

FOPP

FUNDAMENTALS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

March 2015

Class No. 25

1. Please rate the value you derived from various elements of the FOPP program in which you participated. Circle the one number that best expresses your opinion.

5 = extremely valuable, 4 = Valuable, 3 = Somewhat valuable, 2 = Not valuable, and 1 = A waste of time.

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| a. | Remote study/testing program in general | 4.1 |
| b. | <i>Practice Management for Design Professionals</i> | 4.5 |
| c. | Mentor participation | 3.2 |
| d. | Performing the research assignment | 4.5 |
| e. | Research-report submission comments | 4.2 |
| f. | Presenting your self-introduction | 4.0 |
| g. | Presenting your summary of the research assignment | 4.3 |
| h. | Listening to others' summary presentations | 4.2 |
| i. | <i>Trapped under the Sea</i> presentation | 4.3 |
| j. | Case-history workshop/Thursday PM | 4.3 |
| k. | Review of case-history workshop responses Friday AM | 4.2 |
| l. | Conflict-resolution role-playing workshop | 4.7 |
| m. | Friday-evening cocktail reception | 4.3 |
| n. | Friday-evening dinner | 4.3 |
| o. | Saturday-morning "Our Professional Futures" led by John | 4.4 |
| p. | Saturday-morning "Organizational Involvement" session led by John | 4.5 |
| q. | Informal discussion with peers throughout course | 4.8 |

2. Please evaluate other aspects of the FOPP program on a 5 to 1 scale:

5 = Excellent, 4 = Good, 3 = So-so, 2 = Weak, 1 = Bad.

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| a. | Facilitators, Workshop/Seminar Leaders, Speakers | |
| | John P. Bachner | 4.8 |
| | Timothy D. "Tim" Leavitt, P.E. | 3.6 |
| | James R. Attaway, Jr., Esq., P.E. | 4.4 |
| | James K. Johnston, P.E. | 4.7 |
| | Ken R. Johnston | 4.6 |
| | Neil Swidey | 4.5 |
| | Eric Kaufman | 4.9 |
| | Barry K. Thacker, P.E. | 4.9 |
| b. | Overall FOPP Operation/Distance Learning | 4.3 |
| c. | Overall FOPP Operation/Seminar | 4.8 |
| d. | Physical Facilities at the Seminar | 4.6 |

3. Based on your experience, would you recommend the FOPP program to someone else in your position?

Yes 41
No 0

4. If you have derived benefits from participating in FOPP 25, please list the top three or four in descending order of importance: (40 responses)

- Writing style; limiting liability; intro to dispute resolution; and meeting other excellent professionals in the same boat.
- The reminder that our profession is the most important profession on the planet. We need to have confidence in what we do and why it's so important. Increased communication skills, in writing (reports), orally (presentations), and verbally (communication workshop). Meeting amazing and fun geoprofessionals from across the country.
- Networking. Research project. More conscious of writing as a result of course.
- Reaffirms my interest in improving systems/attitudes toward our profession in my company. Made me interested in wanting to further the participation of kids in STEM. Focused my attention to detail in writing and how my writing sells the message.
- Extending my professional network and circle of influence. Reinforcement of being a professional. Encouraged to uphold the profession.
- Improved writing skills. Improved understanding of risk management. Increased accountability of being a professional.
- Inspiration to push the need to be professional when challenged. Directly observing quality presenters and their behaviors. The interesting content and long hours, which forced me to switch off distractions going on back in the office.
- Learned to display a professional attitude and demeanor in everything I do, especially with clients. Learned grammar and proofreading skills; effective communication skills and presentations.
- Education on professional aspects of career. Risk management lessons. Contract review (research report).
- I improved my writing skills. I learned more about contract law and exposure as a design professional, not something I have found elsewhere. I gained perspective on my place as a professional.
- Calling attention to the importance of professionalism. Teaching about subjects that are foreign to geoprofessionals (contracts). Meeting others in my profession. Showing not just what problems we face in the future, but also giving advice on how to solve them.
- Reaffirmed previous "management" thoughts into a clearer view with an end goal of professional promotion.
- Although I had learned many of the topics elsewhere, it provided good reinforcement of those topics, and I learned a tremendous amount about contracts and how to promote professionalism.
- Helped me appreciate my profession more. It's provoked me to want to make a change in my community. I think presenting my research project to peers, whom I had never met, has broken me out of my fear of public speaking.
- Increased focus on risk management through writing. Better understanding of risk management. Knowledge that my peers are going through the same struggles as I am.
- Public speaking experience. Networking. Settlement strategies. Case history review; how not to approach a project.
- Communication skills. Be professional at all times. Involvement in the community.
- Improve understanding of how technical professionals can benefit society. Improved understanding of professional practice. Improved knowledge of contract issues. Ideas and encouragement to improve as a professional.
- Confidence that I belong. Awareness of my faults. Interest in getting involved.
- Renewed my aspirations for becoming a professional who does well by doing good. The course has shown that becoming active in the community is easier and more beneficial to my work-play balance than I had thought.

