معهد القيادة
في التعليم العالي
**INSTITUTE OF LEADERSHIP
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

جامعة الشارقة
UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH

**Office of Vice Chancellor for
Academic Affairs**

Institute of Leadership in Higher Education – Annual Report

2021- 2022

Table of Content

Introduction

The Institute of Leadership in Higher Education (ILHE) supports the vision of the University of Sharjah (UoS) to be globally recognized as a distinguished and leading center in world-class teaching, learning, and research. ILHE has delivered a series of interactive training and workshops that continues to keep the UoS faculty up to date with current pedagogy and educational teaching methodologies and technology that can help them in enhancing the learning experience of students in the face-to-face classroom as well as Hybrid/Hyflex sessions.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR

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The University of Sharjah is one of the leading academic institutions in the Middle East and the Gulf region.

With 14 Colleges offering over 111 programs across multiple academic disciplines, the university attracts and retains world-class faculty members, staff, and students. To ensure our students receive an education that meets the highest international standards, the University of Sharjah has an unwavering commitment to the ongoing professional development of all staff and faculty. Besides, the University signed cooperation agreements and forged strategic alliances with over 80 leading institutions around the globe, which ensure we deliver the highest quality experiences. We recognize that qualified and dedicated staff are vital to ensuring that a university can fulfill its mission of teaching, supporting learning, researching, and serving society.

To support the university's 2019-24 strategic plan, the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education is mandated to develop and deliver an annual development session program that embodies our dedication to expanding the university's excellence. Through engagement with these programs, our staff and faculty will continue to enhance their professional skills and knowledge and develop new ambitions for meeting students' needs today, and in the future.

Together, we offer world-class education, cutting-edge research, and responsible community service, making the University of Sharjah a beacon of excellence. Faculty and staff are encouraged to continue working and engaging with the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education to enhance their professional practices and students' learning experiences. As we continue to navigate the current educational landscape, faculty members are also encouraged to explore strategies to foster students' learning using technology effectively in hybrid and blended learning contexts.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR THE ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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The University of Sharjah seeks to maintain a high-performance culture, in which all staff and students are supported to be and do their very best.

The University of Sharjah seeks to maintain a high-performance culture, in which all staff and students are supported to be and do their very best. One important way of facilitating this is through our commitment to staff and faculty development. From the moment a new employee joins the university and throughout their career here, we offer multiple opportunities for gaining new skills and knowledge in role-related areas as well as for career progression.

In line with the University's strategic priorities and areas of focus, the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education is established to provide a community-responsive program of professional development opportunities. Addressing key aspects of supporting 21st Century learners, employees, and research, the program offers diverse opportunities in areas such as technology-enhanced teaching, learning and assessment, leadership skills, and well-being initiatives. Such provision is provided throughout the year and is regularly reviewed to ensure currency and relevance to the higher education climate. The varied and balanced program also facilitates professional development conversations on employee-nominated matters. In this way, we uphold our commitment to providing for and responding to our community's lifelong learning interests.

By engaging in development opportunities, we are all helping to achieve current objectives as well as to shape future goals, which ensures the University of Sharjah remains a center of excellence. In doing this effectively, everyone needs to consider working and supporting the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education's quest for enhancing teaching and learning at the university.

MESSAGE FROM THE INSTITUTE'S DIRECTOR

This is your space in which we hope you can renew your dedication, extend your expertise, and welcome newer colleagues to this excellent environment to strengthen professional practices.

At the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education, we recognize the importance of staff and faculty development for the well-being of our community members and the achievement of long-term university goals. We believe that engagement with lifelong learning can ensure our students and wider stakeholders receive world-class service from this university, in teaching and learning, research, leadership, and community service. We are therefore proud to host a center and a dynamic, responsive program of events in which members of the University of Sharjah can collaborate in professional learning communities or seek collegial support. The Institute also holds memoranda of understanding with several world-renowned, external partners to bring cutting-edge development opportunities to the University of Sharjah community. We hope our colleagues will enjoy the many opportunities for interaction and interdisciplinary advancements that are offered by the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education.

Each year, we develop and offer programs and workshops delivered online, through blended learning or face-to-face, aiming to address topical matters for faculty at the university. The provision enables each faculty member to meet annual targets for the university's 2019-24 strategy by supporting professional learning and inquiry in areas of interest or need. Our program is clustered into streams to help faculty more quickly identify relevant opportunities. We also encourage everyone to suggest or lead other development events as the need or interest arises. We would be most happy to support and facilitate the realization of any ideas shared, including strategies for strengthening hybrid learning, blended learning, and technology-augmented active learning.

Together we will lead the way.

ILHE Vision

The ILHE aspires to be a regional hub advancing leadership in higher education and inspiring teaching excellence through innovative training, academic programs, and scholarship in teaching and learning research.
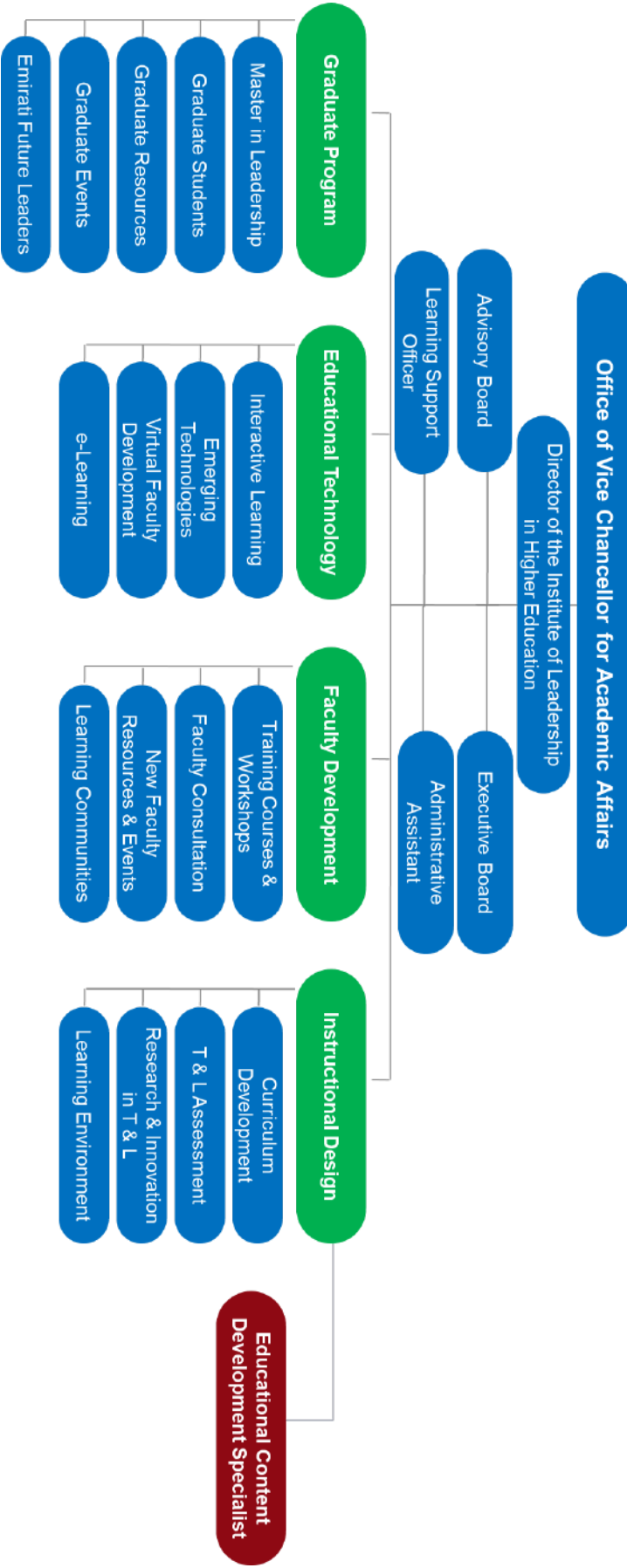
ILHE Mission

The mission of the ILHE is to strengthen the professional knowledge and leadership skills of faculty and higher education practitioners in the UAE and beyond. It leads and provides development training, educational programs, and pedagogical research opportunities to foster exceptional leadership practices and the teaching and learning process.

