is currently being addressed at college level with the development of a more strategic Educational Development Division. However, this needs to be tackled in a very sensitive way so as not to cause faculty members to feel threatened or under pressure.

2. Provision of additional training opportunities for faculty members in order to help them to remain current, build

[17] Annual review of collated teaching and learning portfolios, with participation in professional development and aspects of college life being highly encouraged at ADMC.

confidence in their classroom performance, give them a feeling of security in their teaching posts, and to feel more in control of their career paths. The professional development opportunities would be optional as previously there has been a certain amount of resistance.

Therefore holding a workshop provided an ideal method of approaching those faculty members who are very experienced and often somewhat reluctant to embrace change or indeed additional training. The setting was informal and non-threatening and provided participants with an opportunity to share their views whilst at the same time possibly realizing that they are not alone in experiencing discomfort with technological developments in our learning environment.

Contextual Data Collection Via the Workshop

Following the success of the professional development Swap Shops which have been conducted for and by Diploma Program teachers employed at Abu Dhabi Men's College since the beginning of 2004, it became apparent that there was an urgent need to tackle the issue of providing pro-active professional development for in-service teachers. The objectives of the workshop included:

- assisting professionals in education in clearly understanding how learning takes place
- guiding staff towards articulating strategic development of their career and life goals, and ways of optimizing chances of reaching these goals
- guiding staff to the realization of how delivery is impacted by external factors and the need to cascade change management strategies to students

- data collection in the form of a survey and reflective feedback to inform the construction of a professional development framework for Abu Dhabi Men's College

This chapter considers the contextualization of research methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1998; Punch, 1998) to be the most useful way to ascertain the development needs of the faculty members involved. The expectation was that, by the conclusion of the workshop, participants would have developed a personal and professional development plan 'under their own steam', without feeling any significant pressure from management. The realization that such a plan would provide them with a 'comfort zone' and ultimately also benefit their students, was expected to encourage a more willing approach to formal, and possibly most especially, informal development.

Reflection and planning are paramount to educational organizations in the 21st century, however most of what is written about teacher development is based on experience, observation and concepts. There appears to be very little available literature on how mature and experienced teachers are coping with the significant technological changes of the 21st century. It is plausible to suggest that there is a connection between the theories of this study and the epistemological beliefs of teachers. However, literature on this subject needs to be reviewed in more depth, in order to draw any significant parallels or conclusions.

Workshop Format

This half day workshop was designed to identify and gain insight into the ongoing need for teachers to remain at the cutting edge of their profession and examines the changing role of the teacher in the 21st century. The workshop format was chosen for this line of enquiry as it is informal and non-threatening, especially for long-serving teachers who may feel insecure about their skills sets. Participants invited to attend had approximately twenty years of teaching experience, mostly at tertiary level,

were educated to at least Master's level and had worked in the Middle East for a significant number of years (5+). The participants were male and female, and from a variety of English-speaking countries.

The workshop provided an avenue for qualitative research, grounded in the constructivist paradigm, to be reflected upon and used as a basis for the best possible development programs for experienced, mature teachers needing some assistance in managing change. Interestingly, Bonk (2003) reports on a survey of teachers in higher education in the United States of America stating that over 70 per cent of respondents who were actively embracing technology had been in teaching for over ten years, and almost half of those were over 50 years of age.

A comfort zone needed to be created at the workshop in order for participants to be receptive, to encourage their active input during the workshop, and ultimately in the professional development program. An atmosphere of trust had to be maintained and all participants were assured that they could withdraw at any point, either before, during or after the workshop (if they would prefer that their data not be considered). Following the success of the focus group in December 2003, the level of trust within the group had already been established and there was a clear understanding that staff involvement would in no way impact on them professionally. This assurance was also a consideration at departmental meetings at Abu Dhabi Men's College where all members are encouraged to express themselves openly

The workshop, held in the Abu Dhabi Men's College auditorium, comprised three complementary portions, each with a power point presentation, followed by a group activity. The second stage of the workshop, 'Reflective Development: Pro-active rather than Re-active Professional Development', included small group discussion and worksheets. Consistent with Pearson's (1999) findings, the workshop provided a stimulating environment that enabled greater participation and involvement. The objective of the workshop was to engage all participants

in the activity. The first worksheet asked participants to reflect upon their careers thus far, and included questions about skills acquisition over approximately the past twenty years (see Appendix IV). The simple worksheet required only very short responses, asking for the skills to be ranked in order of importance, and state how obtained: formally or informally. A second worksheet asked participants to predict the new skills they will need over the next year, a year hence, and by 2010. Again, only very short answers were sought. As a parting gesture, participants were asked to complete a 'gift certificate' providing one person from their group the opportunity to learn a particular skill from them in the coming three month period. It is hoped that this will start an informal network of skills exchange throughout the college.

One of the expected outcomes of the structure of the workshop was that participants would develop a plan for their own personal and professional development. This plan would then be used as a personal and professional development program after the workshop and meetings would be held with individuals to look at ways of implementing their desired training and goals. Overlap was expected between participants' professional development needs. It was also expected that staff could be grouped according to these common goals. Using these groups, action learning projects could be organized for future workshops, in addition to forming the basis of collegial support groups. The data collection was in relation to the new skills participants had acquired during their careers in education, whether they had acquired those skills formally or informally and the prediction of the new skills they may need or would like to develop in the next year, the following year, and by the year 2010. Thus a longer term professional development plan could be set up.

The reflection upon past skills development was to inspire confidence in the participants who had all weathered some significant changes during their careers. Staff were encouraged to recognize their past success in managing change, supporting the probability for ability to cope

with such changes in the 21st century. The theoretical basis of the workshop structure was the importance of metacognitive skills and self-awareness, with greater awareness of the learning process increasingly linked to greater success in skills and knowledge development (Pearson, 1999).

Results

Although the workshop layout was designed with five round tables seating five participants at each to facilitate discussion, each participant was asked to complete individual worksheets with their own responses. Brief questions, asking participants to list new skills they had gained or developed within certain time frames, fell into three distinct categories: professional, personal and IT-related (see Appendix IV). Participants were asked to indicate whether they had acquired their new skills formally or informally. The overwhelming majority of staff reported their new skills were gained informally, i.e. not through professionally recognized or accredited programs of study. Interestingly, although the worksheets asked participants to rank their skills in order of usefulness, this portion of the task was only completed in a few cases. Informal discussion during the workshop indicated that although IT skills were probably used more frequently than other skills they considered to be important, it was not really possible to determine which were the most useful to them in their roles as teachers. Suggestions arising from discussions amongst participants in their groups provided interesting feedback regarding the possibility of an additional workshop to address the topic of the usefulness of skills they were acquiring during their professional development sessions. It may be the case that the aim of collecting such data was ambitious and that the degree of difficulty of that question had been misjudged.

Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – 1980s

Informal professional development was the main route that participants had taken during the 1980s to acquire new skills (see Figure 6.2). Out of a total of 60 responses, 37 related to informally gained new

skills and 23 to formally gained new skills (see Appendix V). Of the responses regarding informal professional development undertaken 38 per cent were related to professional skills, 51 per cent to personal skills and 11 per cent to IT skills. Personal development covered a wide range of activities such as: cooking, driving, learning foreign languages, learning to play musical instruments, parenting, sports activities, etc. Professional related development encompassed a more focused range of skills, predictably, closely connected to teaching, such as: assessment design and creation, developing teaching and classroom management skills, developing teamwork, goal setting and time management skills, and a variety of interpersonal skills. Of the 11 per cent of responses relating to IT skills acquired informally during the 1980s it can be identified that three of them were from one participant who had previously trained as a computer engineer: computer programming, digital system design and microprocessor engineering. The fourth response was from another participant who had learned how to use a personal computer.

Examples of formal professional development acquired during the 1980s show that there were no responses in the IT category (See Figure 6.1, p.122). However, there were 16 responses (70 per cent) from participants who had earned formal qualifications during that decade. Amongst those were: classroom management courses (3), higher degrees (3), TESOL qualifications (3) and for those who had later joined teaching from other professions, chiropody and hairdressing. Under the heading of formal, personal skills, three respondents had acquired their driving licenses, and others had taken qualifications in diving, playing the guitar, playing tennis, dance and gymnastics, which accounted for the remaining 30 per cent of responses.

Figure 6.1

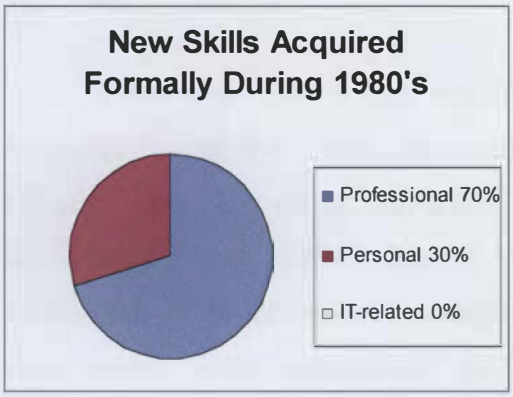
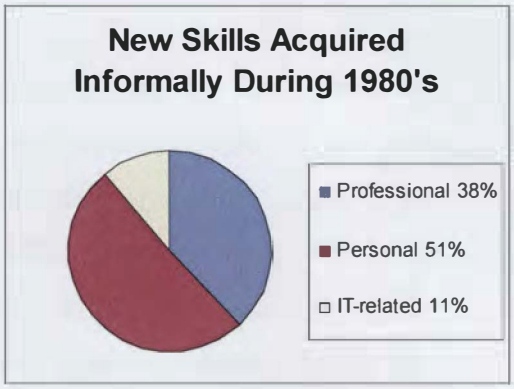


Figure 6.2



Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – 1990s

Responses indicated a dramatic shift in the number of workshops attended by participants during the 1990s which focused on the development of IT-related skills. There continued to be more use of informal (see Figure 6.4, p.123), rather than formal (see Figure 6.3, p.123), means of developing new skills. Of a total of 75 responses in this time frame, 55 responses related to informally acquired professional development, and 20 related to formal professional development. 44 per cent of respondents reported that they had developed IT skills during the 1990s, for example: using the internet (10), using MS Office (7), using email (6) and computer engineering from the respondent who had previously worked in the IT field. The responses appear to reflect the change in how teachers were expected to prepare for their classes, using the internet as a source of information, and how roles in education had begun to change with the use of email and personal computers for administration and materials development. A large proportion of responses relating to informal development were again reported during the 1990s with 34 per cent of participants developing such widely ranging skills as flying a plane and playing a bass guitar. 21 per cent of respondents had improved their professional skills, for example: curriculum development or video camera

use in the classroom, by way of informal professional development during the 1990s.

Reviewing the formal qualifications gained by the workshop attendees during the 1990s, there were 20 responses with 55 per cent directly related to their profession. Examples of formal professional development were: higher degrees (3), TEFL qualifications, courses to further develop classroom management skills (2), research skills, management skills, presentation skills, and general teaching skills (2). Formal personal development accounted for 25 per cent of responses and covered: learning to drive (2), French language, Reiki, and financial management. Only 4 respondents, or 20 per cent, had gained formal IT qualifications during the 1990s with three of them taking general IT skills courses and one taking a course on how to use the internet in the classroom.

Figure 6.3

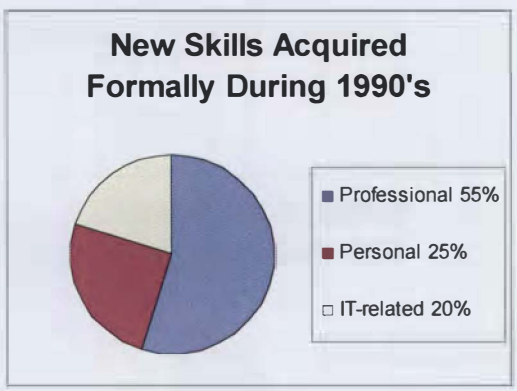
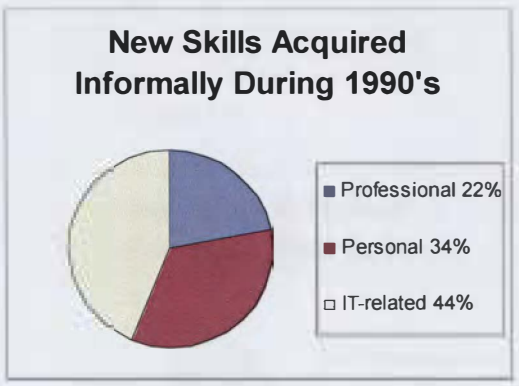


Figure 6.4



Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – 2000-2004

Participants reported a slight increase in the new skills they had gained in the first four years of the 21st century, and as with the previous two decades, those skills had been largely learned informally (see Figure 6.6, p.124). A total of 84 responses gave examples of 63 informally acquired skills and 21 formally acquired skills. In the informal category, 44 per cent related to professional skills, 24 per cent related to personal skills

and 32 per cent to IT skills. The professional and IT-related skills gained informally were closely linked with the developments in educational technology, whereas the examples of personal skills developed were connected with life enrichment.

The 21 responses from workshop participants who had gained new skills formally between 2000 and 2004 (see Figure 6.5) continued to reflect increasing levels of participation in IT-related professional development. Of the three sub-categories professional, personal and IT-related, those new skills that were directly related to the professions of the participants accounted for 11, or 52 per cent, of the responses, while 29 per cent of responses (6) were exclusively IT-related, e.g. WebCT (2) and ICDL (4). There were only 4 responses from participants who had gained formal skills or qualifications to enhance their personal lives. This may reflect the fact that teachers may have less time to develop and pursue their personal and private goals than in the past due to the increasing pressures of their changing roles in the classroom.

Figure 6.5

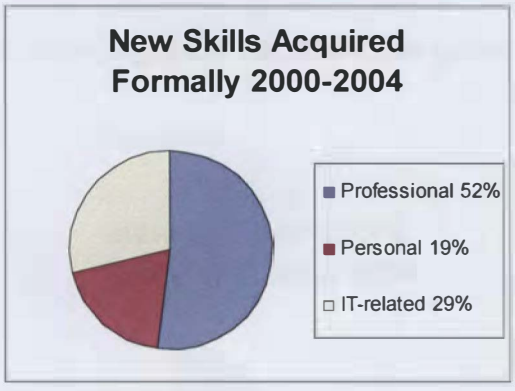
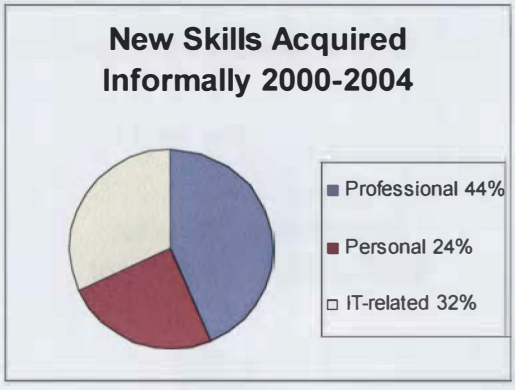


Figure 6.6



Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – During 2004

The 25 participants reported a total of 67 professional and personal development opportunities undertaken during 2004, 58 per cent of which were informal and 42 per cent formal. The sub-categories of professional,

personal and IT-related continued to be reported in both formal and informal professional development with the emerging pattern of the previous four year period, with informal professional and personal development (see Figure 6.8) accounting for 58 per cent of responses, although this proportion had decreased from 75 per cent in the period 2000-2004. IT-related skills development continued to increase with 33 responses (13 per cent) in the informal category and 10 responses (36 per cent) in the formal category, with each of the listed new skills indicating a clear connection with educational technology and the contemporary needs of the teaching profession. Formally acquired professional development (see Figure 6.7) in the professional sub-category had the lowest number of responses at 8, or 28 per cent, perhaps reflecting the fact that higher degrees (4) and management (2) and leadership (2) qualifications which may take several years to achieve, are less attractive, or indeed useful, in an working environment where constant change is the only certainty. Participants continued to find time to develop their personal lives and interests informally (18 per cent) and formally (10 per cent), presumably in an effort to balance their lives and manage stress. Interestingly, examples of formal personal development included such areas as psychology and meditation which may indicate the acknowledgement that stress management is important in a dynamic career.

