

YouTube for Just-in-Time Faculty Development

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Keywords: Determinants of health; You Tube; Faculty development; Distributed learning; Undergraduate; Medical education; Technology

What Problem was Addressed?

It is challenging to orient and provide faculty development for a distributed undergraduate medicine course with multiple busy physician and allied health professional tutors.

First year medical students at the University of Toronto complete a mandatory course entitled Determinants of Community Health-1 (DOCH I). Every Wednesday afternoon in the first year curriculum is devoted to this course. Approximately one third of the sessions are delivered through tutorials (of 6-8 students), with lectures, community field visits, exams and self-study during the remainder of the sessions. The tutorials involve discussions, cases, student presentation of visits, and media assignments. Tutorials occur at academy-based sites throughout the city and at the new distributed campus. Tutorials are facilitated by one physician and an allied health professional. In-person pre-course orientation sessions at each academy have been provided in past years without significant attendance (usually 2-5 tutors out of >60 would show up). When asked, tutors (especially those who had taught the course for many years) felt that pre-course orientation would not have been a valuable use of time; they felt adequately prepared. The academy tutors at the new campus were provided intensive orientation and faculty development - this was well attended. While the tutorial component of DOCH I has consistently been rated in student feedback as a strong, there remained a significant level of inconsistency between how tutorials were delivered. Examination of the literature looking for successful faculty development methods for distributed tutorial courses yielded no results.

What was Tried?

Short 3-7 minute YouTube videos were created by one of the associate course directors, reviewed by the course director and distributed to the tutors approximately 1 week in advance of tutorials.

What Lessons were Learned?

These YouTube videos gave short faculty development tips (i.e. how to give feedback after a PowerPoint presentation) and anchored them with practical logistical issues (i.e. where the evaluation forms needed to be returned after the sessions) to promote viewership. YouTube was chosen as the platform-it was free and easily accessible. The videos were filmed using a smartphone and uploaded. The link was then emailed out to all the tutors. This allowed tutors to view the videos at their convenience. In addition to the asynchronous benefit, the videos could also be viewed with a 'single click'.

A further benefit of using YouTube is the ability for the author to see how many 'views' the video has garnered. This allowed us to estimate the uptake of this faculty development/orientation format. Of the 8 uploaded videos for the 2012-2013 year so far, we have averaged 59 views per video. (This does not account for a single viewer accessing the video multiple times). This indicates a significant uptake from the 72 tutors who were offered this format. Tutors requested a "just-in-time" resource which addressed practical issues pertinent to upcoming tutorials. They wanted it to be convenient and easily accessible. DOCH I leadership wanted to provide some faculty development to all tutors within limited resources. Early feedback from tutors and academy leads has indicated that this initiative has met tutor needs.

Formal evaluation will be done at the end of the academic year.

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Received November 23, 2013; **Accepted** March 05, 2014; **Published** March 07, 2014

Citation: Leung FH, Scott F, Tyler I (2014) YouTube for Just-in-Time Faculty Development. J Community Med Health Educ 4: 278. doi:[10.4172/2161-0711.1000278](https://doi.org/10.4172/2161-0711.1000278)

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