ILHE Goals

- Training of faculty in the university in the full spectrum of the art and science of education.
- Providing expert support for innovation in course development, delivery, and assessments in the higher education context.
- Supporting the development of leadership skills in higher education nationally, regionally, and internationally.
- Advancing educational knowledge and practice by offering funding opportunities for action/classroom research and scholarly activities.
- Developing mechanisms for sustainable academic programs aimed at supporting the university's transformative agenda.
- Working towards becoming a hub for excellence in higher education leadership, policies, and research in the country, regionally and globally.

ILHE Organizational Chart

Office of Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

- Director of the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education
  - Advisory Board
  - Learning Support Officer
  - Executive Board
  - Administrative Assistant

Graduate Program
- Master in Leadership
- Graduate Students
- Graduate Resources
- Graduate Events
- Emirati Future Leaders

Educational Technology
- Interactive Learning
- Emerging Technologies
- Virtual Faculty Development
- e-Learning

Faculty Development
- Training Courses & Workshops
- Faculty Consultation
- New Faculty Resources & Events
- Learning Communities

Instructional Design
- Curriculum Development
- T & L Assessment
- Research & Innovation in T & L
- Learning Environment

Educational Content Development Specialist

Reports in Numbers

58

Training Workshops

18

Trainers & Speakers

1,005

Participants

126

Training Hours

Professional Development Activities

Professional Development Workshops Delivered

Besides responding to the requests of UoS colleges to fulfill their training needs over the year, and to support faculty and staff members, ILHE worked to build excellence in teaching, learning, management, and well-being strategies through external partnerships and internal provision offered by ILHE.

All workshops are delivered through face-to-face, blended learning, or distance e-learning via virtual platforms.

1

Hybrid learning Hands-On Training

August 23th – 26th, 2021
September 1, 2 & 23, 2021

14 workshops have been delivered in Arabic and English to all faculty members who are involved in hybrid teaching across the main campus and branches. Participants had the opportunity to practice using the new interactive screens during these workshops.

2

Designing Modules for Interactive Learning

October 10, 2021 (En)
October 14, 2021 (Ar)

The workshop has provided tips on how to plan, design, and develop modules for interactive learning. Additionally, participants have explored basic strategies to incorporate interactive learning modules into the HyFlex course.

3

Flipped Learning

November 04, 2021 (En)

The participants have identified how flipping a classroom can be part of a blended course design that increases students' engagement and learning.

4

Dealing with Conflict of Interest

November 14, 2021 (En)
November 18, 2021 (Ar)

This workshop focused on the concept, types, and proper methods of handling potential and actual conflicts of interest in higher education.

5

Fostering Student Engagement and Learning using KAHOOT!

November 21, 2021 (En)
November 23, 2021 (Ar)

This workshop aimed to help faculty to develop and foster the skills to create, edit, and reuse the Kahoot! activities. The participants learned different approaches to gathering participation information, and revaluation of the class activities to strengthen students' learning.

6

Modern Teaching Methodologies (Khorfakkan Campus)

November 29, 2021 (Ar)

The workshop has provided the faculty of Khorfakkan campus with an overview of current thinking related to effective teaching methodologies with a particular emphasis on new strategies for improving teaching and learning in higher education settings and the use of technology in the classroom.

Professional Development Workshops Delivered

7 — **Engaging Leadership (College of Dental Medicine)**

January 11&12, 2022 (En)

During the training, participants identified their leadership styles and values, and explore ways to increase their leadership flexibility in a variety of situations. In addition, they have been introduced to the disciplines of execution.

8 — **The Art of Designing Learning Activities**

February 07, 2022 (En)
February 10, 2022 (Ar)

This workshop is designed to assist faculty in creating learning activities memorably and compellingly drawing on the principles of the psychological process of learning.

9 — **Participation and Engagement tools in Blackboard**

February 09, 2022 (En)
February 09, 2022 (Ar)

This workshop aimed to develop the faculty's understanding of how students are accessing and engaging in activities, either during academic program induction or engagement with the asynchronous activity.

10 — **Critical Thinking & Analysis (College of Graduate Studies)**

February 09, 2022 (En)
March 03, 2022 (Ar)

This workshop focused on helping students to recognize barriers to thinking critically. In addition to understanding and practicing the 5 main skills of critical thinking.

11 — **Analytical Thinking & Innovation (College of Graduate Studies)**

February 10, 2022 (En)
March 02, 2022 (Ar)

This workshop provided participants with the ability to tackle complicated problems by evaluating the information they've gathered and organized so they can detect patterns between datasets that often lead to creative solutions.

12 — **Alternatives to Traditional Assessment**

February 14, 2022 (En)
February 17, 2022 (Ar)

The workshop highlighted the methods to encourage student learning and provide more genuine means for students to demonstrate what they've learned at Bloom's Taxonomy's higher levels.

13 — **Explore Academic Integrity Tools (iThenticate -Turnitin –Safe Assign)**

February 16, 2022 (En)
February 16, 2022 (Ar)

Faculty have been introduced to the most trusted plagiarism checker by the world's top researchers, publishers, and students. Where they trained on how to enter and attach files and take advantage of the tools available in the programs.

Professional Development Workshops Delivered

14

Leadership & Social Influence (College of Graduate Studies)

February 16, 2022 (En)
March 09, 2022 (Ar)

The participants have gained familiarity with a breadth of scientific findings on influence such as framing, reciprocity, social proof, and commitment.

15

Creating a Dynamic Virtual Environment Using Mural

February 21, 2022 (En)

The faculty learned how to use Mural to run effective, action online-oriented classroom sessions. In addition to using Mural to run effective, action online-oriented classroom sessions

16

Unlock Your Creative Potential

February 22, 2022 (En)

The Faculty have been introduced to the science of creative and innovative thinking, as well as the art and skill of thinking in lateral ways that helped them to come up with innovative ideas that are fresh and challenge the status quo.

17

Active Learning and Learning Styles (College of Graduate Studies)

February 23, 2022 (En)

The participants learned about different learning styles and the range of theories for and against their use and understanding of how to identify their preferred learning style, and how to recognize their favored way of learning.

18

Blackboard Assignment Tool and Rubrics

February 28, 2022 (En)
February 28, 2022 (Ar)

The faculty gained knowledge on how to assign assignments in their courses, mark the assignments online and activate the Rubrics for formative grading.

19

Designing Grading Rubrics

March 01, 2022 (En)
March 03, 2022 (Ar)

This workshop helped faculty to provide students with feedback that is clear, directed and focused on ways to improve learning. This in turn is helping in creating consistency in how faculty evaluate learning across students and throughout a class.

20

Using Linkedin Learning to Enhance Professional Development

March 02, 2022 (En)

The faculty have recognized the benefits of using LinkedIn Learning in their Professional Development journey.

Professional Development Workshops Delivered

21 **Designing Mobile Learning Tools using No-Coding Apps Development**

March 21, 2022 (En)

In this 2-hour long project-based training, the faculty learned step-by-step to create a mobile app simply using a Google Sheet together with a web app development tool called Glide.

22 **Building Interactive Course in Blackboard**

March 22, 2022 (En)
March 22, 2022 (Ar)

The Faculty learned how to structure their course attractively to enhance the learning model. They used plugins and interactive course content to enable students to enjoy your lecture.

23 **Career Advising (College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences)**

March 22 & 23, 2022 (Ar)

to provide academic advisors of UoS faculty with the tools and practical skills necessary to help students discover their potential and talents and link them to their career paths.

