Teaching Oral Communication through Self-instructional Online Courses and Virtual Classes: the McGill University Experience

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McGill | School of Continuing Studies   École d'éducation permanente

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Project Overview, Objectives & Scope

McGill School of Continuing Studies (SCS) was awarded a **Health Canada grant** to develop and deliver a customized English language-training program to healthcare professionals.

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Multiple Stakeholders

Health Canada
funded project
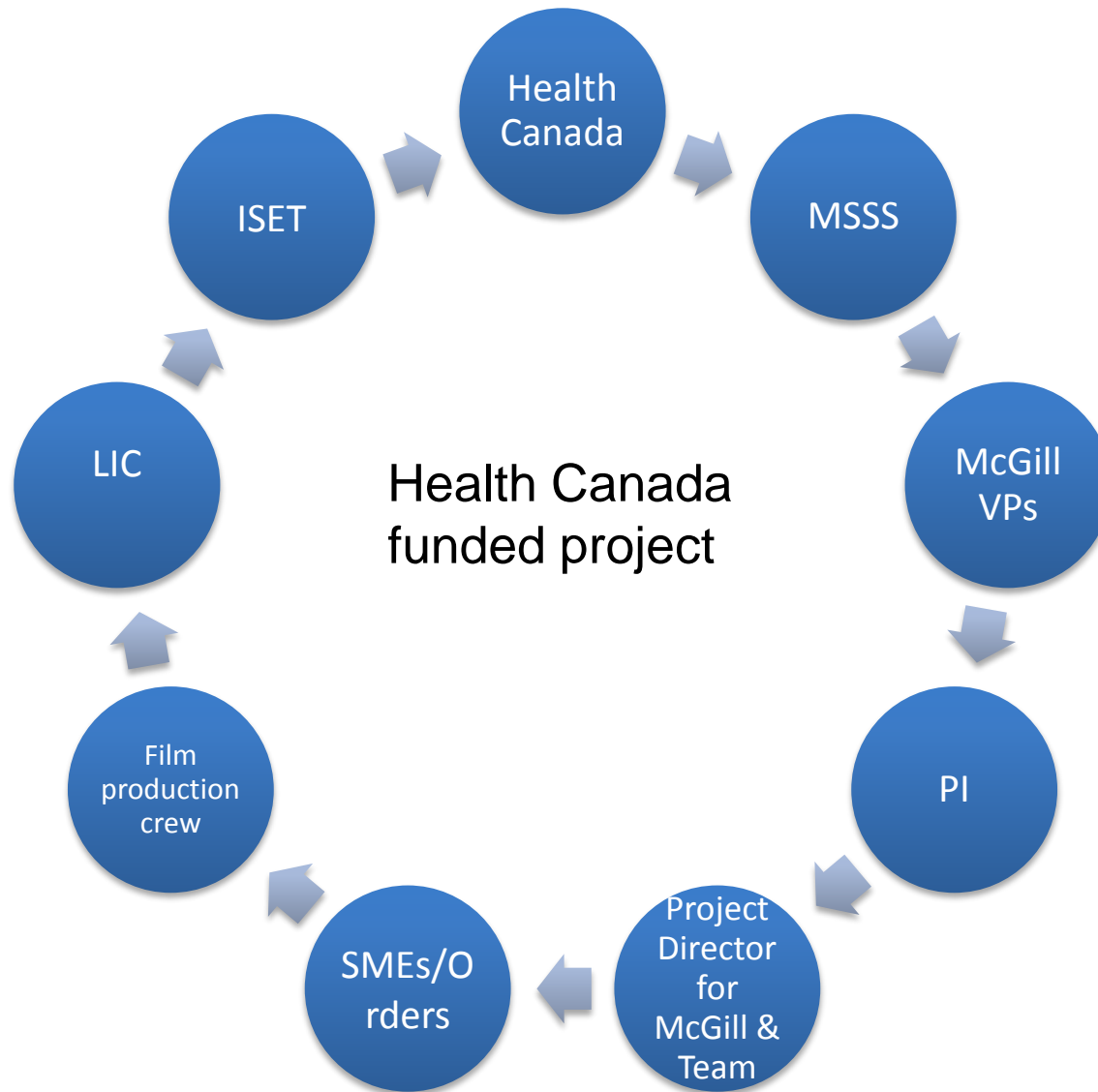
- Objectives of Health Canada and the Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux (MSSS)

  - Provide essential healthcare services in English
  - Standardize training
  - Obtain performance reports
  - Have a better portrait of language training across the province