Figure 6.7

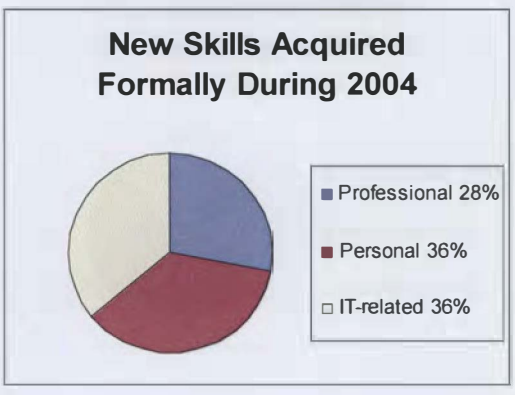
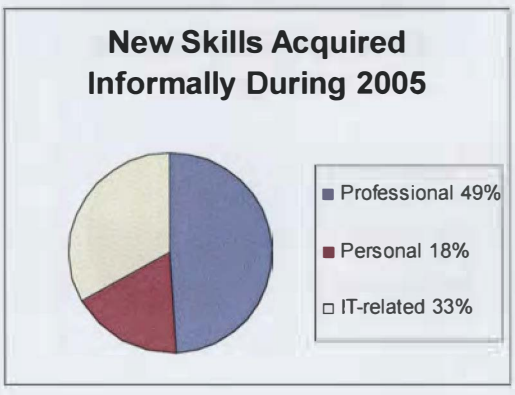


Figure 6.8



Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – 2005

When asked to list the formal and informal professional development that participants planned to undertake during 2005 there were 38 responses, 28 regarding informal (see Figure 6.10) and 10 regarding formal (see Figure 6.9) personal and professional development opportunities. Of the total number of responses 50 per cent related to professional, job-specific development, with 11 respondents indicating that they would be participating in informal professional development and 8 respondents planning to either embark upon or continue with formal professional development. 7 respondents reported that they would continue to take courses in general IT skills, 6 informally and 1 formally. In the personal development sub-category, which accounted for 11 responses (39 per cent) of the informal development of personal skills, the range of interests continued to be varied and interesting, for example, learning foreign languages, cookery courses, public speaking skills and physical exercise. There was only one response indicating that a participant would acquire a formal qualification in 2005 for a personal, non-job-related activity and that was a foreign language credential.

Figure 6.9

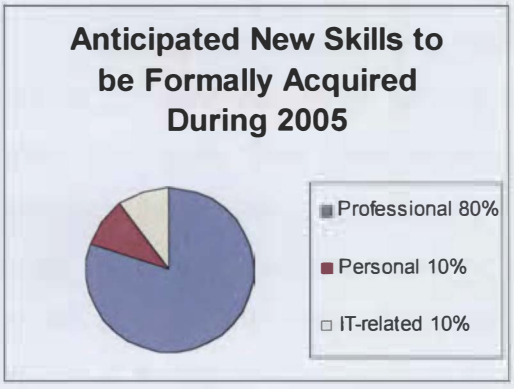
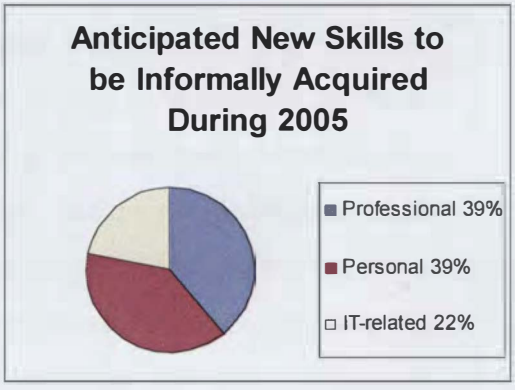


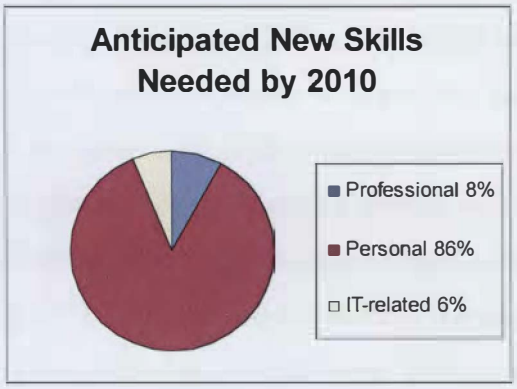
Figure 6.10



Formal and Informal Professional Development of Current ADMC Staff – 2005-2010

When asked to predict their participation in personal and professional development between 2005 and 2010 (see Figure 6.11), only 3 of the workshop participants indicated that they would pursue professional qualifications such as higher degrees (2) and management skills (1). There were 30 responses indicating that personal development would be actively pursued with a vast range of activities from mountaineering to bridge. Only two respondents indicated that they expected to maintain their present level of interest in keeping up with IT-related developments.

Figure 6.11



Summary

Throughout the workshop participants were focused and engaged and all 25 were seen to be actively participating in discussion on their tables. During the three presentations, participants were seen to be closely following the content and noting down ideas and points which interested them. In the group activities one or more of the three facilitators were invited to visit tables when clarification was sought, or when they wanted additional background information about a particular area being discussed. The second segment of the workshop, 'Reflective Development: Pro-active rather than Re-active Professional Development', connected the topic of metacognition and how skills previously acquired enable us to build new skills more easily, to the subject of professional development. The changing

role of the teacher has been a constant platform for discussion, but in order to be pro-active, a framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College, needed to be created.

Teachers appeared a little taken aback at first when reminded of how much their roles in the classroom had changed since their initial qualification. Once they had the opportunity to reflect upon how far they had come, and listed all the new skills they had gained over the past two decades, many of the participants appeared to bristle with pride. Responses from teachers indicated that they spend a great deal of time and effort increasing their skills sets, whether for directly job-related needs or personal development. The data shows that there has been a steady increase in the amount of IT-related professional development undertaken, although much of this is done informally. Sandholtz (2001) claims that professional growth is accelerated by a reflective, interactive approach, and concludes that teachers respond in the same way as their students to learning opportunities and need to be given the chance to, "explore, reflect, collaborate with peers, work on authentic learning tasks, and engage in hands-on, active learning", (Sandholtz, 2001, p.372). This seemed to resonate throughout the workshop during discussion group activities which were highly interactive, relaxed, and with added humour and enthusiasm.

The main aim of this workshop was to engage participants in the construction of a framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College by asking them to reflect upon their careers thus far. An additional outcome surfaced with the realization that the participants appeared to feel more secure in the knowledge that they were not isolated in the fear of sometimes feeling overwhelmed by the ever-increasing use of technology and the shifting learning paradigm. They reflected upon their skills and the input they provided, and understood that with a professional development framework they could continue to meet the challenge, but with a more timely, confident and well-informed approach. The participants also

appeared to understand the need to maintain a balance in their lives and to nurture personal goals and interests.

The one area where discussion groups indicated that they felt under pressure was the need to be seen to be participating in IT-related professional development in line with the policy of using educational technology at Abu Dhabi Men's College. During the Performance Enhancement Process (PEP) each year the report includes the amount and nature of professional development activities faculty members have participated in, and discussion on how the new skills have been integrated into their classroom delivery. Since all the participants are on three year contracts, this is an issue that is important when the renewal of that contract arises. However, during the workshop it was highlighted for participants that they should participate in professional development for their own sakes, and to remain current and marketable should they want to apply for positions elsewhere in the future. Altering the thinking on this subject is not an easy task, but if participation in professional development could be seen as a positive step towards a more interesting future, rather than non-participation bringing the threat of redundancy, we will have come a long way.

The data gathered covered a wide range of activities and interests and participants were clearly operating at a variety of levels of expertise, particularly in IT-related areas. Time constraints were also a factor that emerged frequently in discussion groups, and this issue would need to be resolved prior to introducing the planned professional development framework at Abu Dhabi Men's College (see Appendices VI.a & VI.b). As an interim measure, pending such a significant introduction, an informal exchange of skills was used to conclude the workshop. During workshop discussions participants discovered that those around them had a particular area of expertise, and this seemed like an ideal opportunity to encourage faculty members, with their new-found confidence and attitudes to support one another. Each participant was provided with a gift certificate on which

they could pledge an exchange of skills with another member of their group. This proved to be very popular and has actually continued on a regular basis since December 2004.

The outcome of Phase 3 of the study provided an opportunity to discover the perceived professional development needs of faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College, thereby addressing the second research question by the collation of data regarding their present skills sets and their perception of the support they would need in their future roles in the classroom of the 21st century. Data collected from participants informed the construction of a suggested framework for professional development of faculty member at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

Chapter 7 reviews the three-phase case study in light of the research questions posed and illustrates how the data collected justified and informed a contextual professional development framework for staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College as a mechanism to support the ongoing changes in the teaching and learning environment at the College.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The exploration of the professional learning environment at the College throughout this portfolio addressed concerns and challenges faced by faculty members since the introduction of laptops and a high degree of educational technology in September 2000. The research questions posed by this body of work and explored through a three-phase case study were:

1. What pedagogical influences have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College?

2. What models of professional development prepare tertiary teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College for dynamic developments in the teaching and learning environment?

The role of the teacher has changed significantly in the past decade as have the skills needed to fulfill the requirements of a high standard of professional classroom delivery. This global trend has presented particular challenges to tertiary educators in the UAE. The workforce for which students are being prepared has also changed dramatically and students at the Higher Colleges of Technology must be prepared for dynamic careers in the Information Age. Implicit in educational curriculum in the UAE is preparation of students for high stakes assessments such as PET and IELTS which are external benchmarks and graduation requirements. The challenge facing the Higher Colleges of Technology in the UAE is to provide opportunities for staff to ensure continued currency in their field and confidence in the delivery of their subject area using contemporary pedagogy and the appropriate educational technology.

In this context, there is significant need for faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College to acquire new skills in line with the dynamic

environment in which they work. The background and rapid growth of the UAE is one of the factors impacting the role of the teacher at Abu Dhabi Men's College when identifying the professional development needs of the teachers. As an educational institution, the College must prepare students for careers in the Information Age. The challenge faced by the College in meeting this goal is to accommodating the educational background of the students. For most students, their pre-tertiary educational experiences do not fully prepare them for tertiary level colleges operating with English as a medium of instruction. Difficulties encountered by educators at tertiary level in the UAE are similar to those elsewhere in the world, yet would appear to be magnified in this particular setting.

In order to identify and promote the most appropriate and pragmatic approach to teacher development to best address this issue, the case study was undertaken in three phases:

Phase 1 — a focus group held in December 2003 to assess teachers' concerns and perceptions about the changing role of the teacher in the Information Age (see Chapter 4).

Phase 2 — a comparison of the results of two groups of students being taught using different pedagogical approaches during academic year 2002-03 (see Chapter 5).

Phase 3 — a workshop conducted in December 2004 to understand teachers' perceived needs and identify a relevant, pragmatic approach to teacher development supporting contemporary pedagogy (see Chapter 6).

This final chapter draws on data and conclusions from each of the three components of this study and offers a suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College as a

recommendation to support continued commitment to quality teaching and learning.

Contemporary Teachers

The role of the teacher at Abu Dhabi Men's College has altered radically as a result of globalization and the demands of the 21st century workforce. Student-centered, constructivist learning environments place demands on teachers to be more creative and to integrate technology into their classrooms (Becker, 2000; Becker & Ravitz, 2001; Fullan, 2001, 2002; Grabe & Grabe, 1998; Hannafin & Land, 1997; Hill & Hannafin, 1995; Jonassen, 2000, 2002; Land & Hannafin, 1998). High quality, teacher development initiatives are essential to the successful implementation of contemporary pedagogy (Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Greene, 2001; Guskey, 2000, 2002; Hargreaves, 2001; Jamieson, 2004; Jones, 2002a, 2002b; Straub, 2003). To address concerns arising from this change in the role of the teacher data was collected from a focus group of teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College in December 2003. The data related the experiences, frustrations, perceptions and hopes of the focus group members, who although currently employed as ESL staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College, were representative of the general staff profile for college staff. Technology was reported to have had a significant impact on their professional lives in areas such as pedagogy, educational technology and professional development.

The perception by Abu Dhabi Men's College faculty members was that organizational strategies should be implemented to assist them with these changes. Major pedagogical influences on the teaching and learning environment at the College are in line with the needs of the community and the global workforce and were identified as greater integration of IT into the curriculum, the development of a constructivist learning environment and the vital role of English as a second language in the community which is highlighted by the use of the English language as the medium through which students learn at the Higher Colleges of Technology and external

benchmark assessments in English as graduation requirements from the programs of study. There was the expectation amongst participants in the focus group that the implementation of contemporary teaching and learning strategies at Abu Dhabi Men's College should involve leadership, preparation and support of faculty members. These views are consistent with similar issues identified in current research in other regions of the world (Aspland, Macpherson, Brooker & Elliott, 1998; Dudzinski, Roszmann-Millican & Shank, 2000; Fahoum, 2002; Goldenberg & Stout, 2004; Kawachi, 2000; Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love & Stiles, 1998; Macpherson, Brooker, Aspland & Elliott, 1999; Sheffield, 2004; Tinoca, 2004; Verkler, 2003).

Participants all felt strongly the need to improve and maintain their skills in pedagogy as well as IT-related areas in order to deliver the best possible level of education to their students. The impact of professional development on creating a classroom which fosters communities of learners is underscored by Lappan & Williams (1998), 'We have taken the stand that curriculum and instruction are not distinct... "what to teach" and "how to teach" are inextricably linked. The circumstances in which students learn affects what is learned', (Lappan & Williams, 1998, p.84). To encourage learning communities where students work collaboratively and construct their own learning presents staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College with particular challenges since students have previously been taught using rote learning at high school. Initiatives to make the connection between what is taught and how it should be taught, using a variety of media and activities, are supported in the college system. The leadership of the Higher Colleges of Technology continually expresses encouragement and challenges to teachers to provide the best possible learning environment, to be innovative, creative and to inspire students to become active learners.

Examples of teaching and learning strategies employed to maximize technology in their learning environments were given by the Abu Dhabi Men's College staff and the discussion highlighted how the move towards

the mandatory use of integrated educational technology had increased the demands on staff professional development, which until the mid-1990's had been domain specific. Consistent with current literature, staff indicated considerable concern relating to the following issues:

- Technology in the classroom – in relation to their own competence and currency (see for example, Bain, et al., 2002; Boddy, 1997; Bonk, 2003; Hooper & Hokanson, 2004; Jonassen, et al., 2003; Kidney, 2004; Newhouse, 2004; Pulkinnen, 2003; Richards, 2005; Ross, Johnson & Ertmer, 2002; Sandholtz, 2001; Schön, 1987; Straub, 2003; Waterhouse et al., 2003)

- Technology: at what price? – the amount of time and focus on technology (see for example, Day, 2000; Grant, 2002; Hill & Hannafin, 1995; Hooper, et al., 2004; McLoughlin, 2001; Morrison, 1997; Nay, et al., 1997) in an ESL class at the expense of the subject area content

- Life-Long Learning – strategies to encourage students to understand the concept of continued educational engagement (see for example, Al-Sulayti, 1999; Aspland, et al., 1998; Bryce, et al., 2000; Bryce & Withers, 2003; Day, 1999; Drucker, 1994; Grabinger, 1996; Livingston, 1997; McCombs, 2000; Mograby, 1999; Thornburg, 1999)

- Appropriate Use of Technology – if technology should be used in every aspect of teaching and learning, just for the sake of it (see for example, Becker, 2000: Becker & Ravitz, 2001; Bonk, 2003; Brooks, et al., 2005; Carnevale, 2000; Cuban, 2001; Häkinnen, 2002; Land & Greene, 2000; Luca, et al., 2001; Nay, et al., 1997; Richardson, 2000; Ross, et al., 2002; Wilson, 1997)

- Professional Development and Training – design, time constraints and the suitability of available opportunities (see for example, Castells, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1998; Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Fahoum, 2002; Farrell, 2001; George, 2001; Hall & Hord, 1987; Herrington, Herrington & Oliver, 1999; Herrington, Oliver & Reeves, 2003; Herrington & Standen, 1999; Ingvarson, 2002; Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love & Stiles, 1998; Sheffield, 2004; Straub, 2003; Tinoca, 2004), especially in the UAE

Participants also discussed the move to a more contemporary pedagogy and the mismatch between expectation of pedagogical change and the mandatory forms of traditional assessment used as progression and graduation requirements at the Higher Colleges of Technology.