24 **Story Based Tutorials**

March 23, 2022 (En)

The workshop aimed to enable faculty to use a story-based learning strategy to create effective learning experiences.

25 **Unity VR/AR Basic Training (College of Art and Design**

May 17, 19, 24 & June 14 (En)

The training was requested by FDT to help the faculty/staff to teach students using Unity to create VR/AR content

26 **Interactive Learning Using Google Docs**

May 24, 2022 (En)

The workshop aimed to enable faculty to create online writing activities for all learners on a word document.

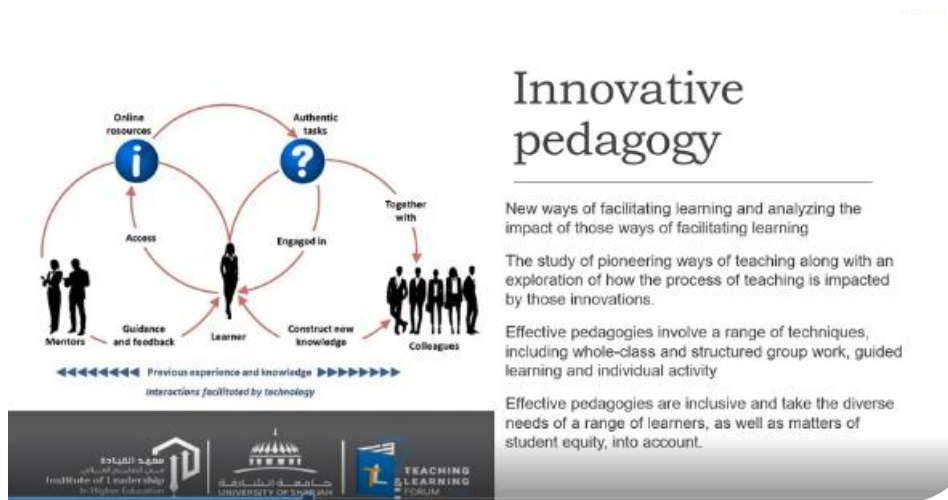**27** **Using Metaphor to Enhance Students' Emotional Stability and Learning**

May 31, 2022 (En)

During the workshop, the faculty explored the place of metaphor as a pedagogical approach to strengthen students' well-being and learning.

3rd Teaching and Learning Forum 2022

The ILHE organized the Teaching and Learning Forum for the third time to provide a platform to share information and experiences on innovative teaching strategies. The forum focused on providing meaningful learning experiences to students and enhancing and equipping students with employability skills while sustaining the university's transformative teaching and learning process. The theme of the forum for this year was "Innovative pedagogies for authentic learning and employability".

The Institute invited all academic staff and those who were involved in enabling and supporting services for teaching and learning at the University of Sharjah (UoS), to give a 30-minute presentation on topics related to the theme.

Overall Workshops' Evaluation

Part 1: Trainers Performance

Legend: Excellent | Good | Average | Below Average

Responding and interacting with participants' questions and concerns

7%
15%
78%
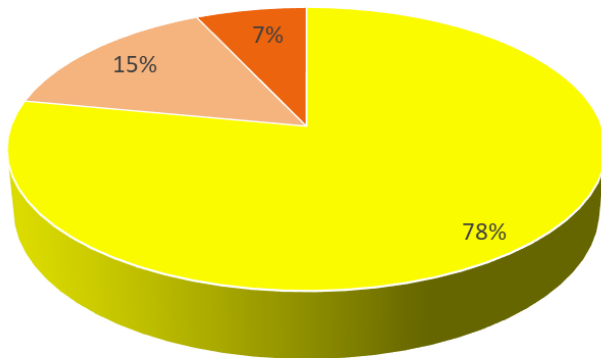
Knowledge of the subject matter explored

8%
10%
82%
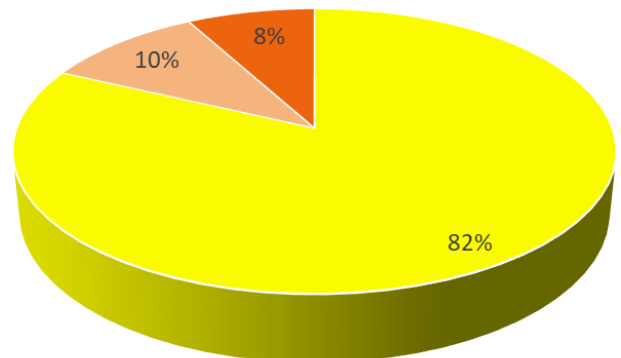
Content effectively communicated and presented

9%
20%
71%
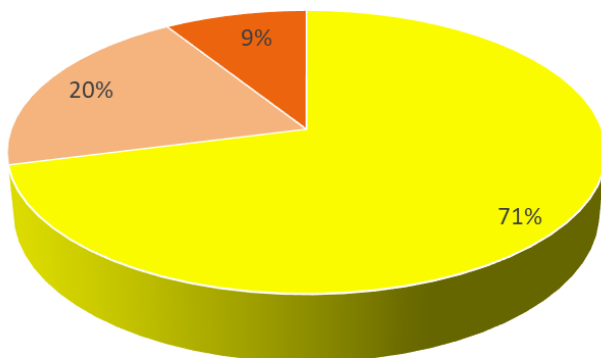
Adequate and effective use of learning aids/tools

18%
12%
70%
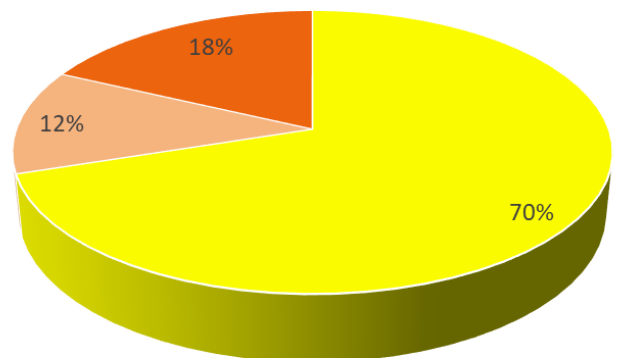
Overall Workshops' Evaluation

Part 2: Workshops Content

Legend: Excellent | Good | Average | Below Average

Topics coherence

- 84%
- 13%
- 3%

Topics coherence

- 84%
- 13%
- 3%
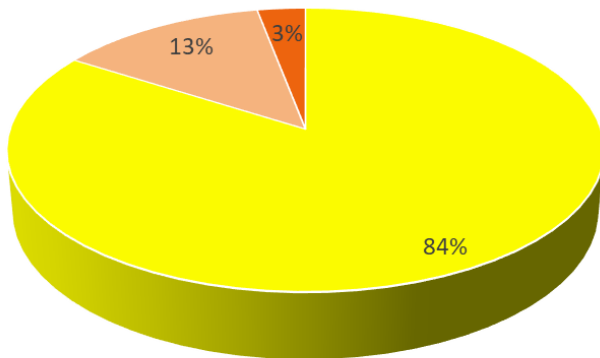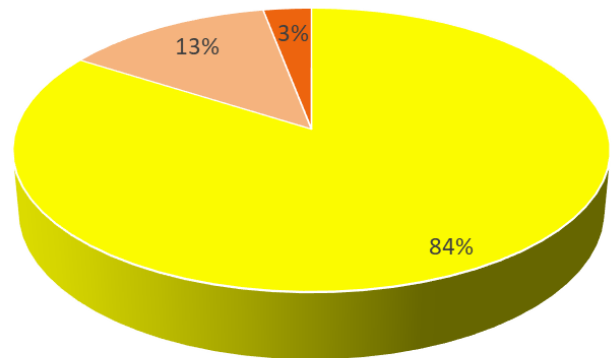
Relevance of content to the nature of participants work

