

Lingnan University

Executive Summary

In the 2019-22 triennium, the Teaching Development and Language Enhancement Grant (TDLEG) was utilised to support four strategic priority areas. These areas were: (1) blended/technology-enhanced learning, (2) Communities of Practice (CoPs), (3) internationalisation on campus by using technologies and (4) language enhancement. The initiatives were drawn from relevant institutional goals identified in the Lingnan University (LU) Strategic Plan 2019-2025. The TDLEG fund has enabled LU to achieve substantial developments in teaching development and language enhancement across these areas.

With reference to the Plan for the Use of TDLEG submitted in 2019, the University's focus on Teaching Development consisted of two components: (1) a top-sliced project for blended and technology-enhanced learning and (2) one-off projects on a competitive basis (Teaching Development Grants or TDGs). The top-sliced project, entitled "Advancing Blended Learning @Lingnan to a New Stage", was proposed to systematically enhance the use of technology across the institution and its implementation was particularly timely given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in this triennium.

The top-sliced project delivered an extensive range of activities and outcomes related to enhancing blended learning. This included the development of 18 staff blended learning resources, 19 sharing sessions and workshops for staff to enhance their blended learning practices as well as workshops for students on digital fluency. In addition, five CoPs were established. These CoPs, involving 48 staff and 31 student members, met throughout the academic year to share good practices and acted as institutional agents of change. This project also involved an international collaboration in the area of Blended Learning with Alverno College (a leading US liberal arts college). This collaboration enabled LU staff to benchmark their practices against an international context and involved 248 participants who gave an average score of 4.7 on a 5-point Likert scale for the usefulness of these sessions in improving their teaching.

There were 20 one-off projects funded on a competitive basis that involved 12 discipline areas and 45 staff. A mandatory aspect of each project included evaluation strategies such as sharing and dissemination activities, resulting in positive impact and feedback from the staff and students involved.

The University's focus on Language Enhancement consisted of a variety of activities that are primarily provided by the Centre for English and Additional Languages (CEAL) and the Chinese Language Education and Assessment Centre (CLEAC). These two centres provide complementary language enhancement activities across the University.

The University's graduate attribute related to language competency in English is delivered via the English Language Enhancement (ELE) programme offered by CEAL. In the 2019-2022 Triennium, the ELE programme was revamped and a new curriculum was implemented. CEAL offered 16 English courses, five of which were core English courses, and 12 Additional Languages courses. During this triennium, CEAL's overall Course Teaching and Learning Evaluation (CTLE) scores have significantly improved, demonstrating the effectiveness of the new curriculum.

New core and ELE elective courses were introduced in response to Faculties' needs and the Diagnostic English Language Tracking Assessment was replaced with Password as a more effective diagnostic tool for speaking and writing. The English Language Support Services continued to provide students with academic services and social events to enhance their language skills outside the classroom, and the Best IELTS Award Scheme recognised students with the best overall IELTS score. Blended Learning was an integral part of all language courses.

The CLEAC successfully achieved and exceeded all targets set for teaching and learning effectiveness and excellence as outlined in the 2019–2022 plan. The CLEAC offered 16 to 19 Chinese enhancement courses annually, two of which were integrated as required core courses for all undergraduates, with an accumulated student headcount of 4 989 across the three academic years. The CTLE scores for these courses were consistently much higher than the University mean scores.

The CLEAC utilises many methods to diagnose, support and enhance Chinese Language learning. These include the Annual Evaluation on Chinese Language Education (AECLO), the Putonghua Pronunciation Diagnostic Assessment (PPDA) and the Nationally-accredited Chinese Communicative Competency Test (CCCT).

The AECLO that assesses student learning outcomes from two required Chinese courses revealed significant improvements in Putonghua and Written Chinese proficiency by 23.32% and 12.32% as measured by standardised pre- and post-tests respectively. Similarly, the PPDA pre-diagnostic assessment and post-diagnostic assessment provided key performance indicators for Putonghua pronunciation

improvement. The improvement rate after each course for students' Putonghua pronunciation was 11.25% on average. Also, the CCCT evaluation result identified significant improvement. For example, the oral test results indicated that 60% of LU students who participated in the National Putonghua Proficiency Test exceeded the Putonghua teacher's Putonghua proficiency level stipulated by the Hong Kong government.

Similar to the CEAL, the CLEAC has introduced new elective courses in response to Faculties' needs and has also embraced blended learning.

The collaborative initiatives by the CLEAC, the CEAL, the Office of Student Affairs and 10 Warden Offices for the innovative extra-curricular Lingnan Language Enhancement Initiative (L²EI) maximised and enriched students' learning experience, encouraged cross-cultural appreciation and integration, and connected learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds via the residential platform.

All TDLEG initiatives were active in dissemination activities both within and outside the University. This included the creation of a Teaching Development online database and a dedicated website to promote the L²EI initiative. To encourage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, the Conference Grant for Teaching and Learning Development was launched and 10 TDG Projects were presented via this mechanism. At an institutional level, dissemination and sharing of good practices were integral to the application process across all the TDG projects and these projects have shared their outcomes via six conferences and 12 internal sharing sessions. Many of the deliverables from the CEAL and the CLEAC were also disseminated via workshops, academic publication and external conferences.

In summary, the targets identified in the Plan for the Use of TDLEG were met and often exceeded in its objectives across teaching development and language enhancement. In particular, whilst many of the initiatives during the 2019-2022 triennium were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, LU was able to respond agilely and still achieved significant enhancement of teaching and language enhancement across the institution.