"Client" Requirements

Flexibility

- Accommodate fluctuating schedules

Accessibility

- Reach people throughout the province

Different levels

- Beginner Intermediate Advanced

Stream-specific

- Healthcare
- Social Services
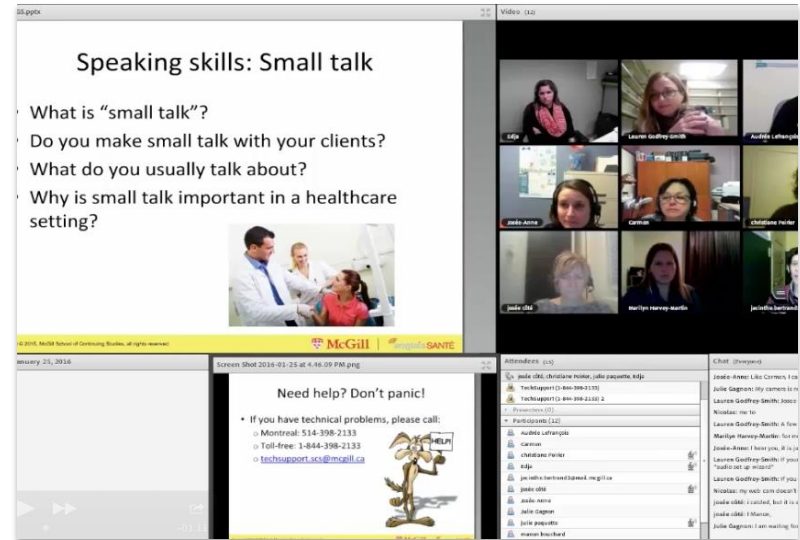- Frontline Administration

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To Consider in the Training Proposal (Challenges)

- Customized to three distinct areas
- Delivered province-wide
- Accommodating varying
  - work schedules
  - language levels
  - technical know-how
  - motivation

OUR PROPOSAL

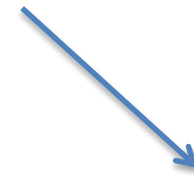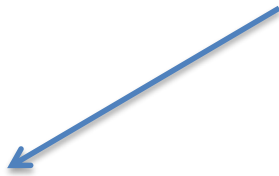## Online Course

VFF or "In-class" Course

Our Proposal

8 levels x 3 streams
24 online courses
24 "in class" courses
leading to…

Professional Development Certificate	Professional Development Certificate	Professional Development Certificate
• English for Healthcare	• English for Social Services	• English for Frontline Healthcare Administration

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Scope and Deliverables

– Needs assessment and analysis (academic, administrative, technological)

– Online Placement Test

– Diagnostic Test

– Program, curriculum, and course design

– Instructional design (for online courses)

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Scope and Deliverables (Cont'd)

– Creation of 24 online courses

– Creation of 24 "in-class" courses

– Program coordination (different levels of academic and administrative coordination and collaboration with the regional agencies)

– Pedagogical, administrative, and technical support to learners, tutors/instructors

– Orientation and systematic professional development for tutors and instructors at McGill and in the regions
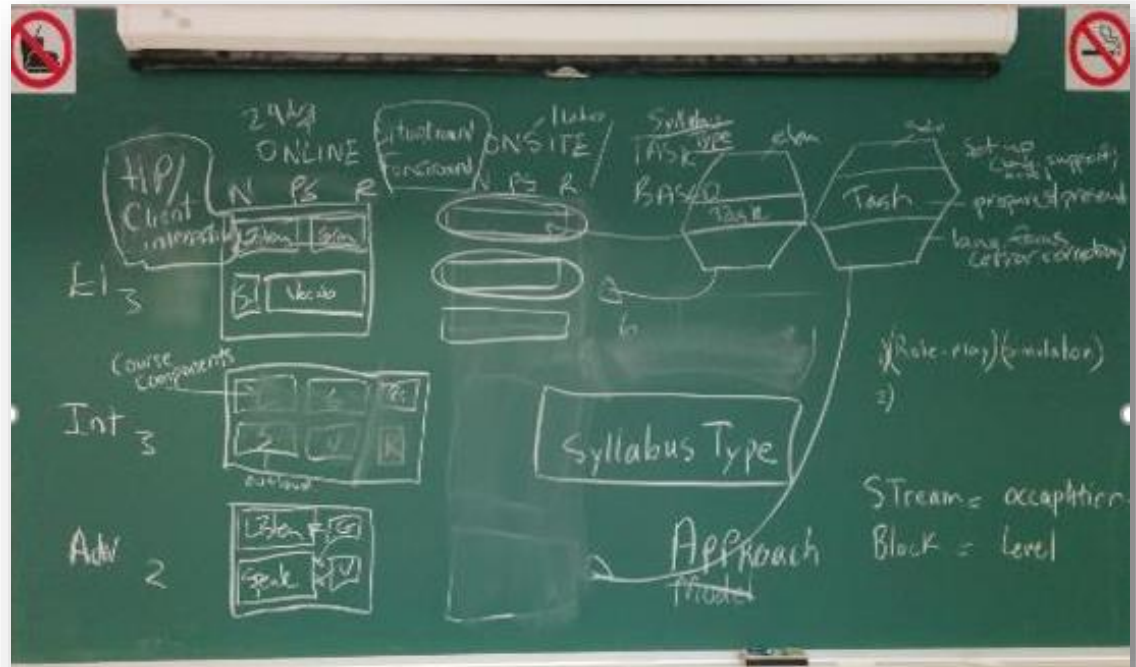
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Scope and Deliverables (Cont'd)