- 87%
- 10%
- 3%
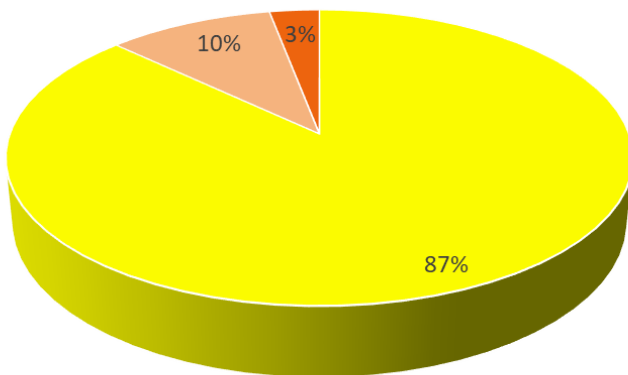
Variety of hands-on activities and exercises

- 62%
- 18%
- 18%
- 2%
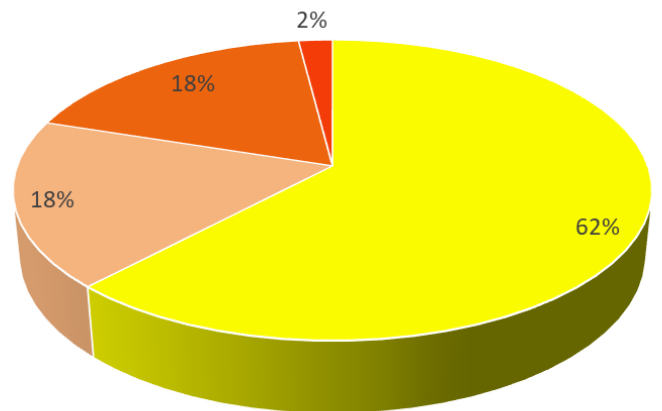
Overall Workshops' Evaluation

Part 3: Workshop Organization   ■ Excellent   ■ Good   ■ Average   ■ Below Average

Program schedule

72%
15%
10%
3%

Clear and well-defined objectives

86%
8%
6%
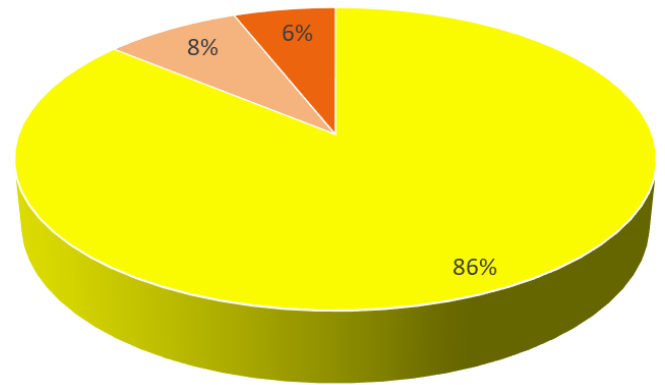
The workshop length

79%
11%
8%
2%
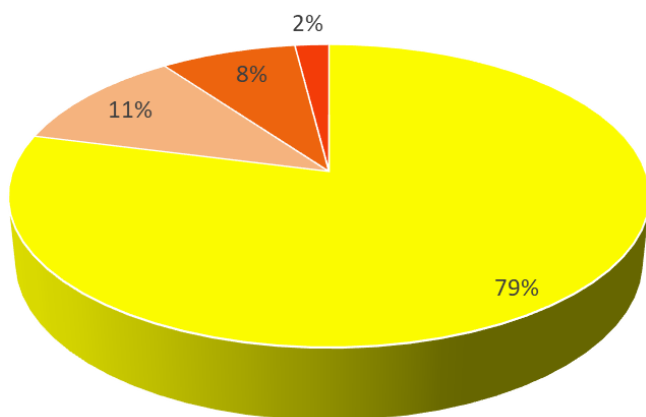
The workshop timing

66%
18%
12%
4%
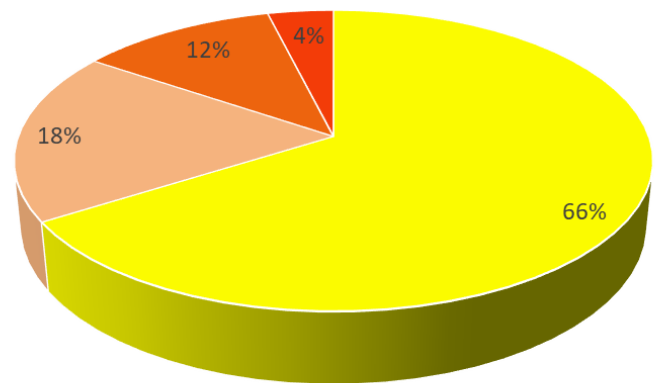
Customized Professional Development Training

Hybrid Classroom Technology Training

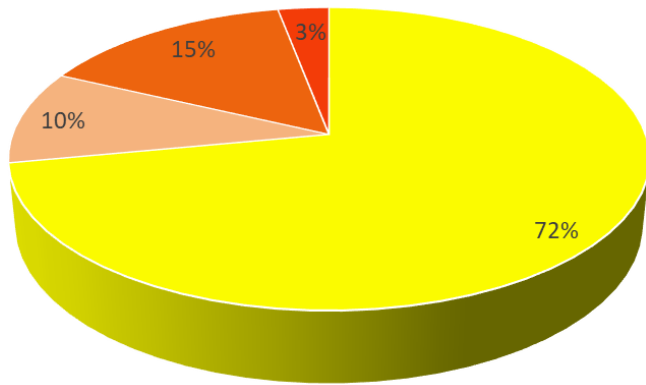The Institute of Leadership in partnership with the IT Department of UoS organized and conducted a hands-on training session on Hybrid Learning, a teaching strategy where traditional methods of instruction are combined with technology to provide positive learning experiences for students. A lot of faculty members had already explored the positive side of using technology to ensure the seamless sharing of knowledge during the COVID-19 lockdown. However, the training session on Hybrid Learning focused on helping the faculty to design engaging classroom experiences for their students and a fulfilling teaching experience for themselves using technology.

The training also outlined the ideal way to set up a hybrid classroom. Quick Reference Guides (QRG) were handed out to the participants at the end of the session. Additionally, video tutorials in English and Arabic on setting up the Hybrid Classroom were created and uploaded on YouTube. The training session was well received by the faculty. Three hundred and twenty fout (324) participants from different departments attended the training program. All participants were given certificates for participation at the end of the session.

Academic Advising Champions - Cohort 2

ILHE exhibits excellence in advising by having an advising mission that aligns with the institute's mission and strategic goals.

This program aimed to design and adapt an advising delivery system and skills that should be responsive to the changing needs of students as determined by ongoing development efforts.

In addition, the program provided participants with tools to build their skills and capabilities to empower faculty in their colleges to become skilled advisors that manifest the professional ethics and virtues of the advising field.

The nominated faculty have been invited to complete a self-assessment survey to provide insights into their knowledge of required competencies, information, and effective academic advising tools.

In partnership with NACADA (The Global Community for Academic Advising), ILHE has delivered this program for 2 cohorts in 2021 and 2022.

Number of Participants:
 • Cohort 1 (2021): 36
 • Cohort 2 (2022): 22

Program Workshops: Academic Advising Champions

1 ## Promoting Excellence in Academic Advising

In this session, we have examined foundational topics related to creating and sustaining learning-centered academic advising programs. Participants learned about the Nine Conditions of Excellence in Academic advising NACADA Core Values, NACADA Core Competencies, and the NACADA Concept of Academic Advising. The distinction between student learning outcomes and process and delivery outcomes has been discussed. Activities included drafting and evaluating academic advising mission statements, creating student learning outcomes, and identifying core competency areas in which to improve.

