Fostering sustainable careers for newcomers in healthcare:

Bridging the skills gap through language training

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION · CUPE

MOSAIC

Presentation Overview

Supporting Career Development – Iulia Sincraian

Curriculum Development and Course Design – Jason Green

Course Delivery – Jennifer Mitchell

Strategic Partnerships – Pat Marilley-Bodner

Land acknowledgment

https://www.pwsaontario.com/general-info/general-info-land/

What are you hoping to learn from this presentation?

Supporting Career Development for Private Sector Healthcare Workers

About HEU

- The Hospital Employees' Union is the biggest health care union in BC, with more than 60,000 members.

- Since 1944, HEU has advocated for better working and caring conditions and defended public health care.

- HEU locals protect members working in every area of health care, all across BC.

About HEU Members

HEU members work in health and community social services, in long term care facilities, assisted living facilities, hospitals, community agencies, and First Nations Health Centers.

Occupations

HEU members work in more than 300 job categories, including:

- Care Aides
- Medical Lab Assistants
- Unit Clerks
- Medical Device Reprocessing Technicians
- Pharmacy Assistant Technicians
- And so many more!

Private / Public Members

- Roughly 11,000 members work in the private sector.

- This includes in long-term care homes, assisted living, and until recently, workers who were contracted out.

- Before the single site order and subsequent wage levelling, there were considerable wage discrepancies between members in the public and the private sector. For Health Care Aides, sometimes this was even a discrepancy of $7/ hour. Members in the private sector and / or those who were contracted out frequently have fewer or no benefits.

About the Funding

- The Education and Access Opportunity Fund came from the Provincial Government.

- The funding is to be allocated to training and upgrading skills for HEU members employed in health care outside the formal public sector by contracted service providers, or those who have recently been repatriated to public sector employment, and to support programs encouraging the hiring of Indigenous People in health care.

About the Process

- HEU conducted an Education and Training Needs Assessment Survey
- Roughly 45% of people who took the survey said they'd be interested in an EAL class.

What programs have an English proficiency requirement?

- Medical Lab Assistant;
- HCA;
- Nursing Unit Assistant;
- Activity Aide;
- And more!

Where Things Are Now

- The first cohort ran January – June 2024; the second cohort, July – December 2024.

- The third cohort of classes will start this January, 2025.

- Three classes will be offered, each with capacity for 35 students.

- The English as an Additional Language Course has been expanded to include members in the public sector. This will be funded through the Facilities Bargaining Association Education Fund.