- Portal for learners; portal for tutors and instructors

- Creation and moderation of communities of practice

- Program management, administration, budgeting and reporting

- Registration

- Evaluation and assessment (formative, summative)

- Academic Quality Assurance

A team of over 200 SCS curriculum and content developers, writers, directors, production managers, actors, instructional designers and programmers worked non-stop to create over 1000 lessons!

EYE ON IDIOMS PLACEMENT TEST SOAP OPERA
GRAMMAR LESSONS VOCABULARY LESSONS VOICES
FUN WITH PHRASALS PRONUNCIATION MODULE
VIDEOS LISTENING COMPREHENSION CURRICULUM
SCOPE AND SEQUENCE CULTURAL AWARENESS
DISCUSSION POINTS FUNCTIONS
TALKING TEACHER
ASSESSMENT

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Curriculum Design and Development

Step 1: Identify needs

Step 2: Develop level descriptors & create learner profiles

Step 3: Select a pedagogical approach and framework

Step 4: Design curriculum

Step 5: Develop content

Identify needs

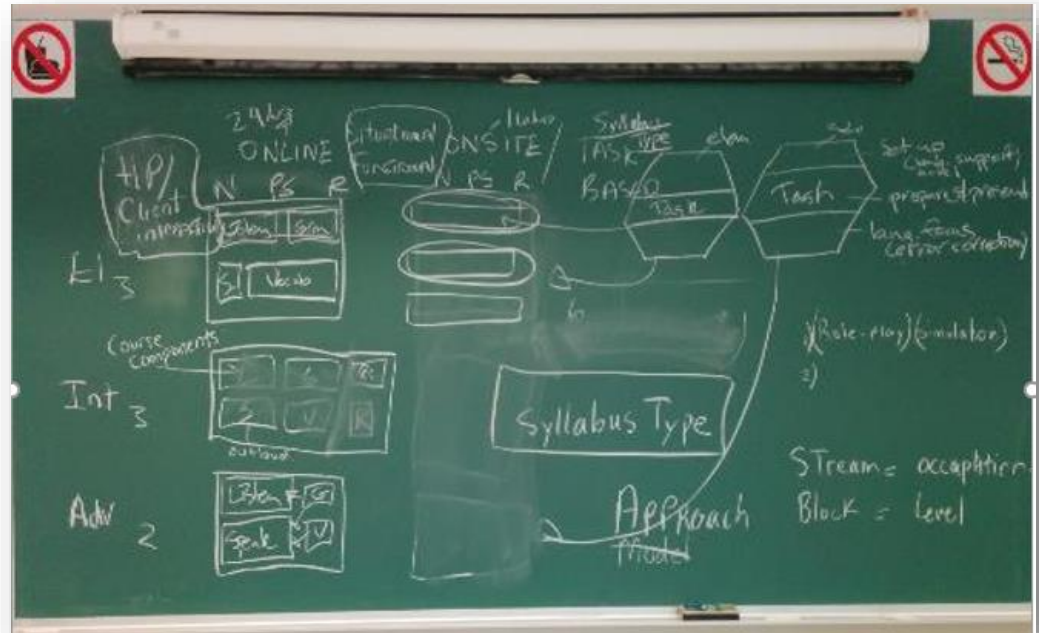Understand the target audience & their workplace settings

- Who are the healthcare workers?

- What do they do?

- What are their language needs?