2 ## New Approaches to Academic Advising through Innovative Technology: Overview of Flipped Advising

This session presented two models used in curricular and instructional design. The two models are Backward by Design and Bloom's Taxonomies. These models should be used to create and demonstrate a Flipped Advising approach, in an LMS, based on intentionality, NACADA Pillars of Advising, and student learning. These models should be used for participants to develop Flipped Advising lesson plans using the University of Sharjah Website.

3 ## Academic Advising and Career Success

Participants learned about advising practices that help to support connections between the majors and careers. A review of data and theories related to career advising practices has been shared. Participants completed activities that they can use with their students to help them engage with their majors and careers.

4 ## Addressing Student Anxiety and Resilience During Times of Crisis

In this session, we explored what are the core components of student success at the University of Sharjah and how students are supported through emerging challenges as they navigate the post-pandemic landscape of higher education. We discussed ways to empower students and enhance their resilience by taking a holistic approach to student well-being. We explored the role advisors can play in identifying mental health issues and reducing barriers to seeking mental health services while maintaining good boundaries within their areas of expertise. Participants had an opportunity to learn communication strategies to facilitate emotional well-being.

Workshops for KhorFakkan Campus

The faculty members of the KhorFakkan campus were introduced to three customized training sessions titled, "Design Learning Activities". The workshop was designed with the perspective that despite differences in learners' orientations, needs, and backgrounds, learning activities should provide experiences that enable them to engage, practice, and receive customized feedback targeted at specific learning outcomes. Furthermore, the participants understood the psychological process of learning and helped to design meaningful learning experiences and aim to foster the achievement of learning outcomes.

Leadership workshop for the University Dental Hospital

Due to incessant societal changes, today's leaders face unprecedented challenges. It has become imperative to upgrade oneself to be prepared to lead people already armed with information and expertise. Technology and the attitudes of people evolve with time. To cater to the challenging times, new models of leadership are emerging as a matter of necessity.

A two-day workshop was conducted by ILHE for the faculty members of the University Dental Hospital. One hundred and fourteen (114) members participated in the workshop. The workshop was aimed to provide an opportunity for members of the University Dental College to discuss the core skills and techniques which are inevitable to effective leadership and management.

The workshop helped the participants identify their leadership styles and values. It also helped them explore ways to increase their leadership flexibility in a variety of situations. The participants were given an opportunity to practice the skills that foster adaptive and resilient teams, resulting in a better workplace environment. The workshop also helped the participants understand the complex issues faced by today's leaders. Discussions revolved around the organization's critical difference-making goals, which clarified the organization's direction for the participants.
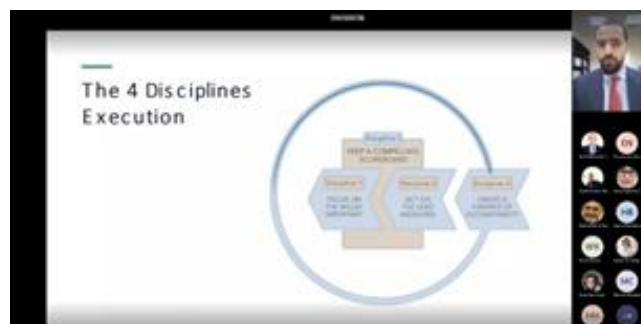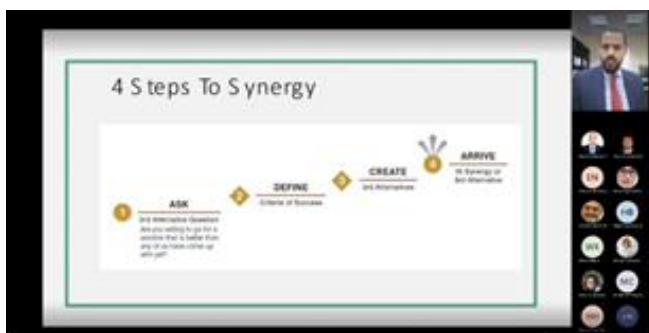
Employability workshops for the College of Graduate Studies

Keeping a finger on the pulse of the economy, and recognizing the ever-changing requirements of the labor market, ILHE conceptualized a series of interactive online workshops on the much-needed employability skills needed in the labor market. The faculty members of the graduate college identified the opportunity for the Institute to prepare post-graduating students with the top skills needed in the coming years. The Institute then initiated these sessions which include but are not limited to problem-solving, self-management, and working with people.

The College of Graduate Studies participants actively engaged in online training courses on analytical thinking and innovation, critical thinking, and analysis. The participants steered through the process of reasoning and problem-solving to enhance their ability and tackle complicated issues by evaluating the information they collected and organized. The objective of the course was designed to fine-tune analytical thinking and help determine patterns between datasets that often lead to creative solutions. On the other hand, decision-making, planning, and strategizing were also critical elements of attention.
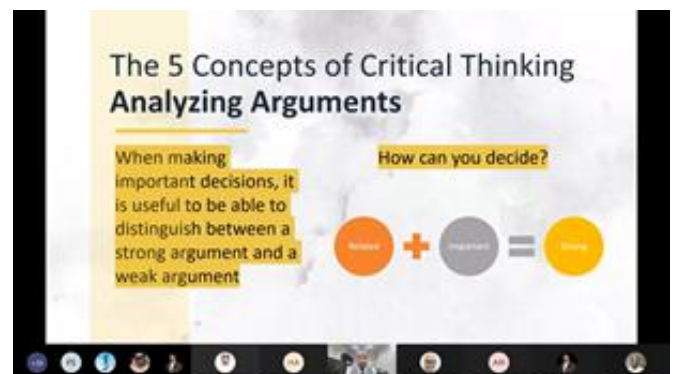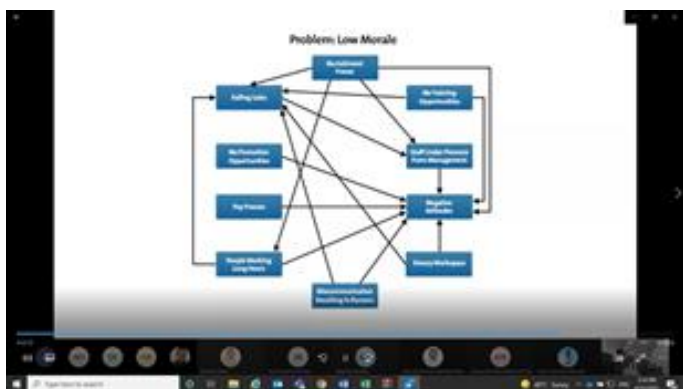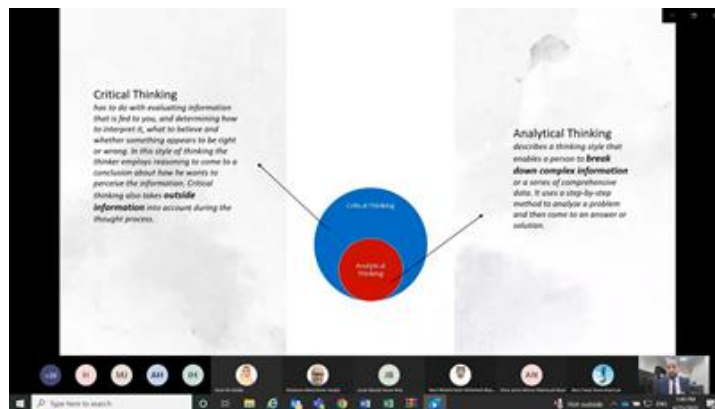
Career Advising for UoS Academic Advisors

