

Developing CE 101: Everything you wish you'd known when you started

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Background

In the CAUCE membership survey of summer 2009 a question was asked about what new services members might like. Four new services were requested by more than 50% of the respondents, and one of those was a “Continuing Education 101” course (Carter & Taylor-O’Reilly, 2009). The CAUCE Executive discussed this possibility at meetings in December and January, noting that the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) planned to develop an orientation to universities course.

Bob Cram, Judith Potter and Betty MacDonald agreed to take the lead in getting something started by preparing a draft course outline for discussion at the February 2010 Deans and Directors meeting. This outline was drafted assuming that the audience would be people who are new to university continuing education. In drafting it, we took note of the fact that Anne Percival’s *Practising Theory* (1991), was written as a guide for those new to university continuing education in Canada. Although it is now out of date, it is still a useful resource.

It is a sign of the continuing relevance of Percival’s book that it became a major influence on the Janice Landry’s work on her doctoral dissertation (Landry, 2009), in which she examined the lived experiences of leaders of Canadian university continuing education units. Landry identified a “practical listing of 56 invariant constituents, or horizons of the experience, [that] can be used by university continuing education units as an evolving checklist and reflective tool for current and future administrators and leaders in continuing education. (185)” These 56 invariant constituents were then distilled into six themes that captured the essence of experiences of those who are leaders in university continuing education.

As we became aware of Landry's work, we invited her to join the small group that was beginning to work on some kind of orientation for university continuing educators in Canada.

Purpose of CAUCE Conference Session, 2010

In the CAUCE conference session in Fredericton in June 2010, we want to explore with conference participants what sorts of knowledge are most needed for those entering the field of University Continuing Education (UCE) and how best to help newcomers acquire that knowledge. More specifically, our objectives will be to:

- gain a fuller understanding of the educational needs of those new to the university continuing education field as part of the development of a new course for those entering or continuing in our field,
- gain a fuller understanding of the continuing education needs of those who have worked in university continuing education for some time, and
- clarify what delivery methods would best suit a national audience for a University CE 101 course.

We will treat our session as a roundtable discussion to determine if some of our preliminary ideas about course content would meet the needs we have identified.

Possible Course Content

1. University operations and governance
2. Common programming of CE units
 - a. Credit and its delivery modes (summer, evening, weekend, distance)
 - b. Certificate programs and the issue of laddering for credit
 - c. Non-credit and its various types (business, computers, languages, arts, liberal studies, education, ESL, etc.) and modes (workshops, conferences, evenings, contract training, etc.)
 - d. Importance of audience: aboriginal, international, children, adults
 - e. Distance education
3. Common features of university continuing education units
 - a. Centralized units, reporting lines and governance structures
 - b. Organizational patterns and linkage to program types
 - i. By type of delivery: credit, non-credit, distance education

- ii. By discipline
 - c. Staffing of university continuing education
 - i. Leadership roles – deans and directors
 - ii. Academic roles – faculty within CE units
 - iii. Programming roles – program directors, managers, coordinators
 - iv. Marketing roles – directors, managers, designers, web programmers, ESL recruiters
 - v. Specialist roles – finance, instructional design, information technology, ESL teachers/specialists
 - vi. Support staff – program assistants, administrative assistants, registration staff
 - d. Financial models
 - i. Cost-recovery and its variations
 - ii. Using cross-subsidization
 - iii. Effect on programming decisions
 - e. Critical centralized functions within CE units
 - i. Marketing
 - ii. Registration
 - iii. Finance
 - iv. IT support
 - v. Instructional design and distance education (in some CE units)
- 4. Six essential themes of leadership in university continuing education (Landry, 2009).
 - a. Responsibility as functional leaders for the ongoing business of university continuing education and responsibility to the learners and the larger community we serve.
 - b. Balancing the needs of learners, partners and the university and the demands of time, structure and constraints in personal and professional lives.

- c. Connectedness to a deeper level of relationships that involve building, strengthening and valuing the relationships within our universities and units and with our learners and communities.
 - d. Impact makes us aware of our mission and our power and capacity to change lives.
 - e. Voice helps us to include, hear and understand those who are marginalized and to use our own voices to address the political nature of our practice and bring balance to power relationships.
 - f. Passion speaks to how strongly we feel about our role, our colleagues, our staff, our learners, and our desire to be caring and courageous.
5. Brief history of university continuing education in Canada
- a. A huge topic so just touch on major periods and trends with references to other sources for more detailed discussions
 - b. More in-depth treatment of recent history (e.g. dissolution of academic CE units; emergence of distance and online learning, ESL, seniors programs; greater cost-recovery pressure)
 - c. Include something on the debate about purpose (social justice model vs business model)
6. Overview of organizations relevant to university continuing education
- a. UCEA, ACHE, LERN, CNIE, Languages Canada, AUCC, ACCC, CAUBO, etc.
 - b. More in-depth discussion of CAUCE, including how to best leverage the services and networks to develop their career and become highly productive contributors
7. University mandate and culture vs CE mandate and culture
- a. Disciplinary vs cross-disciplinary
 - b. Expense driven vs revenue driven
 - c. Faculty needs vs community needs
 - d. Ivory tower vs social justice
 - e. Full-time students vs part-time students
 - f. On-campus/daytime vs off-campus/evening
 - g. Research output vs program output

8. The discipline of adult education and its relationship to university continuing education (keep this very brief with references to other sources and courses offered by CAUCE member institutions)
 - a. Adult education as a movement, discipline and profession
 - b. Program planning as a continuing education professional skill
 - i. Intersection of program planning and instructional design: objectives, instruction plans, learning materials, evaluation plans
 - c. Touch upon each of the main elements of program planning, but no more than a paragraph or so on each
 - i. Needs assessment
 - ii. Budgeting
 - iii. Marketing
 - iv. Logistics, facilities, food, etc.
 - v. Development of learning materials
 - vi. Facilitating learning and transference of learning
 - vii. Assessment, evaluation, review and revision
9. Issues and Challenges
 - a. Collegiality and slow decision-making
 - b. Using influence rather than power
 - c. Incentives for collaboration
 - d. Marginalization of CE within the academy
 - e. Competition from business schools
 - f. Professional continuing education (medicine, nursing, etc.)
 - g. Overcoming the “silo” tendency within CE units
 - h. What distinguishes university continuing educators from other providers?
 - i. Centralization vs decentralization
10. Thoughts on the future of university CE
 - a. Effect of declining undergraduate enrolments
 - b. What does it mean as online learning becomes mainstream?
 - c. Retiring baby boomers

- d. The baby boom echo
- e. Role in expanding opportunities for aboriginal people

References

- Carter, L. & Taylor-O'Reilly, T. (2009). CAUCE institutional members' survey: A snapshot. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, 35(2), 29-42.
- Landry, J. (2009). *The lived experience of university continuing education administrative leaders: A phenomenological perspective*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB.
- Percival, A. (2001). *Practising theory: A guide to becoming an effective adult education programmer*. Saskatoon, SK: University Extension Press.