

FOPP

FUNDAMENTALS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

April 2019

Class No. 28

1. Please rate the value you derived from those 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; 1 = A waste of time.

a.	Remote study/testing program in general	4.0
b.	<i>Practice Management for Design Professionals</i>	4.4
c.	Mentor participation	3.6
d.	Performing the research assignment	4.2
e.	Research report submission comments	4.2
f.	Preparing and presenting your self-introduction	4.0
g.	Joseph S. Ward Lecture by J. Patrick "Pat" Klima, P.E.	4.3
h.	Preparing and presenting your research-assignment summary	4.2
i.	Listening to others' summary presentations	4.1
j.	<i>Trapped under the Sea</i> presentation	4.6
k.	Case-history workshop, Part 1: Thursday evening	4.2
l.	Case-history workshop, Part 2: Friday morning	4.2
m.	Case history presentations by James K. "Jim" Johnston	4.9
n.	Active-listening presentation by Eric Kaufmann	4.5
o.	Conflict-resolution role-playing workshop	4.6
p.	Friday-evening cocktail reception	4.1
q.	Friday-evening dinner	4.0
r.	Saturday-morning "Our Professional Futures" led by John	4.8
s.	Getting-involved presentation by John	4.5
t.	Getting-involved presentation by Evan Thomas, Ph.D., P.E., MPH	4.3
u.	Getting-involved presentation by Barry Thacker, P.E.	4.7
v.	Informal discussion with peers throughout course	4.7

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.	Quality of Facilitators', Speakers', and Staff's services	
	John P. Bachner	4.7
	Sharmyn Elliott	4.6
	James K. "Jim" Johnston, P.E., F.GBA	4.9
	Eric Kaufmann	4.7
	J. Patrick "Pat" Klima, P.E.	4.5
	Nancy K. McKeithen	4.8
	Timothy "Tim" Rodriguez	4.4
	K. Craig Vaughn, P.E.	4.5
	Neil Swidey	4.5
	Evan Thomas, Ph.D., P.E., MPH	4.4
	Barry K. Thacker, P.E.	4.8

b.	Overall FOPP Operation of Distance Learning (Part 1)	4.0
c.	Overall FOPP Operation of Seminar (Part 2)	4.7
d.	Physical Facilities at the Seminar	4.6
e.	Facility Food and Beverage	4.3

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

Yes 57
No 2

a. If No, why not? (2 responses)

- I think this class would benefit someone with less than 10 years' experience.
- The cost and time commitment is extremely high compared to the benefit.

4. If you have derived benefits from participating in FOPP, please list the top three or four in descending order of importance: (57 responses)

- Learned about technical writing. Learned about leadership. Learned about communication skills.
- Communication exercises. Importance of managing yourself. Conflict resolution/negotiations.
- I read contracts differently. I am careful with use of certain words. I have met great peers.
- It has opened my eyes to the legal side of the profession. Provided leadership techniques. Helped me to become a better writer.
- Better writing skills. Better communication skills. Better understanding of what it is to be a Professional.
- Better awareness of communication. Importance of overall professionalism in engineering. Client maintenance and development tools.
- Research topic will benefit GZA engineers. Legal and insurance from distance learning. Camaraderie with fellow participants.
- Desire tools to reach out and serve others. Understanding (better) of legal system and how to minimize potential for litigation. Desire and tools for better communication. Tools and understanding of need for appropriate writing.
- Jim Johnston's presentation made me aware of the danger of blindly following established practice and of political/legal dangers. Technical writing. The consequence of passing risk to the contractor (*Trapped Under the Sea*).
- Loss prevention. Writing guidance. Tools, encouragement, and call-to-action to improve profession image. Communication.
- The course made me get out of my comfort zone and try something that was very challenging to me. It gave me great insight into many aspects of the profession I never knew about (liabilities).
- Improving my writing skills. Better understanding of risk management. New outlook on professionalism.
- Recognition of importance of risks and liability of geoprofessionals.
- Case histories/presentations by facilitators. Improved writing skills. Emphasis on professionalism.
- Technical writing. Communication awareness (self and others). Get involved.
- Great speakers with good messages.
- The importance and meaning of professionalism. Improved writing skills. Business awareness.
- Education on professionalism. Interaction, discussion, and learning from others within the same industry. Public speaking and finding my voice.
- Improve writing styles. Active communication. Case studies and lessons learned shared by all presenters.
- Realizing professional mindset and attitude. Learning importance of aspects other than engineering work. Learning/inspired importance of being involved in the professional society.
- Writing. Professional practice. Don't assume or accept what you are told; question.