Consistent with the findings from Boddy's (1997) study of tertiary educators, clear patterns emerged from the case study data supporting the theory that the use and integration of technology would expand if teachers had better access, knowledge, training and support. Focus group participants acknowledged the apparent need to grow with the new learning paradigm (Becker & Ravitz, 2001; Bonk, 2003; Ross, et al., 2002; Straub, 2003; Waterhouse, et al., 2003), but highlighted concerns related to time constraints (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Parr, 1999; Tuck, 1992) and the suitability of available professional development (Clarke, 2003; Häkinnen, 2002; Newhouse, 2004). At the time of study, Abu Dhabi Men's College lacked a framework for professional development in line with the strategic plan of the institution to introduce the widespread use of technology in the classroom. There were also concerns raised surrounding the effective use of teachers' time when learning a new piece of software with a potentially short life span. Staff acknowledged that similar concerns must apply to teachers in other disciplines, worldwide.

Swap Shops

Findings from the focus group in Phase 1 supported the position that professional development is increasingly becoming a practice of teachers learning from and with one another (Acker, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1990, 1994, 1996, 1998; Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Graham, 1998; King & Newman, 2001; Renyi, 1996). A professional development outcome from the identification of professional needs by the focus group was the Swap Shops. These are informal meetings held at Abu Dhabi Men's College during lunchtime, every three weeks when possible, where faculty members chat, eat lunch and exchange ideas. The participants are from the Diploma Year 1 program, across the disciplines, and seldom number more than twenty colleagues at each meeting.

The usual format for a Swap Shop is for each participant to spend ten minutes sharing an idea, website, new software, game or activity after which the rest of the group has an opportunity to ask questions and collect a handout with further details. Following each session the materials, hyperlinks and other information are collected and posted on the Swap Shop website[18] for those who may have missed the workshop. The success of this initiative has reinforced the idea that teachers benefit greatly from informal workshops that provide them with an opportunity to interact with their colleagues and exchange ideas. Feedback from the Swap Shop initiative confirmed Sandholtz's (2001) finding that teachers as well as their students, "appreciate opportunities to explore, reflect, collaborate with peers, work on authentic tasks and engage in hands-on, active work in teams and engage in reflective, collegial work focused on developing plans and materials for their own classrooms," (Sandholtz, 2001, p.372).

One possible drawback of the Swap Shops is that they are held at lunchtime and prevent the faculty members from having a proper break. The issue of release time within the college day for professional development needs to be addressed in order to promote increased uptake of activities and

to nurture the well-being of the faculty. The need for an authorized professional development time and program became clear during the focus group in December 2003. However, there was also an expressed need to:

- provide a clear rationale for time to be set aside for such workshops
- justify that students would benefit from teachers having a more informed, confident approach to educational technology
- illustrate the impact of new methodologies being integrated into the classroom.

The impact of educational technology on the professional lives of teachers in tertiary education at Abu Dhabi Men's College has been significant in the past tens years. However, although professional development was addressed during the focus group discussion as a means of managing such change, the impact on student learning needed to be assessed before making an informed appeal for both time and funding for a full teacher development program at the College.

Impact of Pedagogy on Student Learning

In order to gauge whether there was any significant impact on student learning as a result of contemporary pedagogical methodologies and the integration of educational technology across the curriculum a comparison was made of students' results during the academic year 2002-03. Phase 2 of the study reviewed the progress of two groups of students: a group who spent approximately half of their contact hours involved in constructivist learning activities and a group who was taught with a more traditional approach. Both groups of students needed to take formal, written mid-semester and final assessments in both semesters and achieve a passing grade for progression to the next academic level.

[18] http://194.170.38.233/tom.johnson/swapshop

The comparative study in Phase 2 focused on teaching methodologies used, and student results in Year 1 of the Diploma program at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Cumulative and summative data of their mid-semester and final assessments were collected during the academic year 2002/03, and compared in light of the fact that the faculty members responsible for teaching these two groups chose to use quite different methodologies to reach their course goals. One group was taught in a relatively traditional way in order to ensure a high success rate in assessments and progression to the next level in the Diploma program. The other group participated in constructivist, project-based, collaborative learning for approximately half of their English classes with more traditional, skills-based instruction for the remainder, again by way of assessment preparation. During the Focus Group No.1 a participant remarked on the dilemma facing teachers in the ESL classroom at Abu Dhabi Men's College saying,

> I find myself... introducing just about every class in a traditional way, either, ... by using text books or visual aids of some sort, and ... doing the traditional teaching and then perhaps in the second hour they will do ... more of a sort of independent learning which tends to be on-line now. ... independent learning not on-line, doesn't seem to exist. It seems to me that the on-line resources are so good, that they're so rich that ... there's plenty out there for the students to get on with. But, they do need to be guided. And then the question remains..... How much do they do on their own? (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.1.)

Another participant in the focus group commented on the suitability of using educational technology for the majority of classroom-based tasks whilst preparing to take traditional paper and pen assessments,

> We feel we need to use the laptops, so a lot of us, myself as well, will have them do it for writing and do it in Microsoft Word, and do all the editing. But when it comes down to the test they have to do it by hand, so trying to find time to teach them how to do both, is very time consuming. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4.)

The literature is rather scant in the area of problem-based versus traditional methods of teaching in the Arab world, however a number of resources provided support to the theory that extensive education reform does not usually endure, yet small-scale changes, adapted by well-informed faculty to suit their own population of students, are usually more successful, (Farrell, 2001; Ravitch & Vinovskis, 1995; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

The outcome of the comparative study showed no obvious difference between the assessment results of the two sections of students under focus. Those who were provided with the opportunity to experience working in a group and constructing their own learning for part of the time did just as well in assessments as those students who had been focusing on traditional methods and preparing for assessments all year. The underlying factor related to the motivation of the group of students, using a combination of teaching and learning methodologies, who were perceived by their teacher as being engaged in their learning experience and taking the initiative to develop their skills as they constructed their own learning.

> The students really enjoyed the work and even had fun, and once they disciplined themselves to remain on task they actually produced some good work together. Some of the group work was spoiled by disruptive students but maybe the task was too difficult for them so they lost interest. (Personal communication, 2005.)

The data highlighted the importance of the development of value-added skills in preparing students who are motivated by learning to work independently, in groups, with limited guidance to build upon their foundation skills and ultimately to function in the Information Age where the need to adapt and update ones' skills is constant. Taher (2003) concludes that technology can help students to reach their goals and allows teachers to stimulate students and encourage them to become engaged in learning activities.

The Focus Group data indicated that in order to prepare students for the Information Age their teachers must also have the benefit of a solid grip

on the new teaching and learning paradigms and comprehensive knowledge of educational technology and its uses. Comments from Focus Group participants, regarding professional development and the time to participate in such initiatives, included:

> Yeah, I find I would like to be spending a lot more time on professional development than I am. There are lots of goals I have in mind, lots of things I would like to learn, but I feel that with our twenty, fifty-five minute hours, and many of us are teaching split shifts, teaching across departments, there simply is no time. Just keeping on top of everything I need to do to be prepared in my classroom to mark my assessments, to stay organized, there's just no time left in a week. And I would really like to see some sort of time set aside for staff PD. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.4.)

The drive to use technology in the classroom at Abu Dhabi Men's College, its impact on student learning and how teachers manage the change in delivery spurred comments such as:

> Technology is obviously a part of that (student learning), when in fact the most interesting part of it is, how the change of understanding as to the creation of knowledge and how we develop our knowledge as professional teachers, um has changed. And that understanding that's changed over the years, and yet just talking round here, it seems all of us we're very, very focused just on the technology aspect of it. (Focus Group No.1, Participant No.6.)

For teachers who may have gained their qualifications a decade or two previously the impact of educational technology and contemporary pedagogy at Abu Dhabi Men's College presented quite a challenge. The pedagogical influences identified in the study as the integration of IT across the curriculum, the development of a constructivist learning environment and the importance of the role of English language as a medium as well as a graduation requirement with external benchmark assessments, made a clear case for a leadership role to be taken in providing support to teachers in the form of a framework for professional development. Current literature supports the theory that curriculum leadership to manage the changes in the learning environment, such as those faced at Abu Dhabi Men's College, and

to address the issues of maintaining and improving skills in IT, designing constructivist learning environments and addressing the language requirements in an ESL institution may be best sustained when led by teachers (Aspland, et al., 1998; Kawachi, 2000; Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998; Macpherson, et al., 1999; Verkler, 2003).

Table 7.1

Case Study of Abu Dhabi Men's College in Three Phases

Case Study	Focus Issue	Method	Findings
Phase 1: Identifying Professional Development Needs	Assessing the impact of globalization on the role of the ESL teacher in higher education in order to identify professional development needs	Focus group collecting qualitative data to gauge teachers' perceptions of their changing role	Need for additional, informal professional development to address concerns and insecurities of teachers
Phase 2: Exploring Current Professional and Pedagogical Practice	Assessing the impact of contemporary pedagogy on student learning in the changing teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College	Comparative study of students' results via quantitative data collection	Similar student outcomes were achieved irrespective of methodology. A degree of teacher autonomy established as positive.
Phase 3: Implementing a Reflective Development Workshop	Identifying the perceived needs for teacher development in the development of value-added skills and support contemporary pedagogy	Interactive workshop to assess teachers' skills and needs, and to collect qualitative data. Survey collecting quantitative data on teachers' skills sets.	Further support for teacher development needed. Responses indicated a desire for informal, peer support as well as more formal support. Data collection informed a framework for professional development

Table 7.1 summarizes the three-phase study illustrating the focus issues, methodology used and findings which ultimately resulted in the

construction of the suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

Professional Development

The evident need to support professional development in order to manage the transformation of the learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College was highlighted in the Focus Group data. The literature indicates that the collaborative construction of a framework for professional development with staff assuming a leadership role is likely to be more sustainable. A framework for professional development in the environment of Abu Dhabi Men's College would need to provide comprehensive preparation for dynamic methodological developments in education and maintaining professional skills. Curriculum leadership to manage the change in the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College, and to focus on the issues of maintaining and improving skills in IT, designing constructivist learning environments and addressing the language requirements in an ESL institution is best sustained when collaboratively developed and led by the teachers (Aspland, et al., 1999; Goldenberg & Stout, 2004; Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998; Macpherson, et al., 1998).

The third phase of the study was conducted in response to the evident need for a framework for professional development for faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The workshop was included as part of a Professional Development Week initiative at Abu Dhabi Men's College in December 2004. The workshop included participants from across the disciplines since the issues discussed were not discipline specific. The workshop title was 'Reflective Development' and was divided into three parts: Metacognition, Pro-active Rather than Re-active Professional Development and Adapting Materials for ESL Students. Curricula and content specific input is based on international tertiary educational standards and textbooks, normally used by native speakers of English, frequently present challenges for students learning through the medium of the English language. The level of sensitivity towards second language learners is

therefore not ESL specific and support in career program content courses is important to ensure student success. The portion of the program relating to professional development was designed to respond to the needs identified during the focus group of the previous year and to gather data to support the introduction of a professional development framework for Abu Dhabi Men's College. A secondary issue which had to be addressed was the need for time relief in order that faculty could attend professional development sessions (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998).

It became evident from the data collected and the responses during the workshop, and previously during the focus group held in December 2003, that teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College are more likely to embrace, and more likely to find useful, a more informal approach to professional development. Long-term study of IT-related skills was not seen as a practical option since software quickly becomes obsolete and even the laptops used at the college are changed every year or two. Formal, long-term qualifications in the field of expertise were still seen to be worth pursuing, although fewer participants showed interest in embarking on such courses of study. The overall feeling appeared to be that they would need to spend every spare moment on improving their educational technology skills in order to maintain currency at college level.

Models for professional development suggested by Loucks-Horsely, et al., 1998, Sparks & Loucks-Horsely (1989), and Salpeter (2003) stress the critical issues involved in developing such a framework. Sparks & Loucks-Horsely (1989) recommend five useful models for accomplishing staff development goals:

1. Individually guided development, where teacher design their own learning activities

2. Observation and assessment, or informal peer observation and feedback

3. Involvement in a development or improvement process, where teachers become involved in curriculum review and improvement processes

4. Training, and the design of training which includes exploration of theory, demonstration, trail of new skills and feedback, as well as coaching in the workplace

5. Inquiry, where teachers reflect upon their own practices and formulate their own questions about their performance, seeking answers (Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989)

Theoretical and practical models for professional development also indicate the need to nurture the leadership role of educators, both within and beyond the classroom, in the quest to remain current in their profession (Aspland, et al., 1998; Clarke, 2003, 2005; Clarke & Wildly, 2004; Corcoran, 1995; Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998; Macpherson, et al., 1999; Salpeter, 2003). The contribution of teacher involvement and contribution in curriculum leadership and the professional development which supports the transformation of the curriculum appears to be one of the key criteria for success.

Effective professional development which deepens teachers' understanding of their profession and involves them as teachers and learners is particularly valuable (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Innovative approaches, policies and procedures for situated teacher development are needed in line with educational reform and require sustained investment and institutional support (Clarke, 2003, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1996 & 1998; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Parr, 1999; Volman, 2005). Traditional, one off, in-service training events need to be replaced by a well structured framework for on-going teacher development (Capper, 2004; Fullan, 2001; Killion & Harrison, 1997; Kosky, 2004). Contemporary staff developers emphasize the need to create learning communities in order to capitalize on the strengths of participants

for the greater good of the institution (Brown, 2002; Killion & Harrison, 1997; Rayman, 1999). Collaborative, less-formal staff development initiatives in authentic, meaningful context, exchanging best practices may overcome the oft-cited problems of time, cost and suitable professional development opportunities (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Friedman & Phillips, 2001; Guskey, 2002; Lee, 2000).

Participants in the workshop at Abu Dhabi Men's College listed in their responses a number of key areas of IT need which could be addressed in weekly workshops and where they could improve their skills in a very practical sense, thus creating a learning community where ideas and skills could be maximized. WebCT design and course management, ICDL, use of Smart Boards, integrated projects, action research groups and a range of workshops in specialist areas are now being introduced as part of a comprehensive, year long rolling workshop program. A skills card (see Appendix VII) is being designed to enable faculty members to effectively check the box when they have completed a certain level. It is hoped that this will alleviate some of the stress surrounding the Performance Enhancement Process (PEP) since they will be able to submit the skills card in their portfolios as evidence of participation in professional development.