ILHE in collaboration with the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences has organized and delivered the "Career Advising" workshop to provide academic advisors of UoS faculty with the tools and practical skills necessary to help students discover their potential and talents and link them to their career paths, in addition to helping them understand the labor market and how to develop the skills that will increase the chances of achieving their career goals by developing the skills of academic advisors in 3 main areas:

• Discover Talents
• Understand Labor Market
• Develop Professional Skills
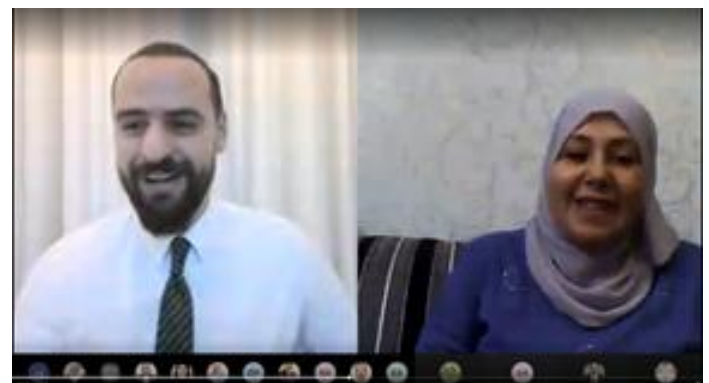
eLearning Solutions

Incorporating eLearning Technology in the Classroom

ILHE took a leap forward in providing members of the faculty consultation in re-designing courses. Faculty from the College of Fine Arts and Design (CFAD) and the English Department have worked hand-in-hand with ILHE to produce pre-recorded video lectures and revise course syllabi to improve learning outcomes.

ILHE has conducted several pieces of training to support this incorporation of educational technology. This training encourages the faculty to connect with the team of Instructional designers and educational technologists and discuss various EdTech tools and re-designing courses to cater to the changing requirements of the 'New Normal.

Faculty pilot projects included the development of 4 courses into an online course by incorporating best practices into eLearning technology, and enhancing the learning environment, thus aligning with the university strategy.

Redesigning Introduction to Lighting Design course for CFAD

Dr. Nadia Al Badri, Lecturer, College of Fine Arts and Design (CFAD), along with the instructional design specialists from ILHE, reviewed and modified the course syllabus, outcomes, and tasks on the Lighting Design for Interior Design course. The revamped course included five chapters. The course is hosted on Blackboard and the outcome of this initiative will be monitored to gauge student motivation to learn.

PoC Development for English Language and Literature Department of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

As social distancing was a strictly followed norm during the COVID-19 pandemic, online education became a seemingly ubiquitous part of our world. As the classrooms moved from the campus to the digital space, imparting of learning changed dramatically. To keep pace with the changing teaching and learning needs of the new normal, the faculty of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) collaborated with the ILHE to revamp the existing course and make it more interactive. The current e-book which is used is a customized version of "New Worlds". McGraw Hill customized the book including only the chapters which are covered as a part of the syllabus predetermined by UoS.

ILHE has initiated the collaboration with the English Language and Literature Department of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences to revamp four courses from e-books to digitized interactive and learner-centric courses.

A Proof of Concept (PoC) was developed using Articulate Rise in one chapter – "Determining the Meaning of an Unfamiliar Word through Context". The course included a theoretical explanation followed by guided practice and a quiz. The PoC is currently under review with the stakeholders from the English Language and Literature department.
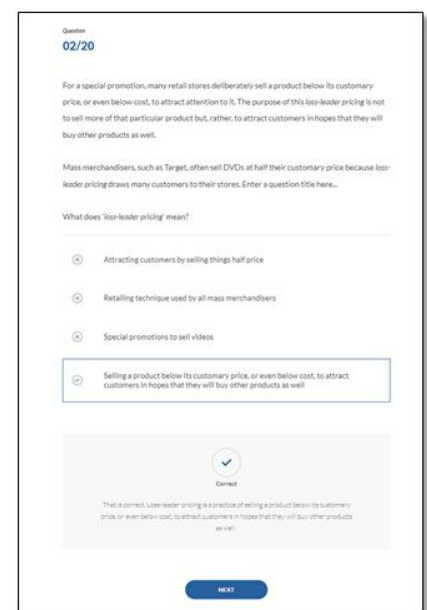
Community Service

Academic Integrity for All

As part of the community services goal, the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education (ILHE) has created an Academic Integrity course that is accessible to the public. This project was in line with one of the UoS Strategic Goals, which is to provide continuing education to the community at large. The course content and design were based on courses made for UoS students with the necessary aesthetic changes to make it more appealing to the public. The course contains three (3) main learning modules and one (1) test. To complete the course, the users must go through all three learning modules and get the minimum passing percentage on the test. The users who successfully complete the course will be given a certificate of completion. Quality testing of the course is underway. Once the testing is completed and the testing team assures seamless access, it will be available for public access.
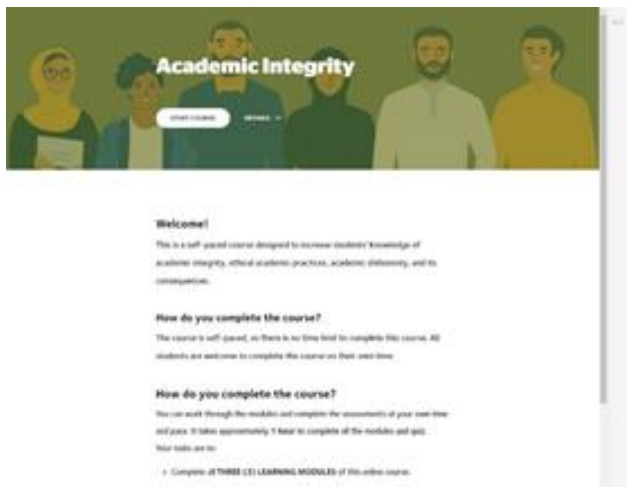
Designing and Developing an Interactive Anti-Verbal Bullying eLearning Course

As per the direction of the UAE Government and to support the efforts of the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education (ILHE) has designed and developed an online self-paced e-learning course to create awareness of bullying and to focus on the well-being of students at UoS. The university aims to create a supportive and sustainable environment on campus. The content focused on the topic of identifying, preventing, and treatment of bullying. The learning content is followed by a quiz. The course also details the process of reporting bullying.