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Develop level descriptors & create learner profiles

- Consult existing standards, guidelines and reference of languages
  - Canadian Language Benchmark standards (CLB)
  - Canadian English Language Benchmark assessment for Nurses   (CELBAN)
  - American council on the teaching of foreign languages (ATCFL)
  - European framework of reference for languages (CEFR)

- Create level descriptors
  - to fit an 8 level program
  - to align with McGill's learner profiles

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Identify Needs

Understand the target audience & their workplace settings

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Select a pedagogical approach and framework
Online delivery - functional situational syllabus
Onsite or 'virtual' delivery - task based syllabus

Curriculum design for online course

Coordination with Participating Regions
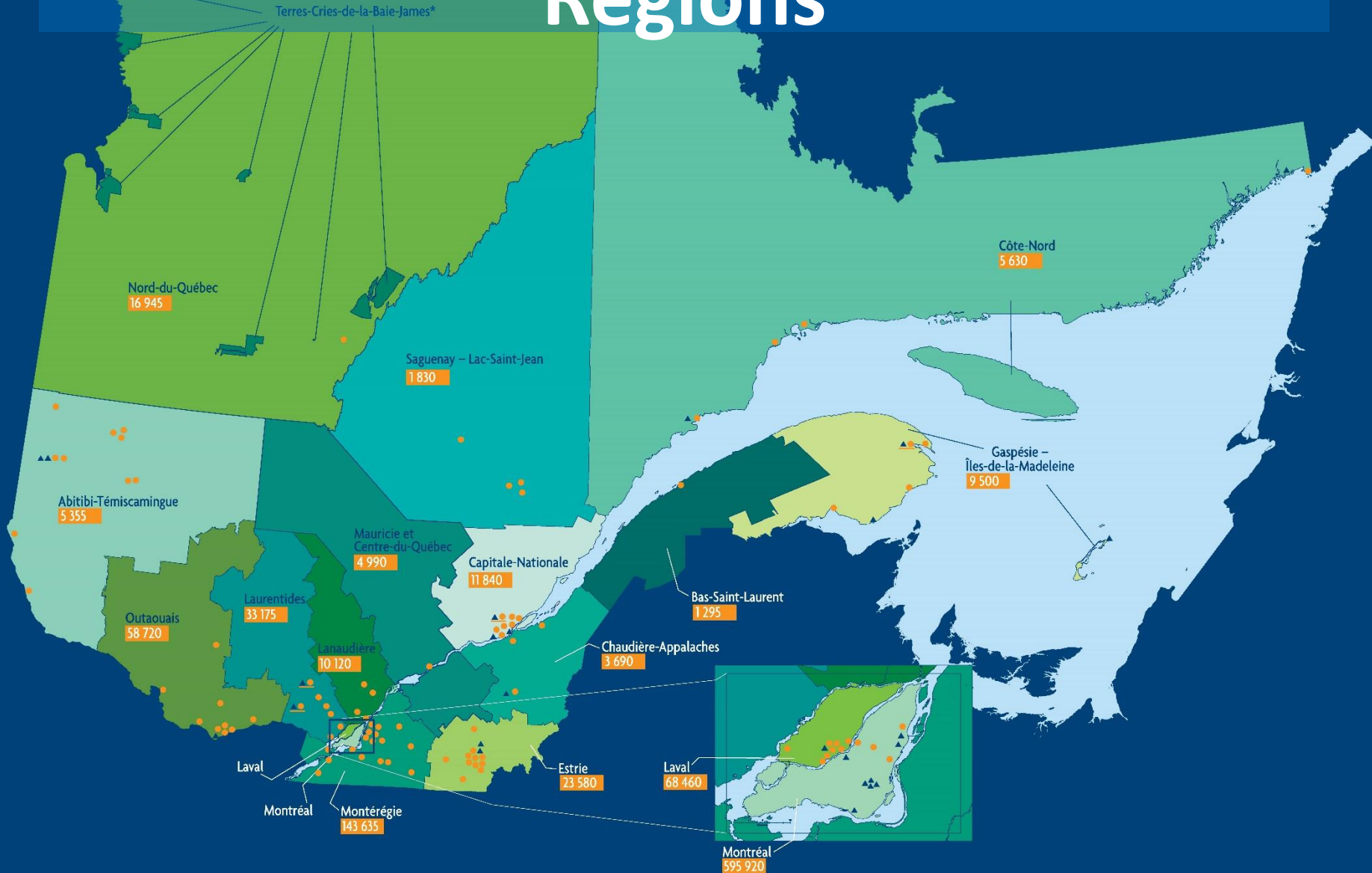
Coordination with the Regions