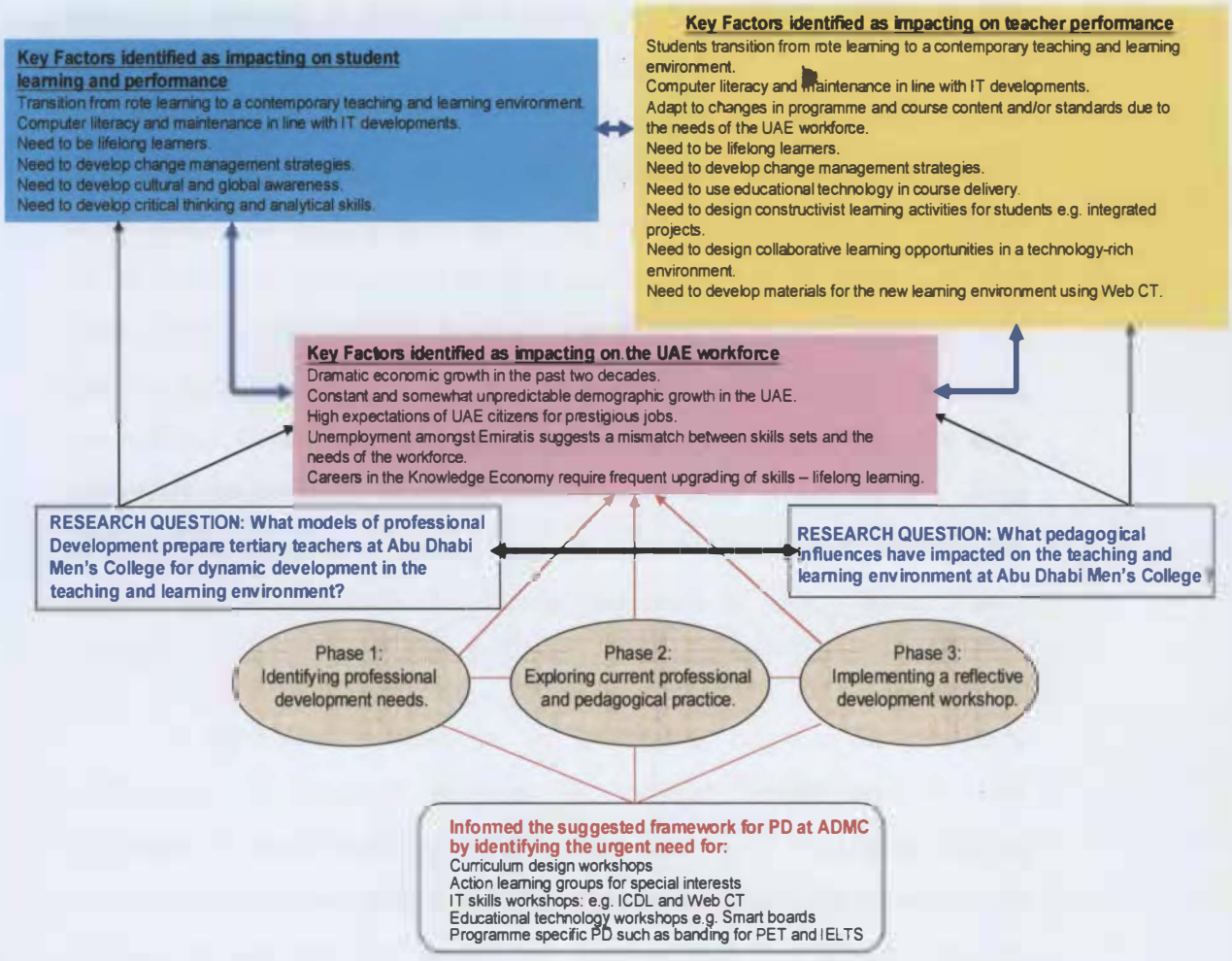
Implicit in conversations during the workshop, and insecurities discussed amongst teachers' about their role in the classroom, was the need to know more about other identified challenges in the constructivist classroom. Future stages in the development of the suggested framework for professional development for Abu Dhabi Men's College will provide an opportunity to focus on issues such as how to develop scaffolding for constructivist activities, particularly amongst students whose English is classified as elementary, or how to promote the discerning use of the world wide web amongst students whose linguistic ability frustrates them and often prevents them from discovering relevant information for group activities.

Recommendations

The case study illustrated below informed the construction of a suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College. The study was conducted in three phases, each one providing rich descriptive data and informing the next stage of the study and eventually the following recommendations.

Figure 7.1

Illustration of the Conceptual Framework for the Three Phase Study as it Informed the Professional Development Programme at Abu Dhabi Men's College



A framework for professional development to meet the perceived professional needs of teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College has been

developed as a practical outcome of this three-part study (see Appendices VI.a & VI.b). Data in the three phases of this case study highlighted the need for a framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

The data from the comparative study in phase 1 informed on the changing teaching and learning environment at the College and its impact on student learning outcomes. The pedagogical influences of contemporary educational paradigms raised awareness amongst staff of the dilemma between the demands of the new teaching and learning environment and the need to ensure student success in traditional external benchmark assessments. In phase two of the study, the focus group participants identified a range of pedagogical influences that have impacted on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College, answering to a great extent the first research question. Responses and concerns raised during the focus group helped to shape the workshop which was phase three of the study. The workshop sought to answer the second research question: 'What models of professional development prepare tertiary teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College for dynamic developments in the teaching and learning environment?'. Participants were each asked to identify their own professional development history, review the trends, and plan for their perceived professional development needs in their future careers. Data collected in these three phases was used to construct a framework for professional development for faculty members at Abu Dhabi Men's College.

A distinction is made in the framework between the year-long professional development program for existing faculty and the one suggested for newly hired faculty members. Many new employees join the college from overseas and as such have particular, immediate needs to be fulfilled as they settle in to the new environment, e.g. accommodation, banking, schooling, utilities. Although these needs are not directly related to their professional lives, experience indicates the potential for an impact on

professional performance if these needs are not comprehensively addressed. It is expected that established faculty members already have an understanding of the Abu Dhabi Men's College ethos and commitment and the focus of participation in professional development will be to build on previous training and experience.

The focus of the framework for new staff and current staff is on use of educational technology, for which a skills card is being designed (see Appendix VII). However, the program includes a selection of inter-divisional workshops on the design of integrated projects; action research and publication groups which will be formed according to a variety of areas of interest; workshops on proctoring and administration, as well as domain specific workshops which are intended to be arranged by individual departments. An example of a domain specific activity arranged by the English department may be the banding of writing or speaking according to PET or IELTS descriptors in a collaborative and supportive workshop. One of the aims of initiating discussion amongst teachers regarding professional development is that they will feel more comfortable about admitting to areas where they need to develop and may more actively seek to discover ways of exchanging best practices and learning from one another more informally (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Day 1999; Guskey, 2002; King & Newman, 2001; Sandholtz, 2001).

Professional Development Framework for Existing Staff

The illustration on p.152 (Table 7.2) shows the suggested professional development activities, the rationale, intended learning outcomes, timelines and the underlying issues these learning opportunities would address. The suggested professional development program for existing staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College (see Appendix VI.a) includes a variety of software and systems intended to reinforce the use and development of technology supported materials. WebCT is the Learning Management System used at the Higher Colleges of Technology to develop online materials for teaching and learning and review purposes. The

management of a WebCT course involves registering students and managing the online resources, including activating assessment windows of opportunity and discussion groups. In order to navigate online web pages and to learn short cuts, as well as to author online materials and quizzes, a variety of workshops will be provided for Abu Dhabi Men's College faculty members to learn from their peers. Progress and participation in professional development initiatives may be recorded by teachers on their skills cards (see Appendix VII).

Increasingly, it has been recognized that teachers benefit greatly from supporting peer professional development in a collaborative environment to affect sustained educational and organizational reform (Acker, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1990, 1994; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Dunscombe & Armour, 2004; Guskey, 2002; Renyi, 1996; Schlager, Fisco & Schank, 1998; Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). Table 7.2 illustrates a suggested framework, in addition to the general framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College, intended specifically for ESL teachers and which will largely be taught by ESL teachers who have gained advanced knowledge in a particular area. The expectation is that each division with arrive at a program-specific component to complement the more general framework, in a collaborative effort to support training and staff development initiatives, and with the common goal of remaining current in their field of expertise. The value of situated, authentic professional development is endorsed by Sikula (2002).

Implicit in professional development activities at Abu Dhabi Men's College is the understanding that faculty members of all levels are offered the opportunity to share their own particular skills and in turn to learn from their colleagues. Such opportunities provide a non-threatening environment as a platform for all levels of staff at the College to learn together as the teaching and learning environment changes (Clarke, 2005). Consistent with the views of Loucks-Horsley, et al., (1998) participation in professional development activities by the leadership of the College is a clear indication

that legitimizes change and may also create the expectation of activities and changes being appropriately resourced. The leadership roles of teachers in staff development initiatives needs to be encouraged as it can be highly effective in organizational change (Aspland, et al., 1998; Goldenberg, et al., 2004; Kawachi, 2000; Loucks-Horsely, et al, 1998; Macpherson, et al., 1999; Resnick, 2005).

The successful implementation of the professional development framework at Abu Dhabi Men's College requires the engagement of staff in their own professional development. This includes their collaboration in the planning stages, involvement in the delivery of sessions, practical application of new skills and ownership of the process to ensure greater success in the long term, as well as reflection upon the process and revision where necessary (Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1998; Resnick, 2005).

Table 7.2 Illustration of Professional Development Framework for Abu Dhabi Men's College

Professional Development Activity	Rationale	Intended Learning Outcomes	Timelines	Underlying Issue to be Addressed
International Computer Driving License (ICDL) Units 1-7	To enhance basic computing skills and to provide an international qualification.	Confidence and proficiency using the MSOffice suite of software. Used for administration of courses and reports.	7 weeks Semester 1 or 2	General computer skills are not only desirable but essential for teachers working in a technology-rich environment. It is vital to provide teachers with an avenue to develop their skills and improve their level of comfort for daily use of the computer.
WebCT management & development Units 1-6	To enable teachers to deliver and manage WebCT courses designed by others and to eventually author online materials of their own.	Increase the usage of commercially designed and in-house WebCT materials to stimulate student learning and review. Provide additional skills to teachers wishing to develop online materials themselves.	6 weeks Semester 1 or 2	Reluctance of some teachers to use the available educational technology to complement their courses and provide a change of pace and delivery in the classroom. Creativity and online authoring are areas where teachers may quickly fall behind if not encouraged to develop their skills.
Action Research & Publications	To allow a platform for teachers to work collaboratively in a particular area of interest with a view to publishing their work.	More interest and currency in the field of education. To promote an ethos of addressing issues and finding constructive solutions. Making a contribution to the field of education.	Ongoing over the academic year.	Teachers need encouragement to find creative solutions to obstacles to constructive teaching and learning. Action research groups will be able to address current issues in education and try to find solutions which may be applied to the context of the UAE from articles and research reported on worldwide.
General "housekeeping" workshops: e.g. Portal & CIS use; E-mail etiquette; Smart Boards; Excel for coursework and record-keeping; Exam practices & procedures; Exam security & recording of grades.	To promote: Proficient use of the College portal, necessary to carry out daily duties. Appropriate use of College email accounts. Confident and competent use of educational technology Efficient and uncompromised assessments.	Record-keeping will be more efficient and teachers will find it easier. Communication via email will be problem free with few misunderstandings. Teachers will become more proficient and creative in their use of Smart Boards. Assessments will run more smoothly with teachers feeling more confident in their approach to administration and security.	One or more introductory sessions in each semester.	All general workshops are designed to cover daily "housekeeping" tasks at the institution. The aim is to have a more efficient and comprehensive College Information System (CIS) where current data will be freely available. Teachers should be able to operate all educational technology such as Smart Boards and to maintain student records using the available software products. All teachers should be familiar with all aspects of exam administration.
Program specific workshops	To provide a forum for teachers to gain current knowledge in their particular field.	Cutting edge knowledge to prepare students for successful careers in the 21st century.	As required by departments	Teachers may tend to become complacent about their skills sets. It is important to invite guest speakers and international visitors to maintain the level of interest and excitement in the various fields.

Table 7.3 Illustration of Professional Development Activities for ESL Teachers at Abu Dhabi Men's College to Supplement and Complement the General Framework

Professional Development Activity	Rationale	Intended Learning Outcomes	Timelines	Underlying Issue to be Addressed
Writing Banding Workshop	To familiarize ESL teachers with banding criteria and the descriptors used at in the college system.	A larger body of teachers showing marker reliability in marking statistics resulting in fairer and more uniform assessment results.	One workshop per semester in Semester 1 and 2 with ongoing practice	Quality control and marker consistency needed to be addressed. Where a large degree of classroom time is spent in collaborative, group assignments there is little room for structured writing tasks and therefore fewer opportunities to refine banding practices.
Speaking Banding Workshop	To familiarize ESL teachers with banding criteria and the descriptors used at in the college system.	A larger body of teachers showing marker reliability in marking statistics resulting in fairer and more uniform assessment results.	One workshop per semester in Semester 1 and 2 with ongoing practice	Quality control and marker consistency needed to be addressed. Where a large degree of classroom time is spent in collaborative, group assignments there is little room for structured speaking tasks and therefore fewer opportunities to refine banding practices. The opportunity to assess students' speaking in presentations or during group work may be explored during such workshops.
PET accreditation / re-accreditation	To familiarize ESL teachers with banding criteria and the descriptors used by UCLES in the PET international, benchmark assessment.	A larger body of teachers showing marker reliability in marking statistics resulting in fairer and more uniform assessment results.	Ongoing practice sessions over the academic year. External examiner training twice a year.	Growing numbers of students are reaching the PET level and therefore additional qualified examiners are needed. Once time constraints are addressed there should be an increase in the uptake of this professional training which leads to an external qualification.
IELTS accreditation / re-accreditation	To familiarize ESL teachers with banding criteria and the descriptors used by IELTS in the international, benchmark assessment.	A larger body of teachers showing marker reliability in marking statistics resulting in fairer and more uniform assessment results.	One or more introductory sessions in each semester. Annual workshops provided by IELTS	Growing numbers of students are reaching the IELTS level and therefore additional qualified examiners are needed. Once time constraints are addressed there should be an increase in the uptake of this professional training which leads to an external qualification.
Curriculum design for the integration of English into the various Programs offered at the College	To provide a forum for teachers to gain current knowledge in their particular field and adapt their T&L strategies to complement program delivery.	The construction of projects and group work needs to be integrated throughout the curriculum for it to be effective and the tasks to be meaningful. Specialist input from the Engineering, IT and Business Divisions will enrich the students' educational experience.	Weekly workshops integrating ESL teachers with Program content specialists	Teachers working in isolation frequently duplicate course goals. By collaborating in teaching teams students will experience a more cohesive approach to their courses and their group work assignments. Outcomes should be of a higher quality. 'Quality rather than quantity'.

Additional computer skills, which will be encouraged via the professional development framework, are the International Computer Driving License[19] modules which cover the full range of skills needed to operate the MSOffice suite of software. College administration, and policies, assessment practices and procedures as well as integrated project and program content specific workshops will be held each semester. The intention that action learning groups will evolve in areas of special interest and that research and subsequent findings will be published is an anticipated outcome of the professional development program. Feedback from a faculty member on the first draft of the framework provided the following comments and suggestions:

> The professional development plan looks concise, comprehensive and to the point. It seems to cover all disciplines. How does it fit into the teaching requirements in terms of time? Perhaps week one of the professional development plan for new hires could be used to determine what the new hires are currently familiar with in order to avoid going over the same ground with them. (Personal communication, 2005.)

Professional Development Framework for New Staff

A slightly different model of professional development program is recommended for those teachers who are in their first year at Abu Dhabi Men's College (see Appendix VI.b). There is a tremendous amount to learn both moving to a foreign country and becoming acquainted with the organizational ethos. A month-long period of orientation including being housed, assisted in furniture shopping, selecting and settling children into schools, developing an appreciation of the culture and the practicalities of everyday life precedes the job-focused professional development components. This is followed by basic classroom management skills such as using an interactive Smart Board and familiarization with the email system and the Abu Dhabi Men's College portal for communication and administrative purposes. Throughout this process newly hired teachers are

[19] International Computer Driving License (ICDL) has 7 modules leading to Certification.

supported by a "buddy" (see Appendix VIII) who has been assigned to mentor them through the first year at the College. The importance of mentoring new teachers is supported by Gaskin, Lumpkin & Keith (2003) and Infantino (2004) and this system has shown itself to be an important means of support and guidance for new teachers since it was informally introduced at Abu Dhabi Men's College in 2001.

The remainder of the professional development program mirrors the one suggested for existing faculty members to encourage a more collaborative, learning community (Pierce, 1998) and develop technology skills in line with the demands of their ever-changing roles in contemporary education (Boddy, 1997; Brooks, Nolan & Gallagher, 2001; Grant, 2002; Jamieson, 2004; Kidney, 2004; NCATE, 1997; Parr, 1999; Ross, et al., 2002; Sandholtz, 2001; Straub, 2003). Developing new skills for the classroom (Guskey, 2000, 2002) and managing change will continue to be important assets in the knowledge economy of the 21st century (Straub, 2003). The importance of continuing faculty development in tertiary education is stressed by Goldenburg & Stout (2004) and Loucks-Horsley, et al., (1998) who support the need for sustained, collaborative models to help faculty maintain currency. An existing faculty member provided feedback on the proposed professional development framework for new hires suggesting that,

> This (professional development framework) looks comprehensive and well organised, a real benefit to everyone. Something that I think would be useful to incorporate would be some system for organizing all the practical information about initial log-on, the Portal, CIS, Banner, WebCT, etc., into one reference, either online or on a booklet, so it could be accessed again easily. (Personal communication, 2005.)

Fahoum (2002) describes a Virtual Teacher Centre comprising a wealth of information for new and existing faculty members, both from an administrative and an educational perspective, and this type of website may be introduced, via the College portal, as a component of the

professional development initiatives at Abu Dhabi Men's College in the future, in order to address suggestions from teachers such as the one raised in the comment above.