The course is hosted on the UoS BlackBoard. ILHE collaborated with the College of Fine Arts and Design to create custom graphics for the course. The users who complete the course will receive a certificate of completion.
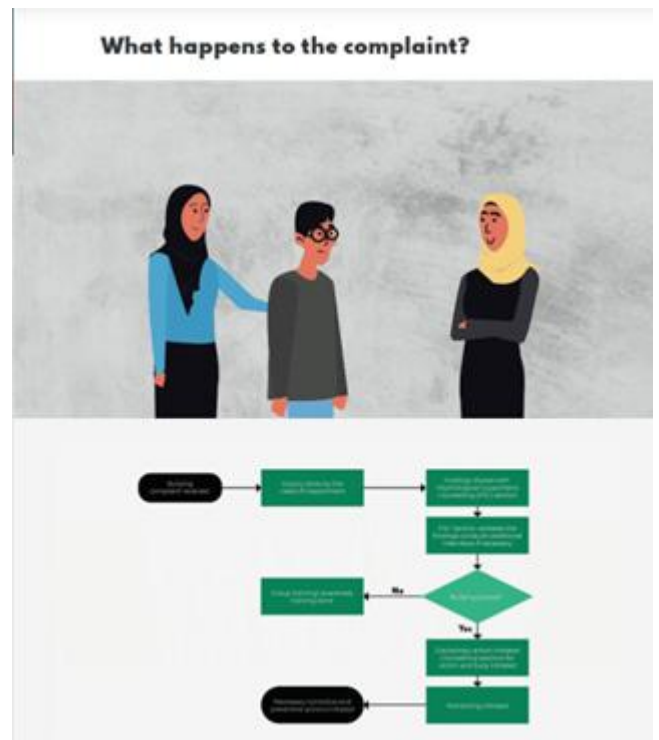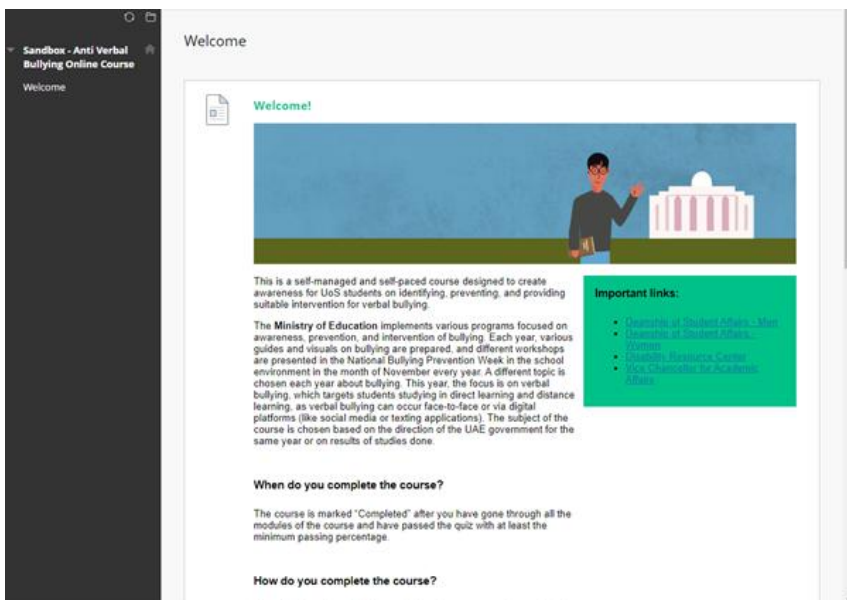
Digital Literacy Leadership Forum 2022

ILHE participated in an online digital literacy forum, with the theme of "Integrating Emerging Technologies in Education" held on June 1-2,2022. The Forum was hosted by Higher Colleges of Technology's Faculty of Applied Media, in collaboration with a global computer software company, Adobe supported by Grapheast Elite Education Distribution Partner in the MENA region to connect with a host of thought leaders, faculty, and students who have fostered creative change in the field of applied media, whereby initiatives of creative development are capable of adoption by academia and drive change.

ILHE was represented by Ilish Asmin, an Educational Technologist from ILHE who enticed the audience with a sneak peek into the work done within ILHE and a snapshot of some screens of the courses designed in ILHE.

The aim of the program was to:
- Engage faculty and administrative leaders by discussing and presenting their research work and projects in digital technology with industry experts.
- Unite academic initiatives and educational experiences, and enhance the media learning environment and digital literacy in higher education and its development.

Unity's Train-the-Trainer Program

Unity is a cross-platform game engine developed by Unity Technologies, which is primarily used to develop video games, simulations (AR/VR/MR), consoles, and mobile devices. Anyone with skills in the Unity software is highly valued right now in the industry arena, where video games and simulations (AR/VR/MR) are employed in unprecedented growth.

Ilish Asmin, the educational technologist from the ILHE team, attended Unity's Train-the-trainer (UTTT) program. The program was an initiative of the UAE Government to establish the UAE as one of the leading hubs of gaming. Participants had to take a professional examination to receive the certificate. Ilish was part of the first cohort to complete all 3 Phases of the program and was certified as a Unity Certified Associate (UCA) after completing one of the professional exams. Other certifications of the training program included Unity Professional Certificate – Unity Certified Associate (UCA), Unity Certified Professional (UCP), and Unity Certified Instructor (UCI). There were no training fees levied for the program. The program was open to all faculty/staff members of universities in the UAE. Participants included members from NYU, HCT, ADU, AUS, and local UAE-based startup gaming companies.

ILHE conducted a knowledge-sharing session after Ilish got certified by Unity. ILHE has conducted 4 Unity training sessions on May and June for faculty members from the Fashion Design and Textiles (FDT) Department at the College of Art and Design (CFAD). The training was requested by FDT to help the faculty/staff to teach students using Unity to create VR/AR content. The demand for these skills in the fashion industry is on the rise. The training was successful and 3 of the faculty/staff have already applied to join the upcoming cohort for the UTTT program.

Intellectual Discussions

Visit from the University of Pennsylvania delegates

A delegation from the University of Pennsylvania and researchers from prominent American institutions visited the University of Sharjah on Jun 28, 2022. The visit was organized by the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education. The delegation was welcomed by Prof. Hamid M.K. Al Naimiy, Chancellor, the University of Sharjah along with the Deans and directors of research centers and administration.

The visit of the delegation was organized by ILHE to pursue collaborative research between the University of Sharjah and prominent educational institutions in the USA and support UAE's efforts to become a leading education hub by fostering knowledge, research, creativity, and innovation. Areas of potential cooperation were also explored with the delegation.

The delegation extensively discussed strategies of collaboration in the fields of scientific research, effective ways to enhance students' experiences and practical training.

Visit of Founder and CEO of DWorld VR

ILHE organized a meeting with Ms. Manila Du Giovanni, the founder, and CEO of DWorld and the youngest technopreneur in the Principality of Monaco featured in the list "Forbes 30 Under 30". Her company is the first VR platform for real, interconnected virtual experiences from the Principality of Monaco within the Metaverse.

We discussed how UoS can prepare for the Metaverse area by finding the best ways to enhance the learning experience for students by utilizing Metaverse tools and technology.

New & Upcoming Programs & Initiatives

Master of Leadership in Higher Education

The program was accredited and approved by the Ministry of Education and the Commission for Academic Accreditation in November 2021. It is the first of its kind in the region as it targets higher education professionals seeking knowledge and skills to function effectively in leadership roles.

The program was launched in the Spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year. Dr. Semiyu Aderibigbe, an Assistant Professor in ILHE, was appointed the Program Coordinator.

Over sixty people applied for the program, and eight were considered qualified and accepted. Of the eight pioneering students, six are female, and two are male. Four of them are academic staff, while the other four students are administrative staff.

The ILHE team will continue to intensify efforts to strengthen the program's feasibility through campaigns and advertisements. With the support of the top management, including the Chancellor and VCAA, the program's brochure will also be shared with sister institutions across the country and the region.

Teaching Excellence and Innovation Grants

University of Sharjah (UoS) recognizes the need for an ongoing commitment to teaching and learning transformation. The University provides Teaching Excellence and innovation grants to support the faculty who go beyond the call of duty to strengthen this endeavor. Through the office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA), the endeavor is led and coordinated by the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education (ILHE). The grant amount is Ten Thousand Dirham (AED 10,000) for each grant.

The two grants that are available for the faculty of UoS:

Chancellor's Teaching Excellence and Innovation Grant (TEIG): The purpose of this grant is to support the faculty in the development, implementation, critical examination, and dissemination of novel pedagogical strategies, and cutting-edge technology-aided assessments which help foster effective teaching and learning experiences.

Integration of Research into Undergraduate Education Grant (IRUEG): The purpose of this grant is to support the faculty in promoting undergraduate research and scholarly activities to create active learning environments that help students develop inquiry and critical thinking skills within the classroom.

Once the grant amount is disbursed the research and development activities should be completed within a span of two years. ILHE will support the faculty members by providing technical support in the implementation of the novel strategies identified during the research program. This may include, but is not limited to, course redesigning, digitizing classroom courses, and modifying the pedagogy of the course.

Initiating Faculty Peer Observation of Teaching

This program offers the opportunity for faculty members to engage in mutually beneficial professional engagement, which is not for assessment but for improvement in professional practices.

The sole purpose of Peer Observation of Teaching (PoT) is to promote learning about teaching, resulting in positive transformation in the teaching and learning process. It could be facilitated using the evaluation, developmental, or review models.

