

COURSE 1

Adult Learning: Theory & Teaching Principles



Who is the learner?

COURSE 2

Creating a Learning Experience



What do students need to learn?

COURSE 3

Evaluation



How do you know they have learned it?

COURSE 4

Facilitation



How do you bring it to life?

THE INSURANCE INSTITUTE OF CANADA

Instructor Certificate Program: learning how to educate



By Peter Hohman

Chartered Insurance Professional instructors are learning new tricks of the trade, taking advantage of The Insurance Institute of Canada's new Instructor Certification Program (ICP).

More than 600 volunteer CIP instructors educate about 20,000 students in the Insurance Institute's CIP designation program each year. A CIP designation shows graduates have a solid level of expertise in the fundamentals of p&c insurance in Canada.

Launched in October, the ICP is designed to help instructors deliver information in a standardized, engaging way to a very diverse group of students, using a variety of contemporary media. More than 45 CIP instructors are currently registered in the program.

Established by the Insurance Insti-

tute, a co-design team made up of between 10 and 15 CIP instructors across the country collaborated in cyberspace to prepare the new ICP curriculum.

"Members of the co-design team can take pride in the fact that they have helped build something that will be extremely beneficial not just to the instructor, but to the person who's paying for the CIP program," said Rose Tomlinson, a Vancouver-based member of the co-design team who has taught CIP courses since 1997. "I'm a firm believer that if someone is paying good money for the program, they need to get back as much as possible."

The new program is available at no charge to CIP instructors. The full-year ICP includes four courses, each one lasting three months. The courses discuss how people learn, how to create a positive learning environment, how to test if students have learned what they need to know and how to deliver material confidently in traditional classrooms and online environments.

"The biggest thing is to step back and think about what you do every day as an instructor," said Tomlinson. "We were asked, for example, what techniques we used to make our classrooms successful.

"For me, I had to take a step back and

think: How do I get students engaged? How do I know whether or not they are getting what I am saying? How do you break down complicated information into bite-sized chunks? How do you get away from that lecture format and make it more interactive?"

The ICP is intended to help instructors provide a standardized, consistent, national learning experience without losing the benefit of the individual instructor's unique skills, experience and personality.

"The Institute encourages each instructor to have their own style, and that's great, but there has to be an underlying level of consistency in the way they are delivering the material so that one particular group is not deficient in certain areas of knowledge heading into that national CIP exam," said Ryan Craven, a member of the co-design team. "The ultimate goal is for it to be a seamless delivery regardless of whether you take a CIP course from your employer in-house or at the Institute or college."

Co-design team members conducted lively discussions about teaching techniques and best practices for building a curriculum. In the process, some felt like they had become students again, learning about themselves as instructors.

“In helping to put together the course, I learned a lot about evaluation, and I learned a lot about different learning processes and different depths of learning,” said Greta Dearing, a member of the co-design team who has taught CIP courses for eight years and is a two-time winner of the Insurance Institute’s Instructor of the Year Award.

Since collaborating with her colleagues on the ICP co-design team, Dearing has prepared to teach a CIP course that she has not taught before.

“This will be my first course that I’ve taught since being involved in the Insurance Certification Program,” she said.

“It’s definitely changed the way I prepare the material. I’m looking more at different ways of helping people to recall and assimilate the information.”

The end result promises to be a lively experience for CIP students. For example, some instructors learned the advantage of using YouTube clips and TV commercials to drive home a point instead of relying exclusively on the tried-and-true methods of lecturing and PowerPoint presentations.

“We collaborated on how we could improve the delivery of material to the students, recognizing that in this industry you are faced with a very diverse

group of students,” said Craven. “The ICP teaches you to be the ideal instructor for the group of students you have.”

CIP instructors are encouraged to register for the ICP. The program is provided at no cost to instructors and registration for admission into the ICP program is now open. Courses begin throughout the year, but space is limited, so we recommend early registration.

If you wish to become a CIP instructor, contact your local Insurance Institute for more information. **IW**

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Peter Hohman is the president and ceo of the Insurance Institute of Canada.

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