Continuing Initiative

The existing Swap Shops, which were an important outcome of the focus group held in December 2003 (Chapter 4) are also included in the professional development program since they have proved to be popular, useful and successful as a platform to exchange practical ideas and best practices. Informal feedback from the workshop (Chapter 6) and regular Swap Shop participants indicates that this informal, collaborative method of professional training may be more important overall, in their present role as teachers at tertiary level in the UAE, than professional development in the pursuit of additional formal qualifications. This is a positive example of a bottom-up approach to professional development which the team of teachers has taken full ownership of since it was launched supporting Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin's (1995) theory that enduring professional development initiatives rarely come from traditional top-down strategies.

Other anecdotal feedback from the staffroom proposes a recommendation for a professional development web site to be constructed, via the Abu Dhabi Men's College portal, offering tips and information as a reference for those unable to attend certain professional development sessions. The professional development website would be an extension of the current Swap Shop web page. This identified need reflects Straub's (2003) focus on a shift in focus from more formal learning approaches to a mix of informal and formal learning and moving towards a stronger integration of learning with work, or on the job training (Adey, 2004; Day, 1999; Duncombe & Armour, 2004; King & Newman, 2001; Lee, 2000).

Although the level of professional development provided at Abu Dhabi Men's College was thought to be highly commendable, a strong recommendation was that there should be a concerted effort on the part of

the management to move from reactionary to pro-active professional development. It was considered by the group to be in teachers' best interests to maintain and update their level of skills and marketability in preparation for possible future career moves.

During the design stage of the professional development framework, feedback from participants of the workshop held in December 2004 indicated that teachers' perceived that their concerns and needs were being addressed in the program. A degree of satisfaction was expressed by one teacher:

> I think the idea of weekly training sessions will help us to develop or brush up the skills we need. I particularly like the continuity of the sessions during the semester. I am sure it will make a difference to our progress. Is it also possible to include a session on the new books that we will be using next year? (Personal communication, 2005.)

Collegial Support for the Implementation of the New Framework

In support of the introduction of this professional development initiative the college executive has agreed to pilot a two hour long timetable block on Tuesdays to be set aside for workshops during the academic year 2005-06. Workshops will be repeated on a rolling basis since it is recognized that some faculty members may need to attend several workshops during the course of a semester. This also enables those with other commitments to miss a workshop and catch up the following week. There will continue to be a Professional Development Week half way through each of the two semesters when faculty members may avail of domain specific seminars more intensive workshops on similar topics to those offered on a weekly basis. The skills card (see Appendix VII), which is being designed for teachers to informally record their participation and progression through the program, may be included in their Performance Enhancement Program (PEP) portfolio as part of their annual review.

Conclusions

In answer to the research questions posed in Chapter 1, the pedagogical influences of IT, contemporary, constructivist learning environments and the increasing importance of English as a second and global operational language in education and the workforce at Abu Dhabi Men's College have necessitated a collaborative professional development framework to prepare tertiary teachers for dynamic development in the teaching and learning environment.

The intent of this case study was to explore the pedagogical influences impacting on the teaching and learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College and to develop an appropriate model of professional development to support staff to integrate these changes into their pedagogy.

The impact of educational technology and contemporary pedagogy on the learning environment at Abu Dhabi Men's College, as in question 1, is illustrated throughout the case study and clearly highlighted by participants in the focus group (Chapter 4) and the workshop (Chapter 6), as well as the resulting proposed professional development framework (see Appendices VI.a & VI.b). The findings of the comparative study (Chapter 5) indicated no obvious difference in student success when taught using traditional or contemporary pedagogy, however College policy indicates the need to continue to develop a more contemporary approach in line with the development of the global workforce for which our students are destined. A proposed framework was constructed to address the perceived professional development needs of staff at Abu Dhabi Men's College. Development of the framework was based upon data gathered at the focus group and the workshop and feedback from participants as to whether the framework reflected their perceived professional development needs.

The future success of the suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College depends on how determined faculty members are to remain current, and therefore their participation and

pro-activity in the process of identifying needs, sharing expertise and providing reflective feedback on their experiences of applying their new skills in the classroom. Those delivering the sessions are volunteers from the faculty and will not receive additional remuneration for their services. Therefore a low level of participation may have an impact on the volunteers' motivation to continue to offer professional development opportunities, and as a consequence be a threat to the success of the program. However, should the pilot prove to be successful a similar framework may be introduced at Abu Dhabi Women's College and interest from Al Ain Men's College and Al Ain Women's College has been expressed. The suggested framework for professional development at Abu Dhabi Men's College contributes to both the knowledge and practice of staff development as it appears to be the first comprehensive, formally articulated and documented framework in the region addressing the specific context of the teaching and learning environment in the Arabian Gulf, although professional development initiatives run by, and for, teachers are not uncommon on a more casual level.

In order for the Higher Colleges of Technology to continue to satisfy the needs of the various stakeholders, and continue to supply the UAE workforce with high quality graduates with the skills to function in the knowledge economy of the 21st century the institution must recognize its responsibility to provide professional development opportunities to faculty members who are grappling with issues relating to maintaining their position at the cutting edge of their field. The expectation is that the quality of education provided to students will equip them with excellent information and communication skills, in addition to global and cultural awareness to facilitate their transition and effectiveness into the workforce in a global economy. However, for faculty members to be in a position to impart or inspire such skills, they need support in maintaining currency in line with the developments in the information technology and global business world, in addition to contemporary developments in their own specialist field of education.

ESL teaching has changed dramatically as a result of global demands and the introduction of educational technology. However, ESL faculty members have displayed a keen interest and a high level of motivation when acquiring new skills in order to remain at the cutting edge of the teaching profession (see Appendix V). One issue that remains to be addressed is the apparent mismatch between contemporary pedagogy and the continued use of traditional, external benchmark assessments in English which are used as graduation requirements. This issue will need to be attended to urgently in order to correct the tendency to align a portion of classroom time with preparation for these high stakes assessments, since an exam-driven curriculum promotes teacher-centered pedagogy (Richards, 2005) and impairs enduring educational reform. In Chapter 4 during the focus group, one of the participants raised the issue of the mismatch between the use of educational technology and contemporary pedagogy in the classroom whilst continuing to assess traditionally, commenting,

> 'I think though that it's not only in conflict with outside exams like PET and IELTS. It's in conflict with how we assess (students) ourselves. If you look at the way we assess, the system-wide exams or …… within our own departments, they are completely separate and in conflict. You know it goes back to this difference between doing writing assignments on the laptop and doing writing assignments by hand'. (Focus Group #1, Participant No. 4.)

It remains key to the organization that professional development activities are aligned to the standards and assessments of the Higher Colleges of Technology, as well as the expectations of the community and the workforce. A suggested professional development framework such as the one presented in this chapter needs to be responsive and dynamic, offering continuous improvement by review and collaboration with the users in order to ensure effectiveness. One of the main criteria for a successful professional development initiative is the involvement of the teachers in the planning, delivery and ongoing collaborative development (Brown, 2002; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Guskey, 2000, 2002; Lee, 2000;

Newman, 2000; Sandholtz, 2001; Schön, 1987; Wood and Killion, 1998; Wood & McQuarrie, 1999).

The Professional Development Committee at Abu Dhabi Men's College plans to review the professional development framework twice in each semester during the academic year 2005-06 using surveys to collect feedback and suggestions for improving the plan. Specialist input will be sought from information technology, software engineering, educational technology and other program content professionals in addition to participating faculty members in order to refine the framework and ensure that it addresses the current needs of the institution and the community during these times of transition. In the context of Abu Dhabi Men's College, concerns and issues identified in this case study of teachers grappling with change in their dynamic teaching and learning environment and striving to remain current in their field are consistent with Privateer's (1999) view that,

> 'Teaching and learning in higher education are changing. The current period is a transitional one as student and staff inadequacies and resistances, curricular dysjunctures and inconsistent outcomes overlap emerging technological and pedagogical developments' (Privateer, 1999, p.60).

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APPENDICES

Appendix I

Chapter 4: The Changing Role of the Teacher – Focus Group Transcript

Appendix II

Chapter 5: Graduate Outcomes for the Diploma Foundation Programme at Abu Dhabi Men's College

Appendix III

Chapter 5: The Divisional Action Plan 2004-2005

Appendix IV

Chapter 6: Workshop surveys

Appendix V

Chapter 6: Workshop responses

Appendix VI.a

Chapter 7: Professional development program for existing staff

Appendix VI.b

Chapter 7: Professional development for new hires

Appendix VII

Chapter 7: Skills card (draft)

Appendix VIII

Chapter 7: "Buddying" at ADMC

(9)LN: Thank you all very much indeed for coming today. Our Focus Group is going to consider some strategies that teachers can/should/may or are able to adopt to remain current in their field. Um, I'm hoping that you'll discuss professional development and how the role of the teacher has altered since you all qualified as teachers. Um, you may also want to discuss issues relating to time constraints, expense, institutional support, in the quest to remain abreast of these changes. Um, I ask you to be honest and frank in your discussion and comments. Um, there are no right or wrong answers, and whatever you say is going to be totally, confidentially handled, names will not be mentioned, and no identities at all will be revealed at any time. The transcript will be kept locked away, as will the cassette tape. So please feel free to express your views in a frank and open manner. Thank you very much.

Please, B, would you like to comment on how your role as a teacher has changed since you qualified?

(1)B: Do you mean my role as an English teacher, because before I was a Science teacher?

(9)LN: Yes, ESL specific.

(1)B: I qualified as an English, an EFL teacher.....back in I think '82. And there's no doubt that the role has changed enormously. Not so much in the first years, um in the first years there was like a gradual change from a behaviorist philosophy, um, which er, obviously knocked on into the classroom and the curriculum. There were a lot of issues, um, which reflected the behaviorist philosophy of teaching and learning. Um, so we were using books like 'Streamline' and doing a lot of drilling, and we were using language labs. And the students would, as you know (talking to the converted people here!)..... Um, we saw, not to go into that too much, but we saw the gradual phasing out of language labs, at least in my own situation and a changeover to the more communicative syllabuses and er, and um, and the rest that went with it.....to Headway. And then Headway became the core book for a while. And er, nothing really, essentially changed in the classroom, um, for a long time. I went on teaching, rightly or wrongly as I always did, and I'm sure a lot of my colleagues did too. And um, the pattern of an EFL class didn't really change very much. But um, it's, it's in the last really five or six years that things have really changed.....dramatically.....to reflect the technological issues, to reflect the technological changes, um, involved in IT.

(9)LN: How have you dealt with those changes?

(1)B: Um, it was, what do you mean, the recent ones?

(9)LN: Yes. The IT changes specifically.

(1)B: Well, I think that word is right. You **deal** with them! There's no sort of plan as to, there's no strategy as to how you're going to approach it, because of the lack of information, because everybody's, it's new for everybody, so we're all feeling our way, um, all we can do is um, look at what we, what we think we should be doing and we discuss it informally.....we go to a few formal talks, and er, and the word on-line, and the term on-line learning is thrown at us.....and um, we don't really

know what it means. Um, but then we gradually I think it gradually dawns on us what on-line learning entails. And er, and it's an enormous issue. It entails a lot of changes for the teacher in terms of PD. And um, here I think we're lucky. We've had a lot of support. We've had a lot of opportunity for PD, but maybe I'm going onto a different matter here.

(9)LN: Mmm. Yeah. Could we go through the background of some of the other participants here and find out what your changes have been?

(2)J: I think B's comment was interesting. We don't really know what on-line learning means.....and how that is compatible with a communicative approach. Because I think we've actually stepped backwards in terms of our approach in our hurry to, em, embrace technology. You know, and I think you can see that in the learning outcomes that the students are achieving. And I think, em, possibly you've got to go two steps backwards before you can move forwards. And I think that's what we're in the process of doing at the moment.

(3)E: Yeah, I would agree very much with what J said. Um, I started teaching in, I think it was 1985, 1985, 1986, and like B said, it was communicative and my teaching didn't really change at all. I've taught in various countries, in Europe and South America, and my teaching was the same, whatever classroom I was in, whatever nationality the students were, I did the same thing. I had about fifteen students and did pair work and role play, and all those kinds of stuff. And then, the only time I noticed it changing, and I mean I did my MA about ten years ago, and we did a little bit of, I think we did a tiny little bit on CALL and that was it. And the rest was, you know, the usual stuff. And then, um, it's only since I came here two years ago that I've had any er, (what's the word?) I've been exposed to, you know, using IT in the classroom, and computers and all this kind of stuff. But I actually agree with J that my teaching, my teaching has changed a lot in the last two years, but I wouldn't actually say it's for the better. What I, I don't think I'm teaching as much English as I used to in a classroom with a blackboard and a piece of chalk. But that's .....

(4)T: I think the communicative element has gone by the wayside to a large degree because we have the laptops.....We're told that we need to use them with the students. The students want to use the laptops because they've paid for them, and they're great for certain things like doing, you know, grammar practice exercises and that sort of thing. They're great! But as far as listening exercises and speaking exercises go, they lose what to me is the essence of learning a language, which is to be able to communicate with other students and with the teacher, because they're so focused on, on using that laptop. And it's just all gone away!

Pause.....(9)LN: Here comes the moderator.

(2)J: I agree with what you said T, but I think I would agree that to an extent we have lost part of the communicative approach in embracing technology, however, I think er when it comes to learner-centered, er learning, and learner autonomy, it's such a wide area that we're now starting to get into, er the fact that students have got to be responsible for their own learning. And this is highlighted when you do like analysis exercises for example, where students have got to record their speaking and then possibly transcribe it, to see where their own problems are. And once they've

written it down they can actually see, em see, in the written form where their problems for example, in speaking are. So, in the area of analysis, em, technology is very good there, I would say.

(6)P: Maybe, I was just thinking, maybe the whole thing is to do with the fact that communicative language teaching is old hat. It doesn't mean that we're, that we shouldn't use communicative language teaching, but we need to approach it in a different way. Yeah? And I don't think necessarily laptops are the answer. I think that becomes a classroom management thing and how the role of the teacher has changed within it, within the classroom, for laptop teaching, if you like. Um, but I think J's right that the latest learning and teaching methodology suggests that the focus on independent learning with a communicative learning support is what generates the best, um, knowledge creation, if you like.

(9)L: What I think here is, my role as a teacher especially, maybe many of my students just aren't very good independent learners. I think we can be honest and say that. And I think my role as a teacher now has become more and more to, not spoon-feed them as much but lead them into, try and direct them into this area. Er, and it's an uphill struggle whereas previously, um, we didn't have to do that, when I first started teaching, as B said it was all behavioristic and then language labs, and it's moved on to communicative, and students, previously, in other countries, students were quite happy to do this, but here it's a little difficult and a little different. And my teaching has changed somewhat because I can't, no, I think I have to, you molly coddle them a bit more here, and then try and release them, into becoming more independent. They don't succeed very well. Maybe it's just my teaching!

(7)H: Well, with the independent learning if you set aside your two hours in the ILC. I find that even though they've got the block of two hours you send them off to do their, to go into the various websites, but unless you go and actually sit there with them, and watch that they're going to do these web sites, they, they'll scurry off or they won't go. Now that might have been my particular group but unless there's that follow up and you, and you like, even put your initials beside an exercise showing that, you know, you really are acknowledging that they've done it, they might just leave it.

(2)J: Does that not come back to basic teaching em, techniques of setting up a task well? Whether it's web-based or whether it's classroom-based, it really doesn't make any difference if the task is well set up.

(3)E: I think though, a lot of it's to do with something very, as basic as having so many students in a class. You know, in the teaching I've done before you've had a maximum of fifteen students and it was very unusual to have fifteen students. And so you can do all this pair work and the teacher can go and sit with the students and give them individual attention and..... whereas if you've got twenty, it's, it's, it's just different. It's a different kind of teaching.

