

RESEARCH REPORT

Ontario Extend In Practice



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About eCampusOntario

eCampusOntario, a not-for-profit corporation, is funded by the Government of Ontario to be a centre of excellence in online and technology-enabled learning for all publicly-funded colleges and universities in Ontario.

About this Report

In late 2019, Kyle Mackie Consulting Ltd. was contracted by eCampusOntario to conduct a survey and follow-up interviews to identify the number of Ontario post-secondary institutions that have adopted and/or customized the Ontario Extend (OE) modules or resources in some format, with attention paid to:

- formal teaching and learning department adoption and customization;
- informal local adoption and customization;
- module-specific adoption and customization;
- delivery modes; and
- technology used for customization.

This research project commenced November 25, 2019 and was completed February 14, 2020.

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Executive Summary

Ontario Extend (OE) is a suite of professional learning resources grounded in the belief that the impact of learning should be the primary motivator for creating technology-enabled and online learning experiences. It aims to empower educators to explore a range of emerging technologies and pedagogical practices for effective online and technology-enabled teaching and learning.

OE explores key skills, knowledge, and attributes required to extend and transform teaching and learning practices and to enrich professional development. The program is designed to contribute to the digital fluency of educators and to support their decision-making for the appropriate use of digital tools.

The intent of these resources is also to provide the basis for more deliberate course design and digital pedagogical practice. The OE modules are designed to be self-paced or used as a component of teaching and learning programs for educators within their institutions.

The framework for these resources is grounded in the model of the [Anatomy of a 21st Century Educator](#) as described by Simon Bates (2014) and is supported by six modules: Teacher for Learning, Technologist, Curator, Collaborator, Experimenter, and Scholar.

In 2017, eCampusOntario identified a need for a professional learning model to underpin a foundational approach to technology-enabled and online teaching. In response, they collaborated with six colleges and four universities in northern Ontario to develop resource materials that could provide a common baseline of knowledge and complement local training and development programming.

In 2018, eCampusOntario published a research report¹ that explores the experiences of educators who participated in the initial iterations of the program. This report examines what, if any, pedagogical values and practice influenced the participants' reviews after interacting with the program, and summarizes recommendations from participants for changes or improvements to the program design, materials, and facilitation strategy and approach.

From January to May 2019 a facilitated version of the six modules was offered to educators as a "medium sized Open Online Course" (mOOC) via the support and communication tools of the edX platform hosted by EDULib

¹ Porter, D. & Lopes, V. (2018). Shifting Perceptions, Changing Practice: Ontario Extend. <https://www.ecampusontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2018-01-11-shifting-perceptions-changing-practice-research-report-en-v1-1.pdf>

Research Methodology

Development of Approach

The Ontario Extend in Practice research project was focused on finding out the ways in which OE modules and resources are being used by colleges and universities in Ontario. This was accomplished through a survey distributed to the 44 publicly-funded universities and colleges, and follow-up interviews.

Survey

With the goal of identifying Ontario post-secondary institutions that have adopted and/or customized the OE resources, a survey was developed and sent to:

- the Ontario University Consortium on eLearning (OUCeL) listserv;
- the Educational Technology Committee (ETC) listserv; and
- OE participants who have completed the requirements for at least one OE module.

Interviews

Some survey respondents opted in for a follow-up interview. The interviews aimed to:

- detail instructional, professional learning, and support situations where OE materials are being referenced, used, and/or customized;
- record any module-specific use;
- document delivery mode (face-to-face, hybrid, distance);
- itemize associated technology use in customization of materials; and
- compile any feedback and future plans for use of materials.

OE in Practice

Respondents from the following *10 institutions* reported that they were using OE:

Algoma University
Brock University
Cambrian College
Canadore College

Georgian College
Seneca College
Sheridan College

McMaster University
University of Windsor
Western University

Resources Used

- Seven respondents said that they were using resources from all six OE modules.
- Two specifically mentioned using resources from the Technologist module.
- One specifically mentioned using resources from both the Technologist and the Curator modules.

