# Proposal

## TITLE: Exploring University teachers’ design practice: Support resources for guiding course development

Researchers: Natasha Boškić, Stuart Sepp

1. Summary of Project (100 words)

The purpose of this project is to explore university teachers’ learning design processes through a descriptive study highlighting their processes in developing new and revising existing online courses in a higher education setting. A primary focus is to explore the sources of support teachers engage with (e.g., workshops, online tutorials, peer expertise), along with the perceptions more novel approaches such as guided guided design processes supported by an instructional designer or learning designer through a qualitative semi-structured interview or online survey.

1. Summary of research Proposal

**Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to explore university teachers’ learning design processes, including available institutional, departmental, technology and peer supports they engage with, along with perception of these supports regarding their value and application.

**Hypothesis**

This is a qualitative descriptive study, employing interviews to determine common themes in learning design practice amongst faculty, therefore no Hypothesis is listed.

**Justification**

Learning Design refers to how teachers document, frame, develop, store, share and reuse pedagogical ideas. One aspect of this work is providing guidance and recommendations to teachers and how this guidance affects practice. Previous work exploring university teachers’ design processes have noted that “Few studies have specifically investigated teachers’ design practices—that is, how they go about designing learning experiences for their students.” (Bennett, Agostinho, & Locker, 2016, p.126). Given that university instructors have the freedom to design learning experiences as they wish (Bennett et al. 2011; Postareff and Lindblom-Yla ̈nne 2008; Stark 2000) it is important to explore teachers’ approach to design within the framework of existing supports and other guidance mechanisms available. This study will investigate university teachers’ design processes, specifically the supports they engage with and their perceptions of these supports.

**Objectives**

1. Expand understanding of how university teachers go about revising or developing a new online course.
2. Determine the available resources and supports that are perceived as valuable in the course development process.
3. Identify perceived gaps in resources and support that university teachers deem valuable.
4. Explore the perceptions of a guided course design processes leveraging the support of learning / instructional designers
5. Determine the perceived value of learning design visualizations for university teachers engaging in course design work.

**Research questions**

1. How do university teachers within the Faculty of Education at UBC go about course design work?
2. What resources to university teachers draw upon as supports in course development work?
3. What are university teachers’ perceptions of a guided learning design process?
4. What are university teachers’ perceptions of learning design visualizations intended to aid their own design process?

**Population**

Study population consists of university teachers employed by higher education institutions. These university teachers may be of any academic rank or employment classification, any age, gender or ethnicity.

**Inclusion Criteria**

Targeted inclusion criteria will focus on university teachers (e.g., sessional teachers and faculty members) in a University setting engaged in online course development.

**Exclusion Criteria**

N/A

**Recruitment**

Primary researcher will directly engage with potential participants on UBC campus through in person contact, phone or email. Potential participants based at other Canadian institutions will be recruited through professional online social networks such as LinkedIn or Twitter, following this, phone conversation or email contact will follow.

**Methods/Procedures**

Teachers who have decided to participate in the study will have the choice of engaging in an online survey, or in a semi-structured interview. Interviews will be conducted by the Primary researcher, Stuart Sepp, in the ETS office at UBC Vancouver, or Online, with field notes taken and with the audio-recorded for later transcription and analysis.

* For an Online interview, a UBC-hosted instance of Zoom will be used. While Zoom servers are located outside of Canada, any recordings made will be stored and encrypted on UBC-owned devices and not stored in the cloud. Additionally, Zoom user names and usage data are stored outside of Canada, so if privacy is a concern, please use a pseudonym, and turn off your camera as it is not required for the interview.
* The survey option will use a UBC-hosted instance of Qualtrics, where data will be securely stored on servers located in Canada.

Notes and recordings will be securely stored on an encrypted pen drive and locked in an office at ETS.

All notes, audio recordings, transcripts and survey responses will be qualitatively analyzed through nVivo software to identify themes and trends focusing on challenges, opportunities and existing support mechanisms in place for teachers engaged in their design work.

**Stat analysis**

Qualitative discourse analysis will be used to code interview transcripts to identify themes and create a code hierarchy for further analysis informed by previous research.

**References**

Bennett, S., Thomas, L., Agostinho, S., Lockyer, L., Jones, J., & Harper, B. (2011). Understanding the design context for Australian university teachers: Implications for the future of learning design. Learning, Media and Technology, 36(2), 151–167.

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Postareff, L., & Lindblom-Yla ̈nne, S. (2008). Variation in teachers’ descriptions of teaching: Broadening the understanding of teaching in higher education. Learning and Instruction, 18(2), 109–120. doi:10.1016/j.learninstruc.2007.01.008.

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