- More thought put into how I write as opposed to doing things the usual way. Meeting other design professionals from other parts of the country.
- Learning how I can improve as an engineer. Improved writing skills. Meeting professional contacts throughout the country.
- Understanding contracts. Writing skills/communication. Importance of not commoditizing our profession. Public speaking.
- Our profession. How to go beyond doing daily work only. Risks associated with what we do.
- Knowing people. Learning from the experiences of senior engineers. Participating in the conflict-resolution exercise.
- Better understanding of liability issues. How important my role is as a geoprofessional. I have a better understanding of the business side of consulting.
- Better writing. Risk/liability understanding. Conflict-resolution approach.
- Improved writing skills. Better understanding of professional liability. Better time management.
- Pride in being an engineer. Improved writing skills. Education on risks associated with profession. Getting to know fellow participants.
- Improved professional writing. Learned about "business" side of consulting. Learned a lot about my own company through the project. Worked on public speaking skills.
- Better communication skills. Better understanding of professionalism. Learned about risks with design-build projects.
- Writing skills. Risk management. Active listening.
- Risk management. Communication/writing. Professional involvement/community involvement.
- Confidence in risk management. Meeting peers from across the country and Canada (and even the state next door). Active listening pointers.
- Workshops. Interaction with fellow participants.
- Improved writing and oral skills, also key words to avoid. Seminar was excellent networking. Communication and the litigation exercise were excellent.
- Writing skills. Information on PM progress.
- Importance of professionalism, importance in talking to peers in my profession and other rising leaders, provided a jump in my confidence to the next level, and overall what it means to be a professional.
- Knowledge gained during research assignment. Writing skills.
- Emphasis on being involved in volunteer and community activities as a client-development tool. The importance of proper writing as a means to manage risk. Better understanding of mediation through the conflict-resolution workshop.
- Understanding not just the importance of client relationships, but the understanding of professionalism in those relationships. Understanding the dangers of lackadaisical report writing and the liabilities behind it.

5. What was the weakest aspect of FOPP (distance learning and seminar)? What would you do to improve it, or with what would you replace it? (34 responses)

- None, great course. I can't say enough to thank you.
- Communication among students before seminar. I think some kind of kick-off event for the class may be helpful for introductions.
- For me the timing was the worst part - right before/during the holidays and year end deadlines, however, I don't necessarily think another time would necessarily be better. And I think it's probably designed to be hard/bad timing.
- Taking the tests - this can still be done without fully reading the texts. I don't feel I really "took-in" what the books said due to the time pressure to read and do the exams in a short time while working and writing FOPP report.
- I felt the mentor aspect was the weakest part. I'm not sure how to improve it from FOPP's side.
- I hated the quizzes, but understand the purpose. I would consider a different format (rather than multiple choice) as the grading method.

- Tim Leavitt's presentation: there seemed to be interesting content, but it was not well delivered and the message was lost on me. I feel if Tim related more of his personal experiences, this would have been more beneficial.
- I would add more involvement with distance learning.
- I think the report comments would be a bit more constructive, but I understand John is role-playing.
- I understand the intent behind the harsh approach to the review process, but my opinion is it's not the most productive approach. I thought the conflict-resolution exercise was great and I'd like to see more of that in the distance learning portion.
- Tim's speech could have used more focus. I feel that he didn't make his point clearly enough.
- Mentoring MAKE TIME
- The case-history presentation on Friday morning was disjointed. It would have benefitted from better visuals.
- Distance learning. Maybe add webinars.
- Tim Leavitt's presentation; I would suggest to replace him with more inspirational speaker.
- Mentorship - create better guidelines for mentor selection.
- Some of the presenters didn't show clear direction in the way they presented. Was hard to tell the purpose of their presentation.
- Book was outdated. Please update. Need to address social media and how its use may affect professionalism. This will become more and more of an issue with younger generations.
- Shorter and maybe add more of some of the presentations. Two or three hours is hard to hold an audience from one presenter.
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- Distance learning: Some chapters of the book would have been better explained in a webinar or conference call. (Although this may be too difficult to achieve).
- It's a waste of time with all of the hyphen edits; nobody has or will ever write that way.
- Several of the quiz questions were poorly worded and created confusion as to which answer was the best. More clarity in the options is needed.
- John Bachner's handwriting.
- Lack of group involvement/communication prior to seminar. I would have an initial call or video chat to introduce everyone.
- Mentor - honestly my mentor was great and helpful but I guess the weakest part? I would maybe try to contact the mentors once a month to check in and see how things are going with their protégées.
- In order to improve FOPP I would recommend even more case studies. I learn best from past mistakes I have made and others have made.
- Time allotments - I appreciate the material presented and the interaction, but seminar was almost regimental. I could have used more time to decompress.
- I felt as though the excessive edits on the submissions created work that took away from time I could spend on the actual assignments.
- Online tests. Easily can forget information. Wouldn't replace it. Possibly include a time limit so participants will need to study prior to taking exam.
- It would be nice to meet FOPP participants prior to starting the class.
- Distance learning - I like face-to-face interaction so not my preferred method (not really a weak aspect but that's all I got).
- Online tests: I understand the purpose but the format could be improved.
- Owner representative in conflict resolution didn't have "skin in the game" concerning a class grade. I suggest getting a volunteer (or selection of your choice) from each of the three professional categories to represent the owner in each of the three rooms.