The majority of respondents reported that they were using OE resources for face-to-face professional learning activities. In three instances, OE modules have been delivered fully online: at Brock University (Faculty of Education), at Western University (Faculty of Education), and at the University of Windsor (Office of Open Learning).

In addition to these formal uses of OE, a number of respondents reported that OE is being promoted as a resource for faculty. Teaching and learning centre staff direct interested instructors to resources available on <https://extend.ecampusontario.ca/>, and actively encourage participation in OE.

OE Program Feedback

Several respondents noted that they see value in OE and are interested in expanding use at their institutions², mentioning timing and staff/faculty buy-in as considerations.

The following suggestions for development of additional OE resources were mentioned during the interviews:

- Inclusive/Universal design
- Indigenous ways of knowing
- Copyright, Fair Use, Creative Commons licensing
- Digital literacy for students (e.g., Ontario Extend: Student Version)
- Concrete examples of effective course design and use of technology

Details of OE in Practice

This section of the report provides further details of OE in practice.

Algoma University

Workshop facilitators have used H5P to design interactive versions of resources from the Technologist module.

Brock University

The “[Post-secondary Online and Blended Learning](#)” course, in Brock’s Adult Education program, includes resources imported from the OE Curator and Technologist modules.

Cambrian College

The Teaching and Learning Innovation Hub at Cambrian is using OE for their new faculty onboarding program. They offer workshops and drop-in support for faculty who are working towards completing the OE modules.

² 7 respondents mentioned that they are interested in making more use of OE materials in their professional learning initiatives.

Cambrian is planning on continuing their local support, and is considering customizing some of the content so that it has a local focus; importing OE modules into their learning management system, and building micro-learning opportunities for faculty.

Canadore College

The department of Quality Learning, Teaching, and Innovation is integrating OE materials, activities and information into ongoing faculty programming and communications. Resources are included in presentations as well as monthly newsletters. Local programming was synchronized with province-wide delivery of OE through the mOOC offering.

Georgian College

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) provides a variety of opportunities for faculty PD. Faculty who participate in these opportunities can gain credits towards the completion of a [Teaching Practice Credential](#) (TPC) to recognize their involvement in professional development activities related to their teaching practice.

By showing evidence of participation in OE, and completion of module activities, faculty can gain credit towards their TPC, to a maximum of four credits.

McMaster University

Staff from McMaster's Institute for Innovation & Excellence in Teaching & Learning have used resources from the OE Technologist module for face-to-face workshops for faculty.

Seneca College

Seneca's [Digital Learning Strategy 2018-2011](#) includes a commitment to, "Adapt the eCampus Ontario Extend program to our needs" in support of the institutional goal of Enrichment, to "Provide a variety of opportunities to enrich the experience within and outside of the classroom, program and Seneca" (p. 7).

Sheridan College

Sheridan's Centre for Teaching and Learning regularly offers a "Fundamentals of Learner-Focused Teaching" course for part-time, sessional, and partial-load faculty at the College. The course instructor has included the visual of the "Anatomy of a 21st Educator" on the course website (built in Brightspace/D2L). The participants are encouraged to explore the information on the OE website.

University of Windsor

Windsor's Office of Open Learning (OOL), offers a [Certificate of Open and Online Learning](#), to "prepare instructors for designing, developing and teaching high-quality, online, blended, technology-enhanced, and open courses." OOL has imported all six OE modules into their learning management system (Blackboard). These materials provide the learning content and activities for the "Anatomy of the 21st Century Online and Open Educator" course.

This course has been offered twice, with faculty and graduate students from Windsor, as well as participants from York University and Lambton College. Potential future plans include mounting an open version of the course (via Reclaim hosting, Moodle, or a similar platform).

Western University

Western's Faculty of Education has run one local instance of OE. Staff from the eLearning Support Team imported all six OE modules into Western's learning management system (Sakai), and facilitated each module over the course of Summer 2019. The materials were offered to limited-duty instructors teaching in their online graduate-level programs.

The Faculty of Education has plans to continue using these resources, and will be opening enrollment to instructors teaching at their English Language Centre in Summer 2020. They have discussed making it a mandatory training requirement for this program.