

## Seeking Evidence of Impact for Innovation in Teaching and Learning *An ELI initiative*

As the pace of technology change continues unabated, institutions are faced with numerous decisions and choices with respect to support for teaching and learning. With many options but constrained budgets, faculty and administrators must make careful decisions about what practices to adopt, and about where to invest their time, effort, and fiscal resources. On an almost daily basis, faculty and their support staff must make decisions about whether to use a technology and a learning engagement.

As critical as these decisions are, the information available about the impact of these innovations is often scarce, uneven, or both. What evidence do we have that these changes and innovation are having the impact we hope for? What are the current effective practices that would enable us to collect that evidence? With the advent of the Web 2.0, the themes of collaboration, participation, and openness have greatly changed the teaching and learning landscape. In light of these changes, what new methods for collecting evidence of impact might need to be developed?

There are established practices and good data that have made inroads in this areas. Often however they are scattered, disconnected, and at times in competition, making it challenging for the teaching and learning community to discover them and compare their merits. Bringing these practices together and encouraging the invention of new ones will enable more institutions to measure impacts and produce data, providing a richer, evidence-based picture of the teaching and learning landscape on both the national and international level.

The EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) announces a program intended to bring the teaching and learning community into a collective discussion about ways of gathering evidence of the impact of our innovations and current practices. We hope to bring all types of higher education institutions and professional associations into a conversation on this theme. We envision an inclusive discussion, one that includes faculty, instructional support professionals, librarians, students, and research experts in a collaborative exchange of insights and ideas. No style or school of gathering evidence will be excluded or privileged.

We ask that community members participate directly by telling us about your experiences in this area and how the Evidence of Impact program can be designed to address your needs. completing a survey at: <<http://www.surveymonkey.com/seisurvey>>. The survey will take about 5 minutes to complete.

Our goals for the initiative include

- catalysing new collaborations to advance evidence-based applications learning innovation to benefit higher education practices;
- initiating a collective exploration that will serve to re-invigorate the community's enthusiasm for and dedication to the task of identifying evidence of impact;
- producing new leadership for the task of seeking evidence of impact;

- enabling participants become (re-)acquainted with a variety of current effective practices, so they can make appropriate choices about which ones to adopt locally;
- encouraging the teaching and learning community to explore and discover options for new ways of gathering evidence;
- inaugurating on-going dialogs, projects, and collaborations that help to enable institutions to effectively gather and share evidence of impact.

The program will consist of a variety of events, meetings, workshops, and publications, all united around the theme of seeking evidence of the impact our new practices and technologies are having.

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- Several ELI web seminars in the latter half of 2010 and early 2011
- Conduct a non-CG discussion session on the topic of evidence of impact at the EDUCAUSE annual conference (October 2010).
- ELI 2011 Annual Meeting. The call for proposals for the ELI Annual Meeting (February 14-16, Washington DC) will explicitly request proposals on the theme of gathering evidence of impact. A portion of the Annual Meeting's sessions and activities will be devoted to initiating the exploration of this theme.
- ELI 2011 Spring Focus Session (April, 2011). This will be a two-day, online conference devoted entirely to the theme of gathering evidence of impact. Leading practitioners will present on effective practices, and schools implementing these methods will report on their results.
- Developing a collection of case studies
- Formation of a community around the Evidence of Impact theme;
- EDUCAUSE 2011 Symposium (tentative). Hold a half-day or full-day symposium at the EDUCAUSE 2011 Annual Conference that continues the community discussion.
- ELI 2012 Annual Meeting (Austin, TX). Organize presentations, and discussions, continuing discussions from the symposium.

The advisory team for this ELI program includes:

- Randy Bass, Assistant Provost, Georgetown University
- Gary Brown, Director, Office of Assessment and Innovation, Washington State University
- Joanne Dehoney, Director of Strategic Projects, East Carolina University
- Chuck Dziuban, Director, Research Initiative for Teaching Effectiveness, University of Central Florida
- John Fritz, Assistant Vice President, Instructional Technology & New Media, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
- Joan Lippincott, Associate Executive Direction, Coalition for Networked Information
- Philip Long, Director, Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology, University of Queensland
- Vernon Smith, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Rio Salado Community College

For more information, please contact either Malcolm Brown, ELI Director <[mbrown@educause.edu](mailto:mbrown@educause.edu)> or Veronica Diaz, ELI Associate Director <[vdiaz@educause.edu](mailto:vdiaz@educause.edu)>