Asynchronous Language Training for the Health-Care Sector

Curriculum Development & Instructional Design considerations

Natalie Anderson – Lead Developer

Jason Green – 2nd Developer

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MOSAIC

Why partner with MOSAIC engage

1. In 2011 MOSAIC piloted blended language learning in the settlement sector.

2. Experience with developing curriculum and supporting students with distance education.

3. Experience with OSLT – English for construction trades, & Careers Paths for Skilled Immigrants employment program.

The HEU Online Course – participant view
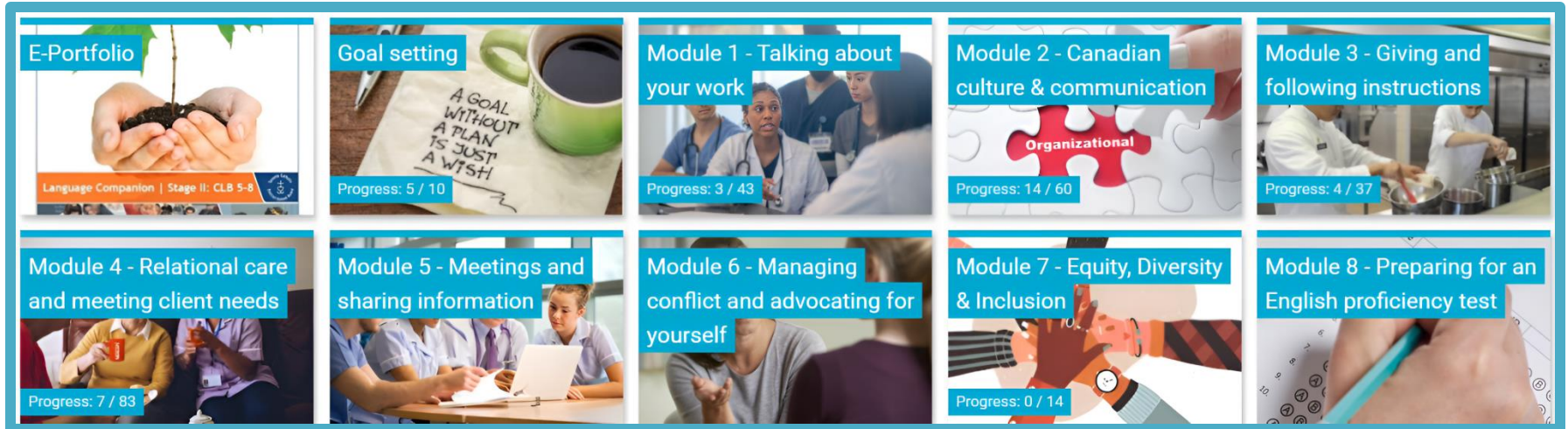
8 Module sections + online portfolio section

How did we pick the topics? (Needs assessment)

1. Two separate participant needs assessment surveys (HEU & MOSAIC)

2. We scanned existing courses and content.

MOSAIC receives Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion award

November 23, 2021

Through a holistic REDI+ lens

An intersectional approach to addressing complex issues of race-based, gendered and other forms of discrimination.
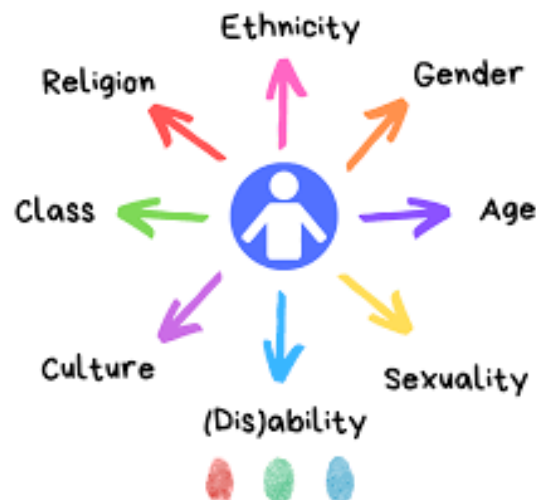
Participant contact - **3 modes**