(6)P: Yeah, but that's then, that's the background isn't it? I mean, just talking to Trish the other day and her daughter's just gone into a class of two thousand. Yeah? So depending, I think depending on where you come, I think twenty for most people is unbelievably small, what an ideal group to work with, yeah? Um, but I think just

going back to the focus question, uh, what's interesting here is like is a lot of our professional development we're doing, being on Master's or degrees, or reading or ??????? seems to be in moving towards this independent learning, using technology in the classroom. Whereas, is the reality of our situation, the fact that what we do on a day to day basis, much more to do with specific classroom skills, communicative language teaching methodologies which are in fact, as far as professional development is concerned, things we've always, already learned as it were, um, and which we have to continually put into practice? It's like the reality seems to conflict with what our, or maybe it's a question..... Does our, the reality of our day to day situation conflict with the way we want to take our professional development?

(9)L: Yes, I think it does!

(1)B: I think the um, the question of on-line learning, the subject of on-line learning, it needs to be defined. It's position in the curriculum and in the class, in any given class, needs to be defined. Where is it going to fit in? We've had this term blended learning that's come along now, and which seems to me to be a reaction, sort of reflecting that on-line learning is not the answer to everything. Woah! Wait a minute! Where are we going? Let's stop! Let's go back to what we were doing before, and let's put on-line learning, in along with our more traditional learning methods, and try and combine the two. So we've come up with this, again a term, blended learning, which I think we all have a rough idea what it is but I think it hasn't been defined any more than on-line learning has been defined. I find myself, um, introducing just about every class in a traditional way, either, er, by using text books or um, visual aids of some sort, and, and, doing the traditional teaching and then perhaps in the second hour they will do more, more of a sort of independent learning which tends to be on-line now. Um, independent learning non on-line, doesn't seem to exist. It seems to me that the on-line resources are so good, that they're so rich that er, there's plenty out there for the students to get on with. But, they do need to be guided. And then the question remains..... How much do they do on their own? How much can they be trusted to get on with on their own? And we've got a whole spectrum of students here. Some can be trusted 100% of the time to get on with it, many others.....

(6)P: But, just what you said there with the blended learning. That's automatically changed your role as a teacher to what it was when you first graduated.

(1)B: Yep!

(9)LN: Do you feel that you've had enough support in that change of role? And if you have, what's worked well? If you haven't, what hasn't worked?

(1)B: I think er, I think, I and some of us I know from talking to other people, have felt that we've been working in the dark a little bit, and that when we trained as teachers we were given a model lesson, and er, we were told, this is the way to do it. OK, it's not the only way but this is a good way that most teachers use. Um, now when we have on-line learning there is not such a model. There's no such model. We are very much feeling our way. There are the on-line resources, this is what we can do, um .....

(6)P: But, is that because there is no model lesson?

(1)B: Yeah. Well that's right. But then, perhaps there's a limit to um, how much freedom you want to give a teacher. I think all teachers want a, to have some guidance. They want to know that they are doing the right thing.

(3)E: Yeah. It's nice to have freedom once you know what your choices are. But it's a different matter just being told, 'there's your laptop, go and teach those twenty-one students, who can't speak a word of English'. That's a bit frightening!

(2)J: I think as well, if communicative competency of the learner is our aim, socially, in the workplace, everything else, we've got to look very, very carefully at the type of tasks that we are giving them for on-line learning and ensure that we're not moving backwards and actually preventing communicative competence. Yeah? Because things like awareness raising activities……you look at some of the, the tasks set, on-line and, and I look at them and I think, 'we're going backwards here'. We're going back to Murphy gap fills!

(6)P: Isn't that true of so much of the new technology, like the new programs brought out by some of the publishers and that? And you look at them and say, 'well this is just going back to the old behaviorism……', because the on-line medium did not support, er what is, what is er, communicative teaching. I mean, even now the, the er, these chat rooms and discussion board possibilities, um, ok fine but, why would we want them to discuss when they're there face to face? I mean, that makes no sense. It's inappropriate use, isn't it? Yeah? And that's like where B says, maybe it's the idea the only real solution is the blended mode and how you manage to……

(7)H: In that same light, like, it seems not to make sense to have them taking an on-line course when you have teachers right here in the college.

(6)P: Unless of course you've got numbers. That's , I mean, that's when it comes down……..I mean can you work it so that you can do something like COMP 100…. The volume we've got in COMP 100 for example.

(7)H: Perhaps in that case, yeah.

(6)P: English language teaching……..I agree with you. I think it's, it's totally different. How much do we want on-line……is the on-line there as support? Yeah, um does it ease things which are, should be easier, like er, like um, digital recordings, um of listening through a classroom system speaker? That type of thing should be, just a setting up……..but then do they want their laptops on? They can practice that at home. That's…….maybe they can do that for homework……Do we even want their laptops open for much of the class?

(5)L: I want to go back to what LN said earlier with PD. Have we been given enough support with the on-line, or the technology that we're supposed to be using in our classrooms? I don't, I think we have in one sense, I agree with what E said, when I came here is when I first started to using all the technology. And I've appreciated that, and I've learned a lot.

(3)E: Yeah, definitely!

(5)L: But I don't think we've had enough support and …. In some areas yes, in how we can exploit what we know in the classroom. And what you said P. I tend to go back to "close all the laptops!". I don't want them used! To the point where, because it is distracting, but um, and it comes back to what you said too J, time management and class management techniques, all these sorts of things that we have learned in our … I'm doing that more often than I would like to because of what we're supposed to be trying to incorporate in our teaching. Expense-wise, well it's all paid for here. We don't have a problem, do we? It's ….everything is provided for, and it's as B said. And there's a wealth of knowledge in technology that we have. We're very fortunate to have that but personally I find it sometimes very overwhelming that I do all this, that way, when it would be more successful when I do it my way, or a traditional way or communicative way.

(3)J: And sometimes the type of technical problems are taking precedence over, em what the students are learning.

(6)P: The first six weeks of this semester.

(2)J: When you spend two hours in the classroom trying to get your students on-line. It's not a useful em, useful em, time management.

(1)B: It's interesting you touched on COMP 1100 which I taught last year and I found I was actually a pretty good teacher at COMP 1100, surprisingly, because of all the er, computer technology that we er, we've learned here and which we've been helped greatly by, I must say, by the college. And I've enjoyed that side of it. You know, the PD in technology, but er, as far as the classroom, the English language classroom goes, I'm not so sure.

(5)L: It comes to me…….in the classroom I'm not as confident as I should be, I feel. I, I personally I feel very happy that I've learned what I can do, but trying to get my students to do it?

(9)LN: How much freedom do you feel that you have, to deliver as you mentioned there L, as you would wish to perhaps? How much freedom do you feel you have in the classroom to deliver your lesson as you would like?

(5)L: 100% freedom. I just ignore it and do what I want to do. I've got to be honest!

(4)T: I do think there is some pressure though, because the students have paid for laptops, and that seems to be the direction that the college as a whole wants to go, I do feel pressured to use the laptops more often and I sometimes find myself feeling very anxious about finding good useful ways of using it in the classroom because I feel like I have to. And, so I find that I do sort of go, you know, what can I do different on the laptops? And, the range of things I feel comfortable doing with the laptops is actually quite small. And I would like to have somebody give me some really great different ideas that I may not have thought of, so where we could pool our ideas a little more and sort of pick and choose from what other people have come up with.

(8)M: I think that goes to planning and follow up. Have we really identified the tasks that are best suited to laptops, and the task that a laptop would in fact enhance? Or,

are we copy, pasting some rather traditional tasks onto laptops because we do feel this urgency? And then to get back to what T says, we should join together sometime and er, and just share the activities that have been successful and maybe come up with a pool of activities that we could all draw from. Swap shops!

(5)L: Going back to, you know, we are language teachers, essentially language teachers, and I would be horrified to think that I could learn a language via a computer. I think you still need a warm-blooded body in there and I don't like the pressure that I know we've all felt. But our department has to push it a lot. But I think it's, the technology is suited for other areas, not as much as a language.

(8)M: Language is a social, is a social activity.

(5)L: We have wonderful activities out there. I don't think it replaces us totally. And I think sometimes, as T said, that we're pressured a little bit. So, I've just totally ignored it and carried on my own way.

(2)J: And of course there are limits to the freedom in the classroom, because now we've got student assessments based on, em for example, WebCT activities, so that's a constraint on the time we have in the classroom because you're taking that independent learning time away from what they would normally be doing in the classroom.

(7)H: And they'd surely compare from one teacher to the next how much the laptop is used. That's another pressure.

(8)M: And that brings up, not all rooms are equipped to comfortably use laptops, either because of the equipment or the size of the room.

(6)P: Like you were saying, my CD 1 class, I think the first sentence they fully understood from me was, 'Let me hear the click"! Because I wanted their laptops shut! So, for them click took on a whole new meaning.

(8)M: Not the click of the mouse!

(6)P: And the laptop closed, yeah? Um, but, I do, I think it's become very individual to the teacher how often laptops are used. I tend to think laptops, the effective use of laptops in the language classroom is, right, that's your writing follow up. I found a brilliant example for process writing. To get students before to actually re-draft work and re-draft it, I found a nightmare. On laptops I can get them to it three or four times, and er, they don't seem to worry about it. Yeah? And they actually do it! So, I found it wonderful for that, but that's not in the classroom time, because the classroom time I use for the handwriting. The first draft.

(4)T: Well, that's just it. Should we try and do that in the class, it's impossible!

(6)P: What I try and look at here, and this is me as a teacher, that what I try and do is say to the students, right, you're going to use your laptops but 90% of your laptop use for my classes is actually outside the classroom. Like they have to email me once a week. They have to do their book reviews and type them up and send them in

nicely, and er, like I say, for the process writing, once they've done their first draft, I've found it very, quite a powerful tool.

(1)B: But then do you get them to print it out and er, you mark it then?

(6)P: No, no, they email me and I do all the marking on-line.

(1)B: You mark it on-line?

(6)P: I open it up, I find I can mark twenty book reviews in about the time it would take me normally to print them out. I just use the, I just use the red.

(1)B: Because I must admit, it takes a lot longer than just going through it with a red pen.

(6)P: Not really, not really. I've found in a funny sort of way that what it's helped me to do is focus my correction, I think I'm not a very good corrector but when I correct especially by pen, I'm terrible at kind of circling too much and not focusing. Whereas I find when I'm doing it on-line I don't want to spend hours, ages going through it on screen like you're saying. So I tend to find my corrections much, much more focused.

(3)E: One thing though about the laptops, I mean, that we have sort of come to terms with them or…….maybe we don't like them so much, but what we, who we're teaching, are a completely generation to us, and they love it. They love technology. And so even though I may not want to use it I have to. I mean there are things that work brilliantly on the laptop, reading for example. My students, my Foundations students, will read about anything if they can go to web sites and do it. If I give them a piece of paper, 'Oh God, reading again!' But they do, they love using their laptops, and I think they, although I don't like it, they get something out of it.

(1)B: Yeah, I just set my lot a treasure hunt, during independent learning week.

(3)E: Yeah, things like that!

(1)B: And I haven't said what they'll be doing, but they'll be reading. They'll be using their internet skills.

(3)E: Yeah, but that wouldn't even cross their minds. They would just think, 'Ooh lovely!', and search on the internet.

(1)B: It's actually with the aim of doing er, a writing exercise at the end, but on that point as well, I mean there are on-line courses around like the Lewis and Clarke College course which, if you're short of ideas as to how to use, to do on-line teaching or get students to do on-line learning or use laptops, is a great start. It's a three-week course. It's got lots of really good ideas as to how best to use them.

(5)L: But the do we have the time to implement, I mean to sit back and internalize things and implement them? That's what I would have liked to do. Just a few more PD sessions on, you do this this way, or you do that…….

(1)B: It is time consuming, yes. It was three weeks of like, full time, so I suppose it has to be done in the holiday or near the holiday or at a quiet time when you can get on with it.

(5)L: I have enjoyed PD sessions where we've done something with the technology and I've said, 'alright, now I can use it that way', but we haven't had any for a while, have we?

(6)P: I don't know, maybe the idea is to focus PD sessions. I think it does depend on from certainly T and L have organized at least a couple already in CD 1, but it's been done departmentally simply because of our size. You know? Um and each department should have a meeting slot, and then I think the idea is then to use that meeting slot for focused PD, like you're talking about. Um, I'll bring it up in our supervisor's meeting next week because I think it's a good idea and like M says, the Swap Shop idea I think could be very, very powerful as a start.

(1)B: I must say though, again, my Foundations students when we talked about discreet item testing, a lot of that, the independent activities on-line are discreet item revision and the rest of it grammar, vocabulary and so on, but my students love that. And they're quite happy to do it so…do it at the end, as a revision and they're happy.

(2)J: But, then, before laptops they were also quite happy to sit down and complete an exercise in Murphy, but is it the best way of them learning? And that would be my question.

(1)B: As a consolidation I would say, it's got its place, yeah!

(3)E: And mine are much happier to do it on a laptop than they are to do it on paper so, if they do it then ……..

(2)J: But then that brings it out, further problems, and further problems is that we've still got benchmark exams that require them to write. We've either got to find exams that are compatible with their learning, or change their learning.

(6)P: Well, I would say we actually have to, yeah we have to find assessments that work. One of the problems there is that we're bound into international exam bodies where, which already have a large enough candidature that the inclusion of all the HCT students wouldn't change the international results. So, it wouldn't end up as a benchmarking. And we've been talking to IELTS literally for five years about getting it done. When I was at the Women's College, that's four years ago, I was involved as a, no it must be longer because I was teaching, so it must be at least six years ago, I was and my class at HD level 2 were involved in a pilot of, er um a, on-line, this was on CDROM at the time, but on-line IELTS test, full. Yeah? Now six years down, and they still haven't settled on it. Part of it to do is to do with the fact that no It is to do with the disadvantage of students that don't have access to the technology. Um, and therefore does it give different results? Or does that mean you can only benchmark against those who did it on a computer? And that's why it's been held back, and it's been doing this internal discussion. Meanwhile, my argument is well, what you're in fact doing, is now you're disadvantaging those who are going through a technological

institution and don't get the….of course their argument is that everyone should get the handwriting skills.

(4)T: I think though that it's not only in conflict with outside exams like PET and IELTS. It's in conflict with how we assess ourselves. If you look at the way we assess, the system-wide exams or our, within our own departments, they are completely separate and in conflict. You know, and it goes back to this difference between, doing writing assignments on the laptop and doing writing assignments by hand. We feel we need to use the laptops, so a lot of us, myself as well, will have them do it for writing and do it in Microsoft Word, and do all the editing. But when it comes down to the test they have to do it by hand, so trying to find time to teach them how to do both, is very time consuming.

(3)E: I suppose we do have to teach them how to do both. I mean, like if there's a power cut they have to be able to write, I suppose. So it's just ……..it's a balance, isn't it?

(6)P: But they only have power cuts in Italy, the States and England!

(3)E: What if there's a nuclear war, or something? You wouldn't have computers, would you? You'd have to……..

(2)J: I don't think we'd be worried about that!

(3)E: You don't know, do you?

(9)LN: From what I've heard, I've noticed a significant change in the role of the EFL teacher. It's no longer simply a language teaching job, it's an IT and workplace preparation job as well. The role that you have now seems to be to, as P mentioned, to have your students send emails he has his students send assignments to him. Um, E mentioned about information searches on the web. I mean you've all probably hit on that somehow here. So, I mean, you're not just English language teachers anymore. "Just" in inverted commas of course!

(8)M: You're absolutely right because even if you're giving them presentations and projects to do I've been teaching them PowerPoint. Or formatting, and if they can't do those things, I mean then they can't complete their projects so there is, there are some computer skills involved as well.

(6)P: Do you think that's true of all teachers? I'm just thinking, obviously with the Maths department, but also with, I was talking to a history teacher, a friend of mine back in England, and he was complaining that as a History teacher, um he you know, a lot of what he does now is involving technology and the fact that he has to um prepare students in a way to get information and be able to critically assess information on the web. So in fact quite a lot of his time is technology based, so I don't think it's just English language teaching, is it? I think it's teaching as a profession that has become technical.

(1)B: Without doubt!

(2)J: I think in certain areas of the world.

(3)E: Yeah, it depends which countries you are working in.

(8)M: That's authentic though, isn't it? You're teaching them a skill through English which is an authentic use of the language. And it doesn't take that much time.