1. Promotion of the Program to regional agencies: site visits
2. Selection of participants by supervisors : language requirement for the position, stream and motivation
3. Online Placement Test :
   - ➢ Link to Website with information on Program, courses, dates, videos, registration procedures, etc.
   - ➢ Registration for the Online Placement Test (listening comprehension, multiple choice questions, *oral interview).
   - ➢ Participant placed

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Coordination with the Regions (Cont'd)

4. Validation process with regional agencies

5. Registration:
   - ➢ Learners informed of level, stream and dates
   - ➢ Course selection
   - ➢ Documentation submission
   - ➢ Email confirmation and links to course access
   - ➢ Tutorials, testing out a virtual class

6. Regional agencies informed

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ENGLISH FOR HEALTHCARE - WINTER 2016

Online Course

CRN	Course number			Course Title	Start-End Jan. 18 – Mar. 25	Day/Time
16313	CEGL	170	701	**Elementary 1** Essential English for Healthcare		
16319	CEGL	172	701	**Elementary 2** Essential English for Healthcare		
16325	CEGL	174	701	**Elementary 3** Essential English for Healthcare		
16335	CEGL	270	701	**Intermediate 1** Essential English for Healthcare	Travail en autonomie, horaire flexible	
16353	CEGL	272	701	**Intermediate 2** Essential English for Healthcare		
16374	CEGL	274	701	**Intermediate 3** Essential English for Healthcare		
16391	CEGL	370	701	**Advanced 1** Essential English for Healthcare		
16404	CEGL	372	701	**Advanced 2** Essential English for Healthcare		

Virtual Face-to-Face Class

CRN	Course number			Course Title	Start-End: Jan. 25 – Mar. 18 Day	Time
16316	CEGL	171	701	**Elementary 1** English Conversation for Healthcare	Friday	11:30 AM-1:30 PM
163161	CEGL	171	702	**Elementary 1** English Conversation for Healthcare	Thursday	4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
163162	CEGL	171	703	**Elementary 1** English Conversation for Healthcare	Tuesday	7 PM-9 PM
16322	CEGL	173	701	**Elementary 2** English Conversation for Healthcare	Thursday	11:30 AM-1:30 PM
163221	CEGL	173	702	**Elementary 2** English Conversation for Healthcare	Wednesday	4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
163222	CEGL	173	703	**Elementary 2** English Conversation for Healthcare	Friday	7 PM-9 PM
16328	CEGL	175	701	**Elementary 3** English Conversation for Healthcare	Monday	11:30 AM-1:30 PM
16329	CEGL	175	702	**Elementary 3** English Conversation for Healthcare	Tuesday	4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
16330	CEGL	175	703	**Elementary 3** English Conversation for Healthcare	Wednesday	7 PM-9 PM

- **Creation of sections per stream and level**
- **Registration constraints**

Pilot Projects

- **Winter 2015 – Pilot Project 1**
  - 8 regions
  - 111 participants
  - 3 levels
- **Fall 2015 – Pilot Project 2**
  - 12 regions
  - 330 participants
  - 6 levels
- **Winter 2016**
  - 15 regions
  - 385 participants
  - 8 levels
- **Fall 2016**
- All regions, all levels and 800 participants

Academic Quality Assurance: Survey Results

- **Information about the program & placement test**

  - Information on the website clear
    and procedures to do the test easy to follow:　　　　78%

- **Registration to course and scheduling**

  - Registration process simple and class schedules convenient　　70%

- **Technology**

  - Technical issues at the beginning　　　　84%

  - Able to solve the problems with help　　　　89%

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Survey Results

Online Courses	Onsite/Live Virtual Face to Face Courses
• Positive responses: overall course relevance to professional needs and components: 85%	• Positive responses: overall course relevance to professional needs, content, evaluation: 84 %
• I would recommend this course: 85 %	• I would recommend this course: 84 %
	• Satisfaction with Instructor: overall, discussion class time, preparation & organization, feedback: 91%

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Technology and Virtual Course Delivery

Lessons Learned

- Don't underestimate learner workload in the online courses.

- In multi-stakeholder projects, allow more time for everyone to reach out, promote, and organize on their end.

- Be sensitive to the concept of online learning because it's very new to many learners.

- Plan for several "virtual class" training sessions before the first class for both instructors and learners.

- Put in place more technical support than anticipated at the onset of a course.

- Put a system in place for inter-departmental collaboration and communication.

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Thank you!