Independent study	→	Group class	→	1:1 meetings
asynchronous learning objects 5.5 hours / week self-paced / self-directed	→	1.5 hours / week over Zoom multiple dates & times open admission across classes – drop in	→	10 – 15 minutes over Zoom Instructor requested / participant generated
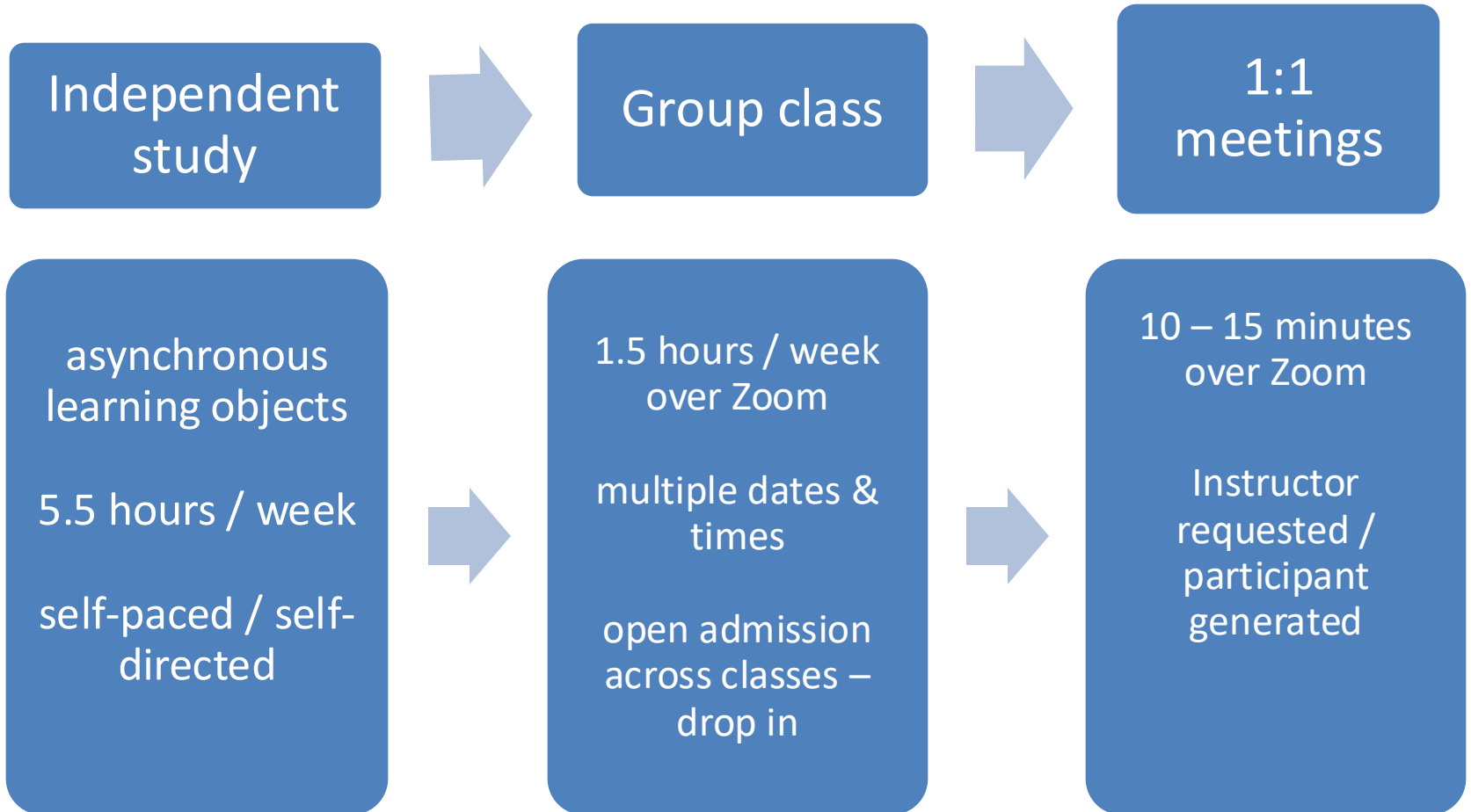
Curriculum design - 4 Key considerations
Learner generated content

1. Alignment with Occupational Needs and Context – Health Care

2. Clear Structure and Self-Paced Navigation

3. Interactive and Multi-Modal Content

4. Feedback and Self-Assessment

Learner generated - a forum post

Now, **write a paragraph** explaining your opinion with reasons and examples based on your knowledge and personal experience working in healthcare and using the healthcare system in both Canada and your first country.

You can:

- express your opinion with "I think..."
- give reasons with "because."
- provide examples with "For example."
- add information with "also," "in addition," "furthermore," "moreover," and "what's more."

Part 2

Reply to one of your classmates' posts and **agree or disagree**.

You can:
- thank them for their post.
- paraphrase their opinion with "I agree/disagree that..."
- express your opinion with "I think..."
- give reasons with "because."
- provide examples with "For example."
- add information with "also," "in addition," "furthermore," "moreover," and "what's more."