(6)P: Just thinking back to, changing tack a bit, like the group's discussing professional development and..... Are there changes that are not technology-based? Or has just technology overridden everything, anything else? I say that quite genuinely, because my whole doctorate is based on, is basically based on knowledge, teacher support and knowledge. Technology is obviously a part of that, when in fact the most interesting part of it is how the change of understanding as to the creation of knowledge and how we develop our knowledge as professional teachers, um has changed. And that understanding that's changed over the years, and yet just talking round here, it seems all of us we're very, very focused just on the technology aspect of it.

(2)J: I think there's more than that, definitely. Em, when I first came here you didn't have so much project work that was directly related to the students. And for example, my year threes who are now doing skills analysis, personal skills, so that they're finding more out about themselves through using computer programmes and they're developing that further taking them right through to applying for jobs. Identifying jobs that interest them, so you're also involved in their career development. Yeah? And I think that's very important because it's directly relating the teaching of English to their own needs. Yeah? And I think that's extremely important, and I think we're doing that more and more now.

(5)L: Has it been overridden, as P says, by the technology

(2)J: I think it's a matter of integrating it.

(5)L: And the pressure we feel here to use it?

(2)J: I think it's integrating it and I think if, I think it comes straight back to what I said earlier, that if the tasks set are realistic and related to the students, and are going to help to develop communicative competence, then we can't argue with it. But if the tasks set are bad, er we're using technology purely for the sake of saying we've all got laptops, then it's possibly worthless.

(5)L: I think too that you have to have a level of student that is sophisticated enough to use the technology appropriately and I have to be honest, I have had classes that the students are not. I'd be happier if they had a pencil and paper rather than their laptop. I think we've all been in this situation where I would have liked to have waited a while.

(6)P: Years!!

(5)L: Before I would have introduced them to a laptop and doing things, I mean I have a class now who are doing things on the laptop that, B and I were talking about it

once, that are nowhere near capable of understanding what they're doing on the laptop unless they are "chatting". Whereas, what was I trying to say? Yes, I think technology, I want to support what P said, I think technology has overridden everything actually.

(6)P: This is one of the things like, um, one of the things I love about the DELTA is it's probably one of the only forums I get in, I'm involved in where um, we're language teachers. Everything else we seem to talk about college wide, college, system wide, focuses on the teacher part, the teaching and learning part. Yeah? Um, but the DELTA seems to be the only time I actually get into professional discussion of the language. I've had a couple of really nice exceptions with one teacher this semester. Um, which was based on an email I sent and it brought out questions of language were really interesting, but we spend, as language teachers, we spend an unbelievably small percentage of our time discussing language.

(5)L: Or even teaching it!

(7)H: On that note……..

(3)E: I don't really know if this is relevant. Tell me if it isn't……. but like, talking about professional development and how we've had to, you know what we've got to do to stay, you know, get where we are, stay where we are. EFL teachers have always had very bad, very bad press, as it were like you know, are you a real teacher or an EFL teacher? Whereas like you know an EFL teacher, you can have an MA, you can have DELTA, you can have CELTA……...The things you have to do to stay where you are, and yet we're still not accepted as proper……..

(6)P: I'm not sure that's true any more, you know for example, the DELTA has now been recognized as a PGCE equivalent in English secondary schools.

(3)E: Oh, has it?

(6)P: Yeah.

(3)E: Oh well, there you go then. I didn't know that.

(6)P: Yeah.

(5)L: I think it depends on what countries you're in. If you're in, if you happen to be employed in a "cowboy outfit" or not, or as young EFL teachers we were all in places that ……..I don't have to explain this. We've all been there, done that.

(6)P: Beautifully phrased!

(3)E: No, but in the UK for example now, even if you're teaching in a university, you're still not considered to be……You know, this is just the point I'm making about how, what we have to do to get where we are, to stay where we are, and what could we actually do to get ourselves better recognized. You know, to get the……

(8)M: Yes, I agree with E on that 100%.

(6)P: That then is involvement, and then you're talking like in professional standards, you're talking then affiliations with TESOL, IATEFL, being memberships of international bodies where, which act in some ways as unions. TESOL have done a lot in North America for the standing of second language teachers. Um, IATEFL is doing the same in Britain. Um, UCLES as well. I have to stop keep saying UCLES. It's now Cambridge ESOL!

(1)B: Oh, not again, they've changed it again!

(6)P: Yeah, they have! But anyway, if that's the only way, if we're looking, if that's something that concerns us, it's the only way of getting involved with it.

(8)M: I think that though too. There are a lot of, a lot of commercial enterprises themselves to the profession of ESL, and they have hired people who are native speakers, and that as the only qualification necessary if you are a native speaker you can teach a language which is, which is just a leap in logic. But I think that has hurt us, the fact that such a big part of ESL is commercial. It takes us away from the academic label that we have certainly studied for.

(6)P: Article couple of, no about six months ago, 80% of all English language teachers in the world still have zero qualifications.

(1)B: Well, there you are!

(8)M: 80%?

(6)P: 80%. I was astounded by it but they reckon 80% because as M says, you go to Europe now and the only qualifications you need to walk through the majority of language schools in Europe is native speaker……..

(8)M: Warm-blooded.

(6)P: Yeah, warm-blooded, and some of the good ones will then give you a CELTA equivalent before you can go into a classroom, but many it's just walk in.

(8)M: And a lot of them, a lot of them are businesses who use strong marketing strategies to promote their product which you, which is exactly what they're doing, promoting a product.

(6)P: And then you look, and then a considerable, Berlitz being a perfect example.

(8)M: Berlitz is perfect. Absolutely!

(6)P: Berlitz is churning out some huge contracts they've signed in the last three months.

(5)L: Then here we are talking about PD and our professional development and the use of technology. We're in a totally different system. I think we're fortunate to be here as B said. In a place where it does provide all the ……..

(3)E: Do you think it will take when we leave here? Do you think we'll carry this? I mean, I think it's incredible what I've learned here in two years, I mean, I haven't learned anything else in the other fifteen years I've been teaching, and it's wonderful for here, but I just wonder you know, when I leave here again whether it'll be the same thing.....Oh, an EFL teacher, alright! Whether we're likely to use all this.

(6)P: Well, it depends on what you go into, doesn't it? I mean certainly, I mean, look at those who've left our department here, and also from the department at the Women's and a lot of them have gone on to, to jobs where they can make a difference.

(3)E: Because of what they.....

(6)P: Because of what they, because of their skills, and of how they're perceived when they move into the new place.

(1)B: Conversely, I feel a bit sorry for new teachers. The lot we've just had in. I, the amount they have to learn and how ..... You've got to go into the classroom within a week or two and you're not really equipped for it.

(8)M: Especially coming in the middle of the year!

(1)B: Yeah, that's right.

(4)T: I think there needs to be more PD-related to how and why we use technology at Abu Dhabi Men's College at the entry level. In that, in that orientation week or two weeks that new people get, I think they need to have a number of workshops over that period, just get them ready to get started into what needs to be done. I remember my first year here feeling like I was absolutely floundering. I had absolutely no idea which direction to go in. I had no idea what the basic skills I needed were, and it was very, sort of anxiety producing situation.

(3)E: More specific as well, like, instead of just going to these PD sessions where it's all this theory and that, you know, I'd like to know, well, what is the password? What do I do when I have this? What's the button to push if it doesn't work? That's what you need!

(1)B: You're right though E. There have been too many of those and I don't go to them any more. Once I see what the subject area is I don't want theory any more.

(3)E: You just want to know what to do!

(1)B: I want somebody who has had a successful year perhaps, you know, and has developed a successful lesson, maybe I'm the best judge of that now, but I'd like to compare, you know, people who .....Sometimes in workshops, just get together and see, like discuss what has worked and how we, how we're going to proceed.

(6)P: And it's, so it goes back to what we were saying earlier, that's focused PD within a department and I think that's the way it's going. And departmentally, I

simply think we could, because the size of us now, um just doesn't allow us to do it as an English, well it's not an English department, as an English division, yeah? So, I mean we're 70 teachers now.

(7)H: So does that .....on the job hiring process like in the course of an interview do you want to be sure that a new teacher coming in has got all sorts of skills?

(6)P: No, it's a criteria, um certainly like you need somebody who's familiar, familiar basically with a computer, yeah? Different colleges have different expectations. Me, I pay personally, personally I pay absolutely zero attention to technology as well because for my own experience I came here with zero technology.

(3)E: You learn very quickly.

(6)P: You learn fast here. It makes the learning curve steep but if somebody's a good teacher, I want a good teacher before I want somebody who can pow,whiz html to a web page. I think that's, er, that's a different department to do that hiring. What I want are good English language teachers.

(1)B: Yes, that's right!

(6)P: Which is contradictory, isn't it? But still that's fine.

(1)B: The Women's College, the laptop forum they had, um earlier this year, that was an excellent use of time. There were a lot of good ideas there particularly as people came from around the HCT system and, and presented what had worked for them.

(6)P: But it was practically based, wasn't it?

(1)B: Very much practically based, yes. And it was very often just fifteen or twenty minutes, rather than the one hour of blah, blah, blah.....jargon, jargon.

(9)LN: Shall I throw something in here? I was wondering again about your role. I am trying to get back on track to the role of the ESL teacher., and the fact that a) you're teaching language and b) you're teaching IT skills, presentation skills, and global awareness, and I was wondering how much you feel that the global awareness that you impart onto your students affects your actual population of students at this college. How much more do you think they know about the world out there? How much more general knowledge do you feel they have, um through teaching them English?

(1)B: Well, they were always getting that through um, through the course books before, like 'Streamline', like particularly with 'Headway'. But now with the internet of course it's more so, but they still need to be focused.

(9)LN: How do you have them focus though? Good information versus bad information to put it simply?

(1)B: Well, what a good question? Something that should be thought about, and written down and passed and shared amongst everybody.

(2)J: Or possibly, who are we to judge that? Maybe they've got to judge that for themselves.

(6)P: Yeah, because our judgment can be in direct contradiction to everything they , but I think, I don't think, I think that's actually one area that since I, no not since I qualified, since I came to the Emirates, is one area, is one element of English language teaching which I found is different to teaching here than anywhere else I've taught. But, where I've taught before, in England, Germany, Venezuela, um all of those places, the, the, if you like the literacy rate of general knowledge of students is very high, very, very acute world awareness, maybe pocketed but, but on the, they had the global awareness.....come here there is no global awareness. I mean, it's sad to say, but you get somebody who comes out of secondary school in this country, they have zero global awareness, and so I've found that ever since I've been here when I was here with the military as well, one of the first things, and they're hungry, they're hungry for it, it's no reflection on the student, the student is really, really, hungry for. They want to know as much as they possibly can about everything. So a lot of the English language teacher and the motivational strategies I've always used here with students is very often using global awareness because they want to know very often. And that's one element I don't think the technology, I don't think the technology, I don't think has changed. I think that's regionally specific to this part, not necessarily this part of the world, but to this, it could be I don't know, but I think it's specifically due to the very, very poor level of secondary education in this country.

(3)E: But there, but there are so many things that we, we cannot talk about, particularly as a woman in a class full of men, that I would just avoid talking about., Usually things that .....

(6)P: That's like being a man at the Women's College. That for me was one of the most liberating things about teaching here at the Men's College.

(3)E: So, whereas before global awareness you would have to discussion, through open discussions, I mean, I'd, I'd run away from that because you don't know what's going to happen. I'm going to end up with, you know, offending a religious fanatic in the class or something or you know, I'm going to say something, or the conversation is going to go somewhere it shouldn't and so I avoid it. So I would say the global awareness of my students is, is pretty low.

(6)P: But, but, I think there are certain areas where, which, yes you're right, there are certain areas that you don't touch aren't there? They're, they're, they're not even there are social rules that lay that down, but there's still an immense amount of global awareness that can go on with those reduced parameters. Especially compared to what they had before. I'm thinking of just mentioning, you know, I worked in Caracas you know, a blank look, Caracas, and then I said ok where is Caracas? Don't know, so I said well go and find out. Next lesson you come back, you know where Caracas is and I'll tell you something more. Every single one of the students came back knowing where Caracas was, because the idea was if they came back not knowing where it

was, I wouldn't do anything. And then from there you get, you can get, ok, so what do you want to know? Little bits of information I don't know. There is a hunger there. I've always found that.

(3)E: Yes, I suppose.

(9)LN: So many of the lessons I've seen prepared though relate to the world at large, the geography, languages, products of each country and famous people from different countries as well. So there are um, quite a number of issues that I think are raised in the classroom which although they were, they had their roots in the good old text books, I think the fact that they have a laptop in front of them, and search engines, if it makes life more interesting they develop the skills for looking for information.

(8)M: Can that question be linked to the graduate outcomes? I think one of the categories in the graduate outcomes does mention global awareness, so I thought language classes are the perfect vehicle for that because you could have something about the culture, you know, anglo-saxon culture, or western culture, as as, as, an organized part of the course.

(6)P: I think actually, one of the, one of my big things with the graduate outcomes is not to have so much change but, and one, I always use global awareness as an example, because we don't actually have to do anything really, to what most of us teach day in, day out, to cover every single global awareness outcome every day. It's basically, if you look at our classrooms, what we're doing every day, that's exactly what we're giving them that opportunity to meet them.

(8)M: But perhaps it would open up the possibility of opening up the contents course, some sort of a basic civilization course, and you could look at ancient civilizations, or you could look at western civilizations, you could look at periods or look at it geographically. You could study advertising, and see what you can learn about a culture through advertising. I only say that because that's what I did in France and Germany with university students, and then you could compare it to their own cultures and it is an input for comparison, and for obtaining knowledge.

(6)P: And the influence that that advertising has on how they are now doing their advertising.

(8)M: And the influence that western advertising has had here, and if you look at the Coca Cola ad at the theatre, um at er Cinestar, you can see the humor against one of the taboos, you know, using their hands to shape a Coca Cola bottle which is really the shape of a woman, isn't it? And so there is, there are possibilities.

(9)LN: One final question from me. I'd really like to get some sort of idea of how much time you think your PD takes. I mean, we're all doing something, each one of us is developing in some way, and in relation to your job, you know, you have a full workload of course to handle. What gives?

(6)P: Oh well, I can tell you that exactly. I block off two hours on a Saturday night, two hours on a Sunday night, both over football games, and four to five hours on a

Friday, and those are Phil's holy study times. And nobody touches them. Um, and that's the only way I make sure that I get what I need to get done on the doctorate.

(8)M: But you're doing that because you're going after a degree?

(6)P: Yeah, I know, I mean…..and since I started doing the doctorate and it was very clear after the first few months, unless I did that I would not have the time.

(9)LN: And that's in addition to your regular day to day PD? Picking up new computer skills, and that type of thing.

(6)P: Ahh, yeah. I'm not sure that's professional development, that's professional struggle!

(8)M: But there's professional development and there's also working for a degree. And maybe the question should be something like, do you see yourself getting a degree or working, why or why wouldn't you?

(7)H: Why would you separate the two? Why would you separate getting a degree…

(8)M: Well, just set it just because well P has actual time slots because he has an objective of getting a PhD, but when I think of PD I think of things that are job related, and for me right now the job related are the technical. Would I like to get another degree, which would have to be, I guess, a PhD or another Master's degree? I think not, I think not.

(6)P: The literature answers that question because the literature considers getting a qualification is, normally comes under professional training. Whereas professional development is the development of your skills at your job. So, another good point, yeah. Professional development I would say most of it goes into the DELTA then. My preparation for the DELTA, and er um, when I work towards those sessions which is another reason why I keep involved with it, because it keeps you up to date.

(1)B: But also we're coming back to the technology, some of us are doing the ICDL which is both. It's a qualification, a professional qualification and it's a, it's professional development. So you are able to combine the two then. It teaches you a lot of skills you need in the classroom, or outside the classroom at your workstation.

(8)M: So, L is your question about professional development including degrees? Job related or….

(9)LN: My question is directly related to professional development that will sustain you in your role as an ESL teacher at this college, specifically.

(8)M: At this college. Specific to this college.

(5)L: Have we had enough time, is what you're asking?

(9)LN: I'm asking about the time, how much time do you feel you need, in relation to how much time you actually have possible. General comments.

(8)M: I think if you ask the question like that what the college's expectations of what we do too is also going to influence our choice. If I were in another environment I would look at er, professional training differently. I would do something for example, I think of a PhD in socio-linguistics for example. But not in this environment. In this environment I would feel that the time I use would have to be more toward, you know, on-line learning, independent learning, technological learning, to enhance my job. But given professional interest, it would be in another direction. And there isn't time for both.