To achieve the goals of the program, ILHE will implement a 4-step Peer Observation Cycle:
Stage 1: A pre-observation conference.
Stage 2: Classroom (Face-to-Face or Online) observation.
Stage 3: Observation analysis and strategy session.
Stage 4: A post-observation conference.

The Second Cohort of the Emirate Future Leadership Program

The Emirati Future Leadership Initiative is a customized six-month leadership training program for Emirati students to equip them with essential skills and knowledge to build a foundation to motivate, empower, and transform themselves and others by making a difference in the world.

This is a new age and a highly engaging Development Program intended to develop & sharpen vital professional characteristics and behaviors to increase leadership capacity for today and tomorrow. We accelerate professional development by focusing on practice rather than heavy content & theory so participants can quickly go and start applying what they have learned.

ILHE has graduated the first cohort in 2021 and running the second cohort of the program with 16 students that will be completed and graduated by December 2022.

Program Workshops: Emirati Future Leadership

1 The New Beginning

14 workshops have been delivered in Arabic and English to all faculty members who are involved in hybrid teaching across the main campus and branches. Participants had the opportunity to practice using the new interactive screens during these workshops.

2 Getting to Know Yourself

In this workshop, students discovered some powerful techniques that can dramatically change how they feel about themselves, and how they approach the world to get the things that they want.

3 Followership Skills

In this workshop, students learned how to build mutual trust with leaders by practicing proven communication techniques that help followers contribute to their leaders and team.

4 The Master of Communication

The goal of this workshop is to help students to understand the impact their communication skills have on other people. They also explored how improving these skills can make it easier for them to get along in the workplace, and in life.

5 Strategic Thinking & Planning

This workshop took the students right through the strategic thinking and planning process with helpful tools, techniques, and ideas at every stage. To be strategic is to be well prepared ahead of time for different prospects.

6 The Art of Achievement

This workshop introduced project and time management tools and techniques that allow students to manage their time more effectively and feel more in control and acheive their projects.

7 Critical Thinking & Innovation

This workshop focused on helping students to recognize barriers to thinking critically. In addition to understanding and practicing the 5 main skills of critical thinking.

8 Presentation Skills

This workshop helped students to communicate their message with authority and influence when presenting over both online and in-person meetings and presentations.

9 Virtual Global Leadership Program (U-LEAD)

In partnership with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, participants have attended 7-days of training along with students from all over the world to explore different cultures and learn leadership concepts from different perspectives.

Launch of the ILHE interactive website

With the institute growing, upgrading the website was inevitable. The ILHE team along with the IT Website development team, took on this challenge to rebuild all the pages of the website, making sure to add aesthetically pleasing and interactive elements that allowed faculty to be updated with ILHE training, interact with members of the institute, or requesting a personalized training. In addition, information on new additions like the Master's in Educational Leadership program which targets individuals working in the higher education sector is detailed on the website. The success of various programs like the Emirati Future Leadership initiative is also showcased. A section allowing faculty members to skim through the hyflex learning section is also a part of the upgraded website.

New & Planned Hiring

A. New Hiring

ILHE has hired Prof. William C. Frick for the master's program, and he joined the team in the Fall Semester.

Specialization: Educational Administration,
Curriculum & Supervision

He holds a joint appointment as a professor with the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and the Institute of Leadership in Higher Education at the University of Sharjah. A doctoral graduate of The Pennsylvania State University, his research interests include the philosophy of administrative leadership, public policy and agency reform initiatives, and broader cultural and world affairs studies. He serves in multiple officers and representative roles for international professional associations and scholarly outreach activities and contributes to editorial oversight for several peer-reviewed academic journals. Possesses significant experience and substantial research activity focused on the schooling sector, and active leadership in higher education, in particular, his focus at the University of Sharjah is to develop and expand the work of the ILHE while substantively contributing to the scholarly work of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

B. Planned Hiring

ILHE is working on hiring 4 new candidates;

1. Faculty member for the master's program.
2. Instructional Designer (replacement).
3. Educational Technologist.
4. Educational Content Development Specialist.
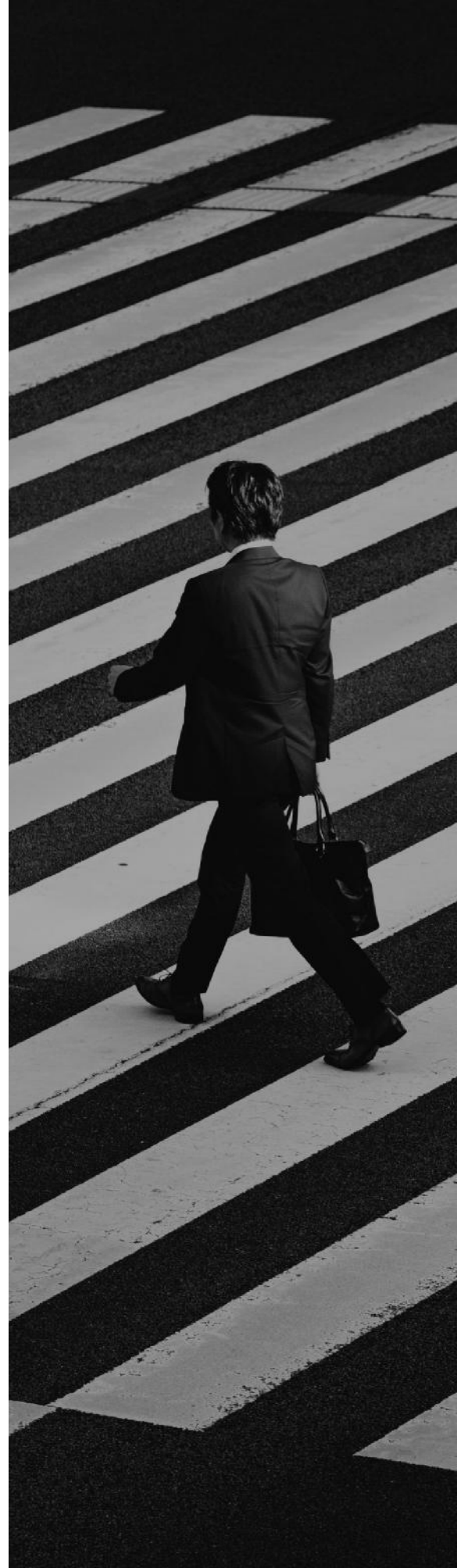
ILHE Requirements for Expansion

Type	Description	Justification	Quantity
Offices	Offices for ILHE staff including furniture	These offices are needed for faculty and staff of ILHE to be able to discharge their duties effectively.	9
MLHE	Offices for master program	Needed for 3 new faculty members	3
Meeting Room	A 12 seater meeting room including furniture	Needed for staff and board meetings	1
Training Rooms	Large workshop rooms (60 seats) including furniture and modern technology	Needed for professional development workshops for staff, faculty, and graduate students	2
Active Learning Room 1	Large active learning room (30 Seats) including furniture and active learning technology	With active learning technology and furniture, the room will be used for training and also to deliver specialized active -based curriculum	1
Active Learning Room 2	Workstations including furniture and active learning technology (VR training)	Needed for faculty and staff to practice and also work with trainers on a one to one basis and small groups	2
Future Learning Space	Virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR)	Faculty from various colleges can engage and collaborate to create new innovative teaching and learning tools	1
Inspirational Room	Inspirational Room to support the Emirati Future Leadership Initiative	Learning through an inspirational room with artifacts from distinguished Emirati leaders	1
Open lounge with sofas and tables	Open lounge where faculty and staff can sit, relax and exchange ideas	Provides faculty with the welcoming feeling and the opportunities to have coffee meetings with colleagues and also relax when they are not engaged	1