1. Alignment with Occupational Needs and Context **Curriculum sources**
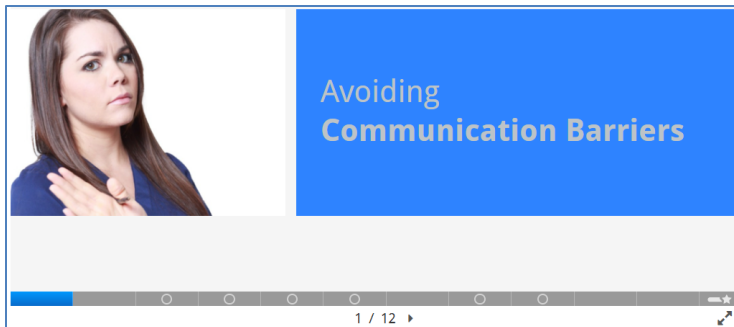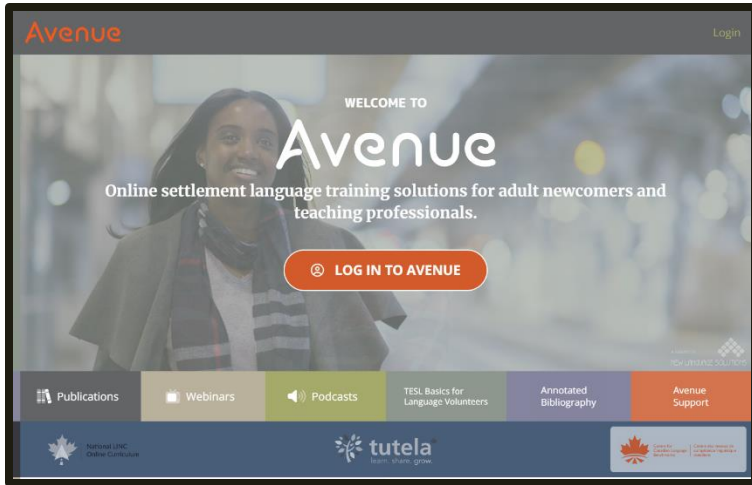
1. Alignment with Occupational Needs and Context   Aligned with...

1. Alignment with Occupational Needs and Context   Learner generated content

MOSAIC

Personal profile

Source: Google Images-Keywordsuggest.org

My name is Jun Lee. I am from China. I was born in Shanghai where I had lived till I came to Canada last year. I landed in Montreal, Quebec, but three months ago, I moved to Vancouver to join my sister.

I am 26 years old. I have a bachelor's degree in nursing. In my country, I was working as an nurse, administering and recording patients' medicines and treatments.

Restricted
TEST YOUR WRITING: Share your opinion in a group

Restricted
TEST YOUR WRTING: Your SMART language goal

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: What do you want to learn about?

5. POLL: What do you think of Canada's health care system?

2. Clear Structure and Self-Paced Navigation
Participant view of a unit in a module (tiles)

Canadian workplace culture & communication

5. In this unit, you will practice English to ...

apologize to a co-worker for a mistake you made.

Badge available in this unit: **Collaboration**: get along with co-workers

A single task

Unit badge

Activity completion

| 1. LESSON: Apologizing | 2. LESSON: How to apologize effectively | 3. PRACTICE: Apologizing and Expressing Regret | 4. PRACTICE: Making apologies using intensifiers: Forgetting names | 5. LISTEN: Apologies at work | TEST YOUR SPEAKING: An apology to a co-worker |

2. Clear Structure and Self-Paced Navigation
Student Support and Communication

When you open the online classroom…

START HERE! Module Overview: Canadian culture and communication

Using Zoom

On a computer

On a mobile

How to use Zoom - playlist

Using the online classroom

How to use a forum

How to complete an assignment

How to do online classroom activities

How to Share your Screen on Zoom

1. In the Breakout Room, choose one person to share.
2. On Zoom, click on the green Share Screen button.
3. Select the window to share.
4. Click Share.

Book a time to meet with your instructor here!

