

## **Morocco launches teacher prep programs infused with Principled Innovation**

**Through partnership with MLFTC, Morocco's Ministry of Education takes hold of PI framework and makes it their own.**

Over the last three years, faculty at MLFTC have been working with Morocco's Ministry of Education to improve education quality in Morocco. Through the Higher Education Partnership–Morocco, a USAID-funded grant, MLFTC is collaborating with Moroccan faculty and teacher trainers to design and develop a pathway for primary teacher education. This winter, Mohammed First University in Oujda, Morocco prepared to open a new school for teachers. To mark the occasion, organizers planned a conference that convened students, faculty and staff around the topic of Principled Innovation.

Mohammed Guamguami, conference organizer and associate professor at Mohammed First University in Morocco, was introduced to Principled Innovation as a character framework for decision-making aimed at preparing students to become effective educators and caring citizens. The framework was developed at Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College with the support of the Kern Family Foundation, which awarded MLFTC a \$12.4 million grant to develop and incorporate character education into its teacher and leadership preparation programs

"Principled Innovation has helped us think about the need to teach, learn and design in a conscientious way and allowed us to think about the educational opportunities available in our system. Educational practices based on Principled Innovation encourage our university faculty and staff and other stakeholders to consider PI as a way for getting the right policy decisions for current and future challenges," says Guamguami.

The HEP-Morocco leadership team (Alexander Kurz, associate research professor; Wendy Oakes, associate professor; Tanya Pinkerton, clinical assistant professor and HEP–Morocco senior coordinator; and Nicole Thompson, vice dean of the division of teacher preparation and professor) developed a series of webinar trainings introducing Moroccan educators to Principled Innovation and Next Education Workforce models. These models emphasize teams of educators designed to deepen and personalize learning for students. The practice of Principled Innovation, says Thompson, "is helpful to individual educators and to teams of educators as they make decisions about how best to provide learner-centered instruction."

The three-day conference, From Values Education to Principled Innovation, was held at the end of October 2021. Due to the pandemic and travel restrictions, the conference was offered both on-site and online to college students and faculty members.

Pinkerton says, "Even across this wide distance and through a global health crisis, developing relationships with our partners in Morocco was fulfilling and energizing."

"Our Principled Innovation framework," says Norman Paul Gibbs, research and project coordinator for Principled Innovation at MLFTC, "looks at what principles each of us brings to change."

The innovation and character aspects of the framework were bridged together by 26 sessions, four of which were led by MLFTC faculty members, and presented to six colleges and roughly 75 participants. Below are the presentations that were led by MLFTC:

- **Principled Innovation: The development and application of a framework for ethical change in the systems of teacher and leader preparation**, presented by Cristy Guleserian, Norman P. Gibbs, Hannah Jennewein, Eoline Cary and Terrilyn McCoy. An overview of MLFTC's journey in Principled Innovation, including both successes and challenges. Presenters described the process and activities the college engaged in to develop the framework and shared the college's approach to integration in its teacher and leadership preparation programs.
- **Principled Innovation enacted in teacher preparation curriculum**, presented by Carlyn Ludlow, Gina Connor, Wendy Oakes, Tanya Pinkerton and Nicole Thompson. Presenters shared the design of coursework and practical experiences to cultivate a Principled Innovation mindset and practices across a bachelor's degree program, as well as a master's degree program, allowing for continuous learning as they grow as professional educators. Participants learned about strategies used by professors to promote the professional growth of teachers.
- **Infusing the Principled Innovation framework into undergraduate coursework**, presented by Teresa S. Foulger, Shyla Doğan and Ashleigh King. It is essential to understand that, instead of the PI framework being a part of the curriculum, it is viewed as a tool to support or amplify the existing course curriculum. This session showcased three courses from a comparative lens to include how instructors: (a) model the PI framework in their teaching, (b) teach PI directly and (c) have students practice applying aspects of PI.
- **Dispositions for Principled Innovation: A scoping review of research on values-centered dispositions in teacher preparation**, presented by Norman P. Gibbs, Niels A. Piepgrass, Andrea E. Weinberg, Wendy Oakes and Julie T. Nagashima. Presenters highlighted the relative prominence of the variety of dispositions targeted in this body of scholarship and the relative frequency of the varying methodological approaches employed in these studies. They identified opportunities for further research in less frequently used methodologies and less-explored themes related to values-oriented dispositions.

Making sure voices are represented in the process of innovation, and learning to understand problems by empathetic actions is foundational to Principled Innovation, Gibbs says. "Instead of just thinking you know what someone needs, you need to talk to the people with whom you differ," he says. If there are diverse people in the room but they never say a word, that's not inclusion. Inclusion is asking and talking to those people, which in turn, creates ways to solve problems, says Gibbs.

So how can a teacher create an environment for all kids to flourish? Gibbs says teachers need to create opportunities to engage with parents so all students can have an equitable chance to succeed. In situations like this, says Gibbs, teachers have used Zoom for online conferences or utilized a substitute teacher and made phone calls to parents when the parents are free. "This is innovation," he says.

Ultimately, he says, change is pushed by character and values.