

CAEP Innovation Human-Centered Design
Course
Summer 2018

Background

WestEd, the American Institutes of Research (AIR), and +Acumen collaborated to offer Human Centered Design (HCD) Training to the 71 Adult Education consortia in California. The HCD training is a 9-week online course with virtual coaching that includes training on design thinking, customer engagement and empathic communication, and rapid prototyping in the design and improvement of service delivery. CAEP consortia who participated identified training teams that were to represent the diverse viewpoints of K12 adult, community college, and other stakeholders in their local consortia process. The training covered 5 lessons over 9 weeks including individual instruction, team activities, and virtual coaching. Participants also had access to a separate online community for only CAEP participants. +Acumen offers the HCD course to thousands of participants around the world three times a year.

Interest in the training was strong for the May cohort, with over 60 people participating in the first information webinar and 20 consortia indicating an interest in doing the training. Nine consortia completed the initial phases of registration, of whom seven participated in the training. Of the seven teams, five finished the course which included the uploading of their final assignments and work products. The two teams which had not finished by the end of the course, indicated they intended to continue to meet and work on their projects after the course ended.

Human-Centered Design Course

HCD encourages collaborative and creative solutions to real world problems centered on the needs of our customers. In addition to the completion of the 5 lessons in the course, teams were expected to meet in person and develop solutions for up to two problems related to the work of their consortium in CAEP. The teams come up with their own names, meeting schedules, and are asked to submit the assignments through an online platform at their own pace. There is a suggested schedule so that the teams can meet the deadline and submit within the 9 weeks that the course is available.

The course teaches an iterative process that aims to ensure that the focus of the services reach the students or clients that they serve. Some teams found the exercise useful in addressing current issues or to use for future issues that their consortia face.

“I found the readings, worksheets, exercises, and tools extremely useful in addressing other issues at the college. In fact, two of the team members are already planning to use this process to address an issue at the college and seek a more viable solution.” Sofia Gelpi

At the end of the course, each participant that uploads 4 out of their 5 assignments will received a Statement of Accomplishment. Thousands of participants participate in the training

concurrently and CAEP team members can also view the comments and assignments from other teams in the course for inspiration and guidance.

What Participants Say

“It has been fun working with our team and getting to know them a bit better. Our Consortium has been working together for several years, but because all our focus has been on our Adult Ed programs, we know very little about one another's families. Sharing about our commutes was an indirect way to get to know one another better. Looking forward to our next team meeting today!”

– Emily Tsai Brownfield

“Takeaways from readings. The most important takeaway for me is that this process is lengthy. It takes time, effort, a few trial-and-error elements (including realizing/understanding/reflecting on the fails in a few of these), and that it can't be done in 2 weeks. It was a relief to know we are undergoing the basics of this process, and that as we do this more and more of these, the result will be: (1) a better more effective design, (2) a better understanding of the whole human-centered design process, and (3) a more effective way of coming up with design projects in the future. I am so glad I am doing taking this course. Thank you for the opportunity to do this!!”

- Dr. Sofia Ramirez Gelpi

“In response to the question: After completing Module 1, what is the most surprising thing you learned about human-centered design? “I like the idea of giving others an opportunity to brainstorm to come up with as many ideas as possible. This gives us a chance to be creative and gain creative confidence.”

- Sherri Watkins

Coaches

We relied on the support of three coaches for this course who provided weekly support and encouragement on the +Acumen course platform as well as through phone meetings or individualized emails. The teams reached out individually or as a group. We also offered two Office Hours sessions for teams to participate and engage directly with their coaches as well as to ask questions of other teams who were in the course. We offered a session during the first week of the course and the third week of the course to encourage participation and questions.

Some team members got a late start and the office hours allowed for some peer mentoring to encourage newly formed teams to start the process as well as to share creative scheduling approaches to meet the deadline. For example, a team could meet weekly and submit an

assignment a week, or they could choose to meet several days in one week and submit multiple assignments over the course of a week. Especially as this course fell during the summer when many people took vacations, this approach was necessary to ensure the involvement of all the team members.

The coaches were also able to provide technical support for NovoEd's platform. This included support for signing on, uploading courses, and making comments or adding documents to the CAEP Innovation platform.

Highlights of the Work

The teams that participated were very engaged and had high completion rates, especially compared to historical completion rates for the course. Each assignment offered a new challenge using the same iterative process.

"Of those 9 teams [who registered], 7 dove into the course content, bringing our activation rate to 78% - [which is] great by historical standards as we typically see activation rates for online engagements between 50-70%. Of the 7 teams that got started in the materials, 5 completed the course in full, bringing that completion rate to 71%. Note that we calculate completion as # completed / # activated. This is on par with historical standards from similar engagements where we've seen this somewhere between 60-80%."

- Marica Rizzo, +Acumen

Many teams got a late start but still found ways to come together and complete the assignments and spend time with their colleagues dedicated to the course. Scheduling was an issue for many teams. It should also be noted that some teams decided early on to take the course again in fall, and possibly to even spend more time on their final assignment to ensure that they produced quality work at a pace that worked with their team's schedule.

"Be gentle with yourselves. Make it real by going to your customers, students, participants, etc. Recognize your own growth process as you engage with others in communication, brainstorming, creating ideas and designing pathways to address challenges."

-Kathy Frye, CAEP Innovation Human-Centered Design Course participant

In addition to the CAEP consortia teams, there was a professional development team that included staff from TAP TA providers. The hope was that this could both increase awareness of how Human Centered Design can help consortia and so that the TAP staff could potentially function as Coaches during future cohorts of training.

Team Participation and Coach Assignments

Assignments							
Team	Coach	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	Completion Rate
PD on TAP	Jimi	1*	1	1	1	1	100%
Allan Hancock College	Jimi	1	1	1	1	1	100%
State Center Consortium	Jamie	1	1	1	1	1	100%
Salinas Valley Design Team	Jamie	1	1	1	1	1	100%
Tri City Career LASERS	Jamie	1	1	1	1	1	100%
SCV Consortium	Lael	1	1	1	1	0	<i>80%/ Plan to complete Assignment #5 later.</i>
Glendale LEARNS	Lael						<i>0%/ Plan to attend in Fall 2018</i>

**At least one team member submitted an assignment*

Next Steps

Due to the strong interest in the first round of training, CAEP will offer a second round of training to the field in September. The Launch webinars for the next phase will be August 2nd and August 17th.