3. Interactive and Multi-Modal Content
A variety of learning options
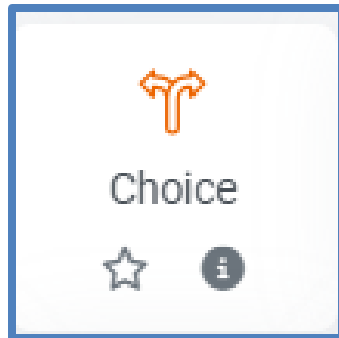
1. Moodle activities

2. Video

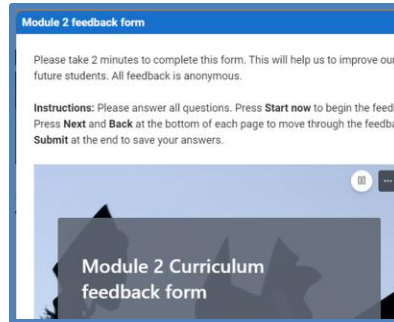3. Voice recorder (Moodle)

4. Create HTML5 content

5. Gamification badges
Cohort 3

Module 3: Creativity and innovation: Encourage others and apply new ideas

4. Feedback Mechanisms and Self-Assessment

1. Evidence of learning captured

2. Forms embedded into course

4. Rubrics & fillable pdfs

Cohorts 1 & 2

3. Review (feedback) settings on Moodle quiz

Curriculum design – key takeaways

1. Know your audience – accessibility is first consideration.
2. Know your course – this is a language course.
3. Have a clear course completion goal (one language level increase).
4. Provide progress tracking mechanism.
5. Allow for a continuous improvement feedback loop.

Facilitating language training for clients with high barriers

Who are our participants?

- Members of the HEU
  - Health care aides
  - Dietary aides
  - Lab technicians
  - Janitors
  - Maintenance staff
  - Recreation aides
  - Multiskilled workers

- English language learners

Why did they take this course?

Students identified two main reasons for wanting to improve English skills:

- To access job training programs (IELTS and CLBPT tests)

- To improve communication skills for their daily or work lives

A Student Quote

"I am a senior care aide. I have a lots chance to training a now care aide. I orientate an office scheduled new care aide for my working routine. I prefer reading the warning instruction sheets on every power equipment, give him/her the right copy to avoid my speaking mistakes, mean time mention what is the important points. I have to speak English with my coworkers because nobody understands (my first language). I try speaking every words slowly and clearly. I like to show the new care aide how I do, in case he/her misunderstands me. I fell it is very important to improve my English, because any wrong information may cause a big mistake. Having a good communication and understand each other is very important for doing a good job, so this why I take this course."

- Mike, Healthcare Aide

Barriers to participation

- Family responsibilities/issues
- Workload (frequent overtime requests, multiple jobs)
- Other coursework
- Emergencies (death in family – international travel)
- Health issues
- Lack of focus or purpose

Addressing barriers

Multi-pronged approach:

- Online activities accessible 24/7
- Zoom workshops with multitude of times and days of the week
- One-on-one appointments with instructor to discuss issues
- Weekly teacher messages with links for mandatory and suggested activities
- Check-in emails with students

Class Issues

- All students working on different activities at different times

- Lack of study skills or digital literacy skills

- Lack of formal English language training and/or formal education

Curriculum Issues

- Course that was designed wasn't always meeting student needs
- Focus: topic-driven vs skills-driven (finding balance)
- Our cohorts experimented with both

Addressing these Issues

- Setting realistic expectations for students and instructors

- Revisiting students' SMART goals set at the beginning of course

- Weekly Zoom workshops (grammar and vocabulary-focused, not tied to healthcare content)

- Establishing (and revisiting) minimum requirements/setting boundaries

In Summary: Take away Lessons

- Meeting students where they're at wherever possible (barriers)
- Offering encouragement and validation
- Aligning instructors' goals with clients'
- Creating flexibility and open-endedness

Using Strategic Partnerships to Address Service Gaps

Forming Collaborative Partnerships

How can we find potential partners?