6. Has participation in the program changed your attitudes in any way? If so, how?

Yes 37
 No 2

- I have more respect for limiting liability and active-voice writing.

- Pride in what I do. I already felt a certain sense of pride and I love what I do but I gained a stronger sense of pride.
- P.Eng' on everything. Re-motivated to continue my existing community and professional volunteer commitments.
- Focus writing to the reader. Get more involved in the community and profession.
- I am more conscious of being a professional and making myself valuable to others.
- Putting client needs first. Every client is our most important. There is no excuse for missing deadlines without prior notification. We all need to be better writers. I need to get out in the community more.
- I will look for ways to become more active in my community. More attention to detail with deliverables and client communications.
- Reinforced the value/pride in my career and my fellow professionals.
- It provided some concrete definition to some of the vague discomfort I've had in a consulting role. I feel I have a grasp how to address that and more forward.
- I recognized the need to get out of the office as a means to develop professionally and personally.
- Increase desire to educate others about my profession.
- I understand professionalism from a different angle, with much appreciation.
- I now pay more attention to forms of written communication (e.g., e-mail) other than formal reports.
- I'm proud of the importance of my career and am looking forward to taking my professional work more seriously.
- Feel more pride and committed to the engineering profession.
- Provided a better perspective on the "big picture" of my profession.
- Awareness beyond my nose. Multi-year planning.
- Caused me to focus more on the positive aspects of the profession.
- How I construct and send e-mails. How I view my profession. Believe it or not, my pride has increased.
- That I, as an individual, can make a change to how our profession is perceived.
- Be a better mentor. Need for mentoring.
- Think twice before I say anything.
- I am proud of my profession. Now I am going to show my pride even more. I will not let "small" projects be treated without the proper care. I will be a better listener.
- I have a better understanding of my role as a geoprofessional.
- I focus on the quality of my writing more.
- To take liability more seriously.
- Pride in being an engineer. Confidence increase.
- Has made me want to become involved in the community more and more prideful of being a civil engineer.
- Better understanding that all communication affects the way we are looked at as a person, company rep. and profession.
- I realized that I need to be more active in my profession and I can make a difference.
- It has opened my eyes to how risky our profession is, and that we need to constantly keep that in mind as we complete our projects.
- More motivated to get involved in professional organization.
- I have a better understanding on the importance of our profession and continuing the legacy of our predecessors.
- I have a better understanding of why my firm promotes certain activities/behaviors. Also recharged my attitude about being an active participant on a board and being a mentor.
- My attitude towards e-mail wording and specifics in reporting. Helped work through work issues during communications workshop.

7. Was the inclusion of the research assignment in the FOPP program beneficial to you?

Yes 40
No 0

8. **Was the inclusion of the research assignment in the FOPP program beneficial to your firm?**

Yes 37

No 1

a. **If No, why not? (7 responses)**

- Hasn't even been brought back up.

9. **Do you have any additional comments? If so, go to it! (22 responses)**

- Seminar and connecting with other geoprofessionals made it all worth it! Seminar was awesome!
- I have enjoyed "playing the game." Consider telling people to think about possible pledges in advance - we wanted to spend time thinking out something meaningful to write but time is very short.
- Great job. I enjoyed every aspect of the program, despite the stress. Stress is part of life.
- Please consider me as a future presenter.
- Excellent seminar; almost every element of it was very high quality.
- More than you do now, please encourage employers to allow FOPP participants to "charge" some percentage of the time we invest.
- Ironically, the most professional thing for me to do would have been to opt out of this.
- MORE BREAKS!
- Very valuable course, I'm thankful someone has the drive to continue to do this.
- I suggest to have the seminar Wednesday - Friday and make the days shorter.
- Thank you!
- None. Keep doing what you're doing. Update the book and address social media.
- Please, keep doing this course for years more to come. I am also interested in advancing and taking more courses with you, if there is any.
- Great course. Thanks!
- The book was boring at times and difficult to stay interested in.
- As painful as it was at times, the feedback by our written documents was very helpful.
- This was a great program that was challenging and difficult to get through, but completely worth it in the end.
- The seminar is great for extraverts who don't need time to recharge activities. For introverts, it's extremely difficult. We need more breaks or shorter days.
- Great program. Doing great things. Keep it up. And thanks!!!
- I very much appreciate this course with helping professionals better themselves.
- Have ice breaker in beginning with everyone not just divided groups.
- Add an "ice breaker" activity at the start.