- Kick in the pants to do more. Understand the importance of public speaking skills. Learn tools to better myself and those around me.
- Appreciate engineering even more. Learn to communicate more effectively. Meet other engineers in my field.
- Better communication. Risk management. Conflict resolution.
- Importance of non-technical aspect of being an engineer. Importance of risk management/liability concerns. Importance of writing and potential negative effect of poor writing.
- Get involved and be engaged. Be professional in your approach, in all cases. Be better at helping others work together for a common purpose.
- Meeting and interacting with other professionals around the country. Excellent speakers. Conflict [-Resolution Workshop] role playing.
- Motivation to improve. Better overall view of "real-world" practice. Appreciation of fellow professionals.
- Importance of my profession. Understanding how powerful and impactful my professional/personal contributions to society are. Understanding risks (and how to manage exposure to them).
- Camaraderie with colleagues and competitors. Inspiration and motivation. Education.
- Further understanding of risk management techniques. Performing research assignment encouraged communication to gather data. Discussions with other FOPP participants at the seminar — discussing similar struggles and best practices.
- Increased education on engineering profession liability. The apathetic nature of engineering profession and ways to correct this problem. Excellent mentoring discussions throughout with John Bachner.
- More awareness with communication, types of communication and ideas to communicate in various situations. New perspective, from those who participated. Contacts and relationships that were built.
- Increased desire to participate and involve myself. Learning better communication skills. Better appreciation for my role as a professional.
- Increased awareness of risk management practices. Increased awareness of the importance of community participation. Conflict resolution.
- Importance of getting involved. Active listening and communication skills. Knowledge of, and how to avoid litigation and manage risk.
- Interaction with other engineers from different walks of life. Knowledge from past experiences. Respect for the profession as a whole.
- I am a more thoughtful professional. Higher standard-of-care. Dealing with difficult clients.
- Understanding issues and solutions to challenge within profession. Creation of drive to affect change/contribute to community. Better writing skills.
- Internal pride generated for our profession, and an increase in desire to become more involved. Sharing experiences/learning about others' companies was very valuable to my own firm. Better writing skills were developed. (Passive voice joke....)
- Understanding the importance of deliverables. Importance of relationships. Effective communication.
- Renewed sense of importance. Understanding I have the power.
- Communication skills. Better understanding of professional behavior. Better understanding of risk and liability.
- Meeting group of peers in collaborative environment.
- The big picture of engineering profession. Managing risk. Conflict resolution.
- Case history presentations. Barry's professionalism presentation. Networking with fellow FOPP students.
- Greater understanding of professionalism. Greater appreciation/respect for engineers. Improved writing skills.
- Improved writing skills. Networking/meeting others at the seminar. Better understanding of contracts and contract language.
- Better writer. Motivation on the importance of the profession. Motivation to get involved. Networking.
- Communication (how to improve). The future of our profession. General negotiating tips/tactics.

- Being visible. Networking. Hearing others' experiences from outside my firm.
- Professional character. Review of ethics. Presenting and socializing.
- Increasing my use of active voice. Learning more about contract law. The incredible people I met at seminar.
- Appreciation for the profession. Writing (quality). Writing (importance of language on reports and documents).
- Improve my writing skills. Understand more by risk-management in geo-practice. The need to build geo-professional's image.
- Be proud of profession. Get involved in community. Liability and risk management.
- Reading habit. Listen to others. Interview technique. Writing method.

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? (54 responses)

- I think the research paper was a waste of effort and resources.
- Quiz interval time was not enough. Can increase the time between quizzes.
- I would like either more breaks or the time assigned to those breaks to be lengthened. There is a lot of information to take in and the breaks help clear our minds.
- Distance learning itself has always been a problem to me. I enjoy seeing someone that I plan to work with. I think an introduction video by John would be great.
- For me, it was the distance learning. I would have chosen a different mentor.
- Distance learning could do it over a longer period; felt like it was rushed due to our work commitments. Seminar only comment is for the conflict-resolution workshop, when each group break out into C, A, or G, it would be good for individual group (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) to have time to discuss their strategy.
- Initial kick-off of the distance learning felt like a large information dump with a large amount of information to digest all at once. Maybe syllabus style roll out of information would make things easier to digest.
- Weakest aspect is that John's comments on my writing did not discuss how to write to your audience.
- I became frustrated with the online quizzes. I would have liked them better had they been more general and encouraged more application of the concepts, rather than just reorganization.
- The distance learning portion lacks communication from FOPP staff. Inclusion of a conference call or video meeting would improve the course.
- The quiz questions tested facts instead of understanding of concepts.
- Distance learning had little interaction.
- Distance learning. Needs more interaction.
- More staff contact throughout course. How to participate in program throughout distance learning phase.
- DL: Update the book! Seminar: Conflict Resolution. Better define and emphasize role playing by facilitators.
- Working too late. No need and not healthy.
- I wish more time or effort was spent on the subject matter of book. It's easy to read, take a quiz, then forget. I would rather have been assigned short writing assignments. Also an avenue for more writing critique.
- Not interacting with other people/firms prior to the seminar. It would be interesting to see if we would have benefited or learned more about collaboration and networking if we had contact with one or two people outside our firm throughout the entire FOPP program.
- Too much time required. I have to admit I was not able to fulfill the required time.
- No real weakness.
- Less interaction and impersonal beginnings with distance learning. Video seminars and force early communications one-on-one.
- Distance learning didn't work very well for me; probably enforce phone calls. Please add bacon to the breakfast menu and make lunches a little longer.
- Distance learning reading — I like the material but I think a webinar or other more active/visual approach in addition to this book would be very beneficial.
- The seminar could be exhausting at times. Possibly extend the seminar while providing a bit more down time.

