TATA

TATA INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS

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Taking a Traditional, On-Campus Master of Science in Sustainable Design Program, Fully Online

Philadelphia University, a private institution, has an award-wining, on-campus Master of Science in Sustainable Design (MSSD) program developed by a group of top practitioners and experienced professors in sustainability. The target audience for this program has a wide range of occupational interests and educational backgrounds and includes a mix of builders, designers, architects, developers, engineers and other professionals interested in Sustainable Design.

The challenge
Philadelphia University intended to reach the on-campus curriculum to a global scale through the use of robust instructional design principles and digital tools for collaboration.

The solution
Based on extensive discussions with the faculty from Philadelphia University, Tata Interactive Systems recommended an instructional design framework with four strategies – Engage, Explain, Explore, and Evaluate – that addresses the topic of sustainability in a systemic, holistic, and integrated fashion. At the same time the approach provides an engaging, online learning environment to stimulate thought process and hone skills.

- The Engage strategy attracts student to the learning by answering the "what's in it for me?" or "how is this relevant to the situation?" questions.

- The Explain strategy introduces concepts, processes, and skills in a manner that facilitates the learning process and strengthens understanding.
- The Explore strategy provides experiences to students that help them use prior knowledge to generate new ideas, explore questions and possibilities, and design and conduct a preliminary investigation.
- The Evaluation strategy encourages students to assess their understanding and abilities and provides opportunities for the faculty to evaluate student progress toward achieving the learning objectives.

The result

- E-Modules, the primary tool for providing didactic instruction
- E-Stakeholder interactions comprised of fictitious characters—including practitioners, expert facilitators, a student and other varied backgrounds—to enhance engagement and bring perspective to theory
- Lecture supplements in the form of PDFs, PowerPoint slides and other readings
- E-Tutorials with a mix of animated demonstrations and interactive screen-captures to familiarize students with the software's user interface and to act as liaison between the "What?" and "How to?"
- Simulations to help students internalize complex concepts through real-world scenarios
- Projects and assignments to evaluate comprehension of concepts and application of skills
- Faculty-driven synchronous and asynchronous collaborations orchestrating the various components for a successful delivery of the program