ELL-U, The Adult English Language Learning Professional Development Network

Background

English language learners are the largest subgroup enrolled in adult education programs, with over 40% of students served enrolled in adult English as a Second Language classes in program year 2011-2012. Many more non-native speakers enroll in adult basic and secondary education programs. The ELL population is extremely diverse in terms of languages spoken, educational attainment levels, literacy skills in their first languages, and English proficiency. The population represents immigrants highly skilled in their home country but lacking English proficiency as well as immigrants with little formal schooling. The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) has invested in a hybrid delivery model of on-demand, evidence-based professional learning resources and a virtual community of practice, along with customized study circles and on-site trainings to address these challenges and strengthen teacher effectiveness for adult language learners.

Overview

Kratos Learning Solutions, under contract with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, created ELL-U (English Language Learning University), a research-based learning portal. Resources are organized to support five principles: principles of second language acquisition, teaching adult ELLs who are emergent readers, assessment in adult ELL programs, principles of second language teaching, and the role of culture in teaching adult ELLs. ELL-U provides teachers access to a team of subject matter expert faculty, self-paced and faculty-led professional learning opportunities such as learning clubs, online courses, virtual book groups and field trips, a virtual community of practice, and study circles. The project period is from July 2010 to July 2013.

Project Milestones

- Develop catalogue of professional development materials.
- Create roster of trainers and professional developers.
- Conduct workshops and training events and study circles.

Outcomes and Products

- Five online courses in topics related to the organizing research-based principles.
- National, regional, and/or state workshop and training events.
- Electronic community of practice to engage peer- and expert-led discussions.

Website:  [http://ell-u.org/](http://ell-u.org/)

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