- Personal connections
- Professional connections
- Environmental scan
- Newsletters
- Conferences

Promoting successful partnerships
Things to consider…

What is the goal of the project?

What does each partner bring?

How can we work together?

Goal

- Our project goal: to improve language skills so clients can access training and improve future career opportunities

Discuss, document, be open to revisions

What does each partner bring?

HEU

- Client base
- Resources
- Trusted relationship with clients and ability to communicate directly

MOSAIC

- Technical skills-language training
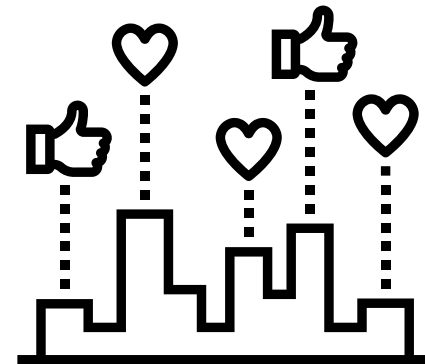- Experience working with client base

How can we work together?

Projects often feel like this

Making Partnerships work

Shared values

- What are the core values of each organization?
  - Mission
  - Treating clients
  - Treating staff

Making Partnerships Work

Communication

- Building trust
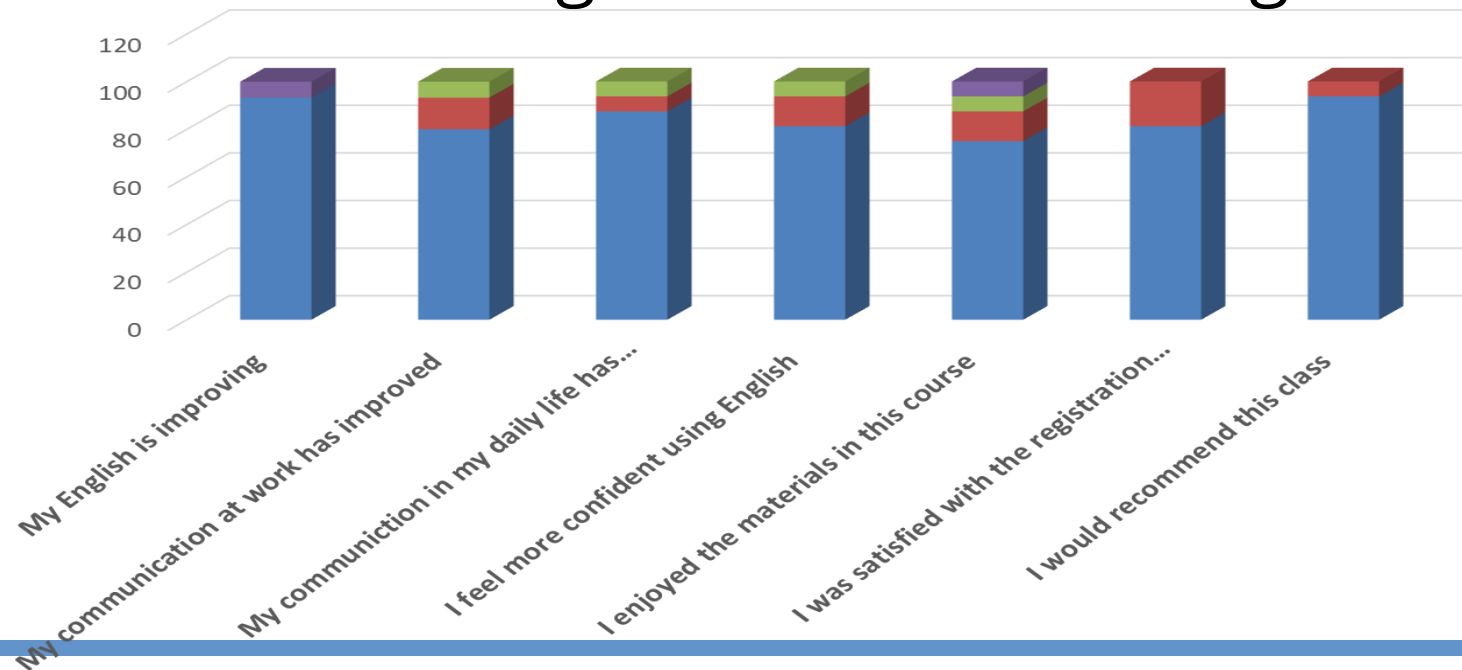- Be honest if things need to change