(4)T: Yeah, I find I would like to be spending a lot more time on professional development than I am. There are lots of goals I have in mind, lots of things I would like to learn, but I feel that with our twenty, fifty-five minute hours, and many of us are teaching split shifts, teaching across departments, there simply is no time. Just keeping on top of everything I need to do to be prepared in my classroom to mark my assessments, to stay organized, there's just no time left in a week. And I would really like to see some sort of time set aside for staff PD. I know in Canada what we do, is in every semester in a school, there is one day per semester where there are no classes, students are not expected to turn up, and very clear concrete, specific PD is set aside on that day and that's what teachers do for the day.

(6)P: That's what's supposed to be our Independent Learning Week.

(4)T: Yeah, well this is just .....

(6)P: That was one that simply the teachers themselves um, basically came back and said we cannot afford the time. We do not want the Independent Learning Week to be as it was planned, so next semester, that whole week will be exactly what you just said, like we did last year in the first semester. But basically the teachers, especially the content teachers but also a number of ourselves said that I just don't have the time to with the students. I need that week in the classroom.

(8)M: I think the time too, we also need time set aside for the students. The reason I am late today is because I was ambushed by three students who are very, there's an exam of course, so they're even more eager than usual, but ah they kept me after to do, to look at some of the extra work that they had done. And I don't normally have that kind of time, so I was late. So, I'm always making some kind of a trade off, short changing something, for something else, and I thought I'm here for them and well I see my role as a teacher as being in contact with my students, above all.

(7)H: If you have multiple preps that can multiply your prepping and your marking and, and as you say, giving the students the time that they need at your workstation, so that takes away from your time to do professional development and on top of now making a distinction between professional development and professional training. If you're doing professional training like I'm doing this semester that further takes away from doing professional development. So I find, in my case, this semester that I'm running the whole time just to tread water.

(6)P: That's a pretty good definition of working here, really isn't it? Running to tread water.

(2)J: Yeah, I probably spend about five hours a week on a MA which I feel is professional development. It's making me think more about what I'm doing in the classroom. Em, I think though that's a very narrow range of what professional development is. Sometimes I learn more in half an hour of watching someone else's the classroom, which I still think is one of the best ways to learn new things. Just to walk into some one else's classroom.

(8)M: Get's back to Swap Shop, doesn't it?

(6)P: Yeah, yeah. And taking more advantage of these departmental slots, I think. And, you know, and having the opportunity there for PD. Even if it's not a full day of it. There's a slot there which everyone focuses on.

(1)B: Yeah, no we had one of those the first year I was here and er, people just got up and swapped teaching ideas, and we just used the whiteboard, other things. It was only an hour session but five minutes per teacher we learned a lot.

(5)L: Now we've got laptops and technology.

(8)M: And Smartboards and Softboards. Is there a difference?

(2)J: And I think that's a way we could develop our PD's are done on observations, but a lot of people choose not to do peer observations, and I think that, I walked into one of Paul's classes last year and I couldn't believe what he was doing with his computer. I just thought it was so good. Em, and I would have lost out on that if I'd only had my supervisor observe me. Yeah? So there's a lot more scope for that I think, possibly.

(6)P: Yeah, peer observation's a great one, and then why not use the whole PEP format to do it.

(2)J: Exactly!

(9)LN: OK well thank you all very much. That was fascinating and we've at least got a Swap Shop out of it!

(6)P: Well yes, I feel like I done an hours PD.

(9)LN: Yes, that was wonderful. Thank you all very much indeed.

Diploma Student's GO Portfolio Tracking Sheet - Write your Portfolio Evidence Location in pencil (because you may wish to update your portfolio in the future).

Graduate Outcomes		Achievement Indicator	Evidence Location
Communications & Information Literacy	1.1	locate specified information by choosing appropriately from a range of sources	
	1.2	apply commonly used search strategies to retrieve relevant information on a topic	
	1.3	compare straightforward information from different sources	
	1.4	communicate in English sufficiently to carry out a range of routine social, work and college related functions	
	1.5	adapt communication to the needs of an audience	
	1.6	act ethically in the use and distribution of information	
Critical Thinking, Problem Solving & Interdisciplinary	2.1	address a given, ill-defined problem and generate possible solutions	
	2.2	apply critical analysis methods to a range of defined problems, and make recommendations for solving the problems	
	2.3	apply basic concepts and principles from one discipline to another discipline	
Global Awareness	3.1	identify a number of global issues and demonstrate an understanding of their impact upon local issues, and evaluate their possible causes and effects	
	3.2	recognize the influence of culture and context on the achievement of specific tasks, and show an informed understanding of how to address these in performing the tasks	
	3.3	use historical information to formulate solutions to simple contemporary problems	
	3.4	generate a local response to a given global issue	
Information Technology	4.1	explore the general features of the basic applications from an IT suite and produce a specified range of products to professional standards	
	4.2	select appropriate items from an IT suite, and use them to assist in problem -solving and decision making	
	4.3	identify the legal and ethical issues surrounding the use of IT, and apply appropriate ethical standards in their IT work	
	4.4	determine the scope of the potential impact of IT in their personal and professional lives	

Graduate Outcomes		Achievement Indicator	Evidence Location
Self-management & lifelong learning	5.1	respond to specific challenges in an effective and socially mature way	
	5.2	describe their own learning processes and identify any limitations	
	5.3	create a personal development program	
	5.4	display a positive attitude and good work habits in the workplace	
Teamwork & Leadership	6.1	offer constructive input to, and accept and utilize feedback from a group	
	6.2	use group dynamics to facilitate group processes	
	6.3	contribute to group decision-making using a number of alternative strategies while assessing their effectiveness	
	6.4	act ethically when participating in a group	
	6.5	act as a group representative and communicate information to and from the group	
	6.6	describe an understanding of a wide variety of leadership styles	
	6.7	evaluate their own leadership style	
	6.8	determine effective leadership styles for a given set of situations	
	6.9	communicate goals and strategies to others so as to generate synergy of purpose	
Vocational Competencies	7.1	perform a defined range of activities in a variety of contexts in their chosen vocational field, some of which are complex and non-routine	
	7.2	analyze their experiences in college and in the workplace, and review against possible career paths in their chosen vocation	
	7.3	analyze current practices within their chosen vocation and suggest alternatives	

ADMC EDUCATION DIVISION - OUR ETHOS & GOALS, 2004-2005

OUR ETHOS

We maintain the educational development of our students as our primary focus.
We enjoy coming to work each day and sharing our professional lives with those around us who share our willingness, ability, professionalism, flexibility and sense of humour.
We commit to never asking others to do something we would not do ourselves and to respecting others for the diversity they bring to our teams and working lives.
We strive to be transparent, open and honest.
We smile in the face of adversity and see challenges as opportunities.
We celebrate our successes, and continually strive to improve in all we do.

OUR GOALS for 2004 - 2005

LEARNING

- Further develop the integration between program areas in both assessment and delivery.
- Provide increased opportunities for teachers to remain current in their field and share their knowledge through action learning groups and in-house workshops.
- Enhance course content with a full review of course outlines in light of changes over the past 12 months.
- Enhance the use of technology and instructional design as appropriate tools to support effective teaching and learning.
- Continue to promote and support Peer Tutoring and the Enhanced Learning Programme to further aid student success.

EXCELLENCE & QUALITY

- Support the business department in their major report year for the internal PQA and take advantage of this process to develop stronger inter-departmental links.
- Maintain the excellence of our students' educational experience, their employability and their fine reputation among the community's employers.
- Develop a full understanding of the importance of the HCT learning model and graduate outcomes through the use of portfolios - and how these promote learner independence.
- Create reduced workloads for team leaders to address teaching and learning issues effectively.

AMBIENCE

- Improve the working environment throughout the year with faculty area, resource room, staff lounge and classroom facilities and equipment regularly upgraded and maintained.
- Ensure communication flow throughout the college is improved and processes put in place that allow for effective implementation.
- Help new faculty integrate effectively into the division using the new buddy system.
- Create an understanding among all staff and students that CERT and ADM programmes are one seamless quality operation.

RESOURCES

- Improve the IT services and educational technology support to faculty and students, and ensure everyone in the division receives training in the full exploitation of the portal, which needs to become a true vehicle for knowledge management in the college.
- By continuing to be fully active in all CERT programmes, plan and employ staff to the work load that is added through the year to thereby create more time for quality development (e.g. of materials, of e-learning etc)
- Ensure that facilities in CERT are developed to keep pace with the new student intakes.

NETWORKING

- Widen our industry and community links with their concrete involvement in the day-to-day life of the college.
- Use system meetings and DAT forums to contribute and share our best practice.
- Continue to actively participate in, contribute to and initiate relevant national and international events.

Think about the skills you have acquired during your career.
Then rank them in order of importance or usefulness to you.
How did you acquire these skills?

SKILLS ACQUIRED SINCE 2000	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	HOW ACQUIRED – FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SKILLS ACQUIRED DURING 1990'S	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	HOW ACQUIRED – FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SKILLS ACQUIRED DURING 1980'S	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	HOW ACQUIRED – FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SKILLS NEEDED THIS YEAR	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	VIA FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SKILLS NEEDED NEXT YEAR	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	VIA FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

SKILLS NEEDED BY 2010	RANK (#1 AS MOST USEFUL)	VIA FORMAL OR INFORMAL PD?
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

New Skills Needed by 2010 (Estimated)

Professional

- Higher degrees (2)
- Management Skills

Personal

- Golf (3)
- Friendship (2)
- Health and fitness (2)
- Learn to play a new musical instrument (2)
- Personal Financial Management (2)
- Agriculture, animal husbandry
- Bridge
- Business knowledge
- Change Management Skills
- Cycling
- Gardening
- Mountaineering
- New skills for a new career (maybe cooking)
- Parenting
- Photography
- Reiki
- Repair/maintain farming machinery
- Skiing
- Study History/Religion
- Transferable job skills - not just teaching
- Travelling
- TV presenter skills
- Walking
- Writing/Authoring

IT

- Keep up with IT developments (2)

PD Program for Existing Staff
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
Semester 1			
September	Week 1	Portal & CIS	Practical workshop
		E-mail etiquette	Practical workshop
		Integrated Projects - 1	Updates on new developments (inter-divisional)
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
	Week 2	Banding or other specialist area	Practical workshop
		Smartboards - Refresher	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Practical workshop - Skills card to be introduced
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 3	MS Word and File Management	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Practical workshop - Skills card to be introduced
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Practical workshop - Develop skills as per skills card
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 4	HCT overview & HR issues	General information session on HCT and HR procedures incl. medical ins. etc
		Excel & Coursework Record Keeping	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Practical workshop - Develop skills as per skills card
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for Existing Staff
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
Semester 1			
October	Week 5	Banding (or other specialist area)	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 6	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 7	Research Skills and Software Packages - 1	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 8	Integrated Projects - 2	Inter-divisional workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for Existing Staff
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
Semester 1			
November	Week 9	Eid/Open Learning Week	Options to be selected by individual
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 10	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
		Research Skills and Software Packages - 2	Practical workshop
	Week 11	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 12	Integrated Projects - Follow up	Inter-divisional workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for Existing Staff
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
Semester 1			
December	Week 13	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Research Skills and Software Packages - 2	Practical workshop
	Week 14	Exam Practices & Procedures	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 15	Exam security & Recording of Grades	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 16	Proctoring & Recording of Grades	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for New Hires
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
August	13th - 17th	ADMC Orientation	Map, ADMC layout, handbook, desk, telephone, computer
		Housing and Banking	Personnel Department to personalize as new hires arrive
	20th - 24th	Cultural Awareness	Workshop with Q&A session
		Furniture Shopping	With buddy if available
	27th - 31st	Smartboards - 1	Practical (hands-on) workshop
		Internet and email access	Buddy to assist in orientation (one on one)

PD Program for New Hires
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
Semester 1			
September	Week 1	Portal & CIS	Practical workshop
		E-mail etiquette	Practical workshop
		Integrated Projects - 1	Developing integrated projects workshop (inter-divisional)
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
	Week 2	Banding or other specialist area	Practical workshop
		Smartboards - Refresher	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Practical workshop - Skills card to be introduced
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 3	MS Word and File Management	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Practical workshop - Skills card to be introduced
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Practical workshop - Develop skills as per skills card
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 4	HCT overview & HR issues	General information session on HCT and HR procedures incl. medical ins. etc
		Excel & Coursework Record Keeping	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Practical workshop - Develop skills as per skills card
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for New Hires
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
October	Week 5	Banding (or other specialist area)	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 6	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 4	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 7	Research Skills and Software Packages - 1	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 8	Integrated Projects - 2	Inter-divisional workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for New Hires
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
November	Week 9	Eid/Open Learning Week	Options to be selected by individual
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 10	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
		Research Skills and Software Packages - 2	Practical workshop
	Week 11	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		Introduction to WebCT - 1	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 1	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 12	Integrated Projects - Follow up	Inter-divisional workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT Course Management - 2	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 2	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment

PD Program for New Hires
Semester 1

Month	Week	PD Training Session	Description
December	Week 13	Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 3	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
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		ICDL - 3	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
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	Week 14	Exam Practices & Procedures	Practical workshop
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		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 4	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		Swap Shops	Workshops/ideas exchange sessions
	Week 15	Exam security & Recording of Grades	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 5	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 5	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
	Week 16	Proctoring & Recording of Grades	Practical workshop
		Action Research & Publications	Groups developed according to area of interest
		WebCT - 6	Divisionally-led, content-directed workshop
		ICDL - 6	Practical workshop - online assessment
		ICDL - 7	Practical workshop - online assessment

Stage	Name	Description
1	Imparting Information.	Use WebCT to impart administrative and course information to students.
2	Assignments.	Use WebCT to set written work, receive work, return work and save records of students' work.
3	Content Modules.	Create a Content Module comprising Word and Web pages.
4	Quizzes.	Create a Quiz with Respondus software and publish to WebCT.
5	Communication Tools	Add WebCT email to a course. Add a discussion forum to a course.
6	Course Management.	Use the Manage Course WebCT tool to extract information about students' progress and to update student's data
7	Sharing Learning Objects	Add other teachers' learning objects. Share yours with others.

"Buddying" at ADMC

The rationale for introducing a Buddy System is that new faculty will quickly become comfortable and confident in their new surroundings, and have a point of reference when looking for new information and guidance. The established faculty Buddy is intended to be an informal, helpful, sounding board and advisor assisting the new faculty member to rapidly settle in and become part of the Gen. Ed. team.

In a Buddy relationship, it is important that:

1. Open and honest communications between both faculty members exist with the established faculty member giving honest praise and advice. Confidentiality, integrity, and trust are important aspects of the relationship.
2. A Buddy indicates opportunities for growth and development of the new faculty member outside of the existing skill area as well as introduces him/her to the right people.
3. A Buddy is accessible and the responsibilities of both faculty members are clearly defined.

The role of the established faculty member Buddy:
Provide ADMC orientation (facilities and staff room)
Advise on ADMC "housekeeping" practices
Be open-minded
Clarify essential issues
Maintain confidentiality
Act as an advisor when needed – be accessible
Offers opportunities for peer observations
Encourage the new faculty member to participate in PD activities
Encourage the new faculty member to participate in social activities
Share knowledge of the political structure
Give encouragement
Give emotional, moral and professional support

The role of the new faculty member Buddy:
Be open-minded
Maintain confidentiality
Be flexible
Be a good listener
Accept constructive advice
Accept responsibility

The relationship between "Buddies" should be maintained over time providing continued guidance and open lines of communication. Established faculty member Buddies should aim to continue to be supportive professionally by clarifying issues, suggesting strategies for achieving work objectives, questioning, listening and problem-solving. On a more personal level, established faculty member Buddies should continue to provide encouragement, show concern and boost confidence whenever possible.

Suggested initial strategies:
Guided tour of ADMC concluding with a coffee at Starbucks
Assist with workstation set-up, computer, phone, stationary, etc.
Look at timetable together and visit classrooms scheduled
Familiarize the new faculty member with the technology available in his/her classrooms and/or direct them to training opportunities
Discuss the courses assigned, student profile and the resources available

Adapted from documents provided at the 'Academy for Leadership Training and Development' - chair.academy@mcmail.maricopa.edu