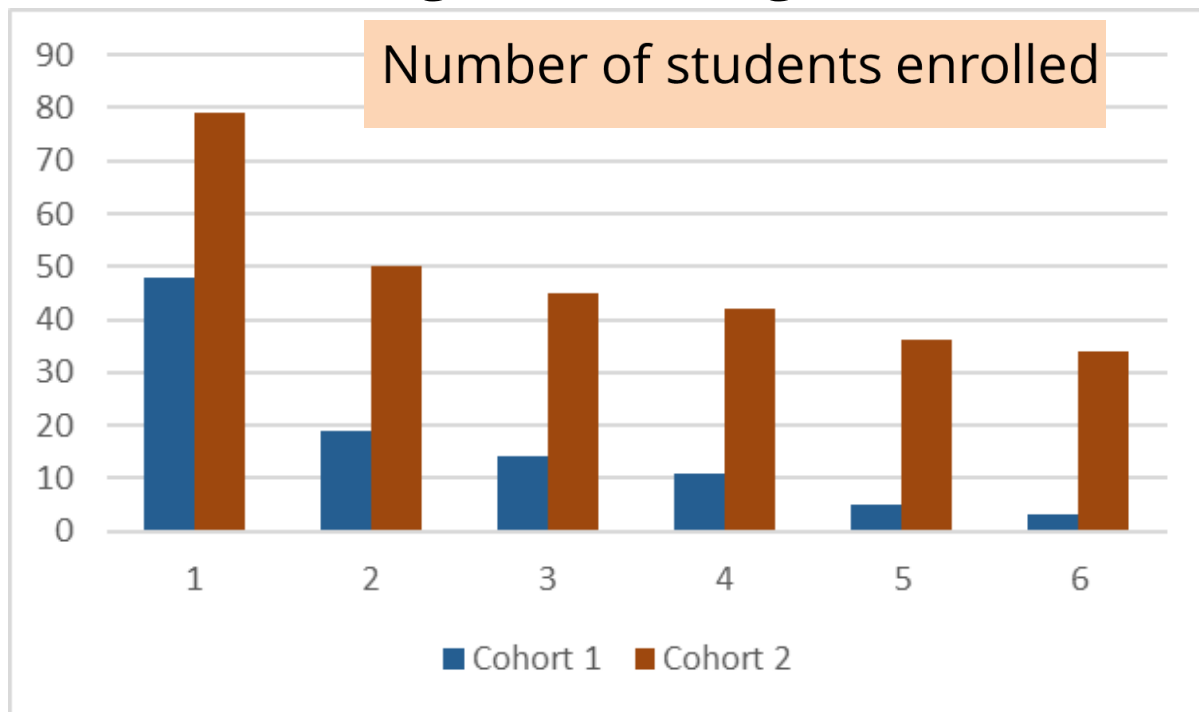# Making Partnerships Work

Continual evaluation

- Stay focused on the goal

- Evaluate as you go

- What's working? What isn't working?

Making Partnerships Work

Adaptability

- What needs to change? Why?

- How can we manage the change?

Number of students enrolled

Take Aways

- Leverage your personal and professional connections

- Stay focused on the goal

- Acknowledge unique contributions of each partner

- Shared values and communication build trust

- Evaluate and be open to change

Any Questions?

Photo by Camylla Battani on Unsplash

What are your Take Aways from this presentation?

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