- I got a lot more talking to others than I did from the self-introductions. Friendships developed organically are more impactful. Consider something other than the self-introductions.
- I enjoyed the whole program.
- Some of the presentations appeared to represent the more extreme cautionary tales. Maybe gear more toward situations that tend to occur more often.
- I would have appreciated a phone call from John to discuss my final paper. I also would have appreciated positive feedback on my paper.
- Quizzes did not improve much critical thinking.
- Emphasis on geoprofessionals. Should be more inclusive of professional engineers. Perhaps market FOPP to more multi-disciplinary firms.
- The way John communicated back to me when grading reports. We talked about relationships how they are important. The feedback was adversarial and did not promote an atmosphere of learning.
- Distance learning: I made the mistake of not communicating frequently with John or Nancy and feel I would have been better served if I was encouraged by my mentor to do so.
- Distance learning component: If there was a way to stretch out the time to complete the second submittal (after the holidays?), that would have been a benefit. We all made it though and it was a great experience.
- Suggest smaller groups for the last studies to encourage more participation.
- Distance learning. Video-based lectures on the important concepts instead of quizzes that you just want to finish.
- *Practice Management for Design Professionals*. Add a writing component to the quizzes. I think it will help with retention and with reader engagement.
- Comments/style requirements for research report appear inflexible and make the report harder to understand in many cases.
- Personally it was the mentorship program, would not replace it, but I will make mentoring a priority.
- Shorter days in the seminar but maybe spread or increase the number of days. Also maybe include a field trip during the seminar to an engineering site or neat place to visit.
- Distance — more time-make 1st submission due earlier. Seminar — improve Wednesday night activity - add more role playing.
- Seminar schedule is fairly hectic. May go 3 days to spread out and let some information sink in or allow for additional discussions among participants during down time.
- Quizzes are “clever” to the point of being counter-productive. Make them less “tricky.” They don't need to be timed or done “all at once.”
- The grading/comments on writing assignments are demotivating. Need some sort of web-based seminar/interaction during the distance learning.
- You get as much out of it as you put into the distance-learning portion. Really up to you to direct amount of effort.
- Aspects of book out done.
- The length of day. Condense the information or reduce the number of activities or add an extra day to the seminar.
- Mentor had little contact; this could be a valuable opportunity but I had little contact/input from mentor. Just not motivated to get involved. Seminar was good; really enjoyed it and learned a lot.
- The quiz portion did not seem to be much more than “busy” work. However, I could see how younger participants would get benefit. There should be an option for more advanced reading for more seasoned professionals.
- Mentor for part 1. Have mentor provide feedback to FOPP.
- Very weak interaction between participants prior to seminar. Maybe create some online/LinkedIn problems that require you to interact with each other remotely.
- Revise quiz questions that intentionally seem to trick the participant, as opposed to testing on the information comprehended.
- Seminar was perfect. Distance learning part could be improved by encouraging participants to provide continuous feedback.
- The book is very useful but difficult to read.
- Distance learning could be improved with a webinar rather than just reading.

6. Has participation in the program changed your attitudes in any way?

Yes 53
No 6

a. If Yes, please identify the attitudes and how they changed. (51 responses)

- Focus on managing myself and priorities.
- I am more careful with contracts.
- It has given me leadership tips and techniques for conflict resolution.
- More motivated to mentor others.
- My attitude toward my profession has become better. I am more interested in getting involved with my community.
- I would not present myself as an engineer outside of work before this course.
- The smallest detail is equally important as bigger ones. We need to speak up and tell people about our profession's importance; no one else will.
- It has encouraged me to be more active/involved in professional societies and develop relationships.
- Has motivated me to strive for excellence every day on every project/interaction.
- Need to apply risk-management measures to company business.
- Did not necessarily change my attitudes but reinforced/emphasized the importance of professionalism.
- Professional writing. Community involvement.
- My attitude toward professionalism was corrected and I had never really understood how much of a commodity geoprofessionals are considered. This was eye-opening.
- I feel more empowered and encouraged to be a better professional. I feel more hopeful for our profession in the future by seeing and interacting with other motivated individuals.
- But I learned a lot of useful information.
- Being professional in all aspects of my work and life. Will initiate the change.
- I appreciate more the importance of becoming involved beyond my job.
- I need to do more to cause meaningful change.
- Toward engineers. Colleagues.
- I realize I have a lot of things to work on personally to become a better engineer/PM; in particular, client relations.
- More aware of potential liability issues. More attention to writing and general correspondence.
- I will absolutely be considering other individuals' ways of learning, thinking, and working when I make decisions.
- This made me more focused on being a leader.
- I have more pride in my profession. I have a much stronger sense of personal accountability and status quo questioning.
- Positivity and motivation.
- Reaffirmed that together, as geoprofessionals, we can elevate our image/perceived value.
- The time and effort I have already been expending (on my own time) to help disadvantaged communities has been well expended.
- Get more involved! Branding profession.
- Importance of relationships and how to build relationships.
- Maybe not changed, but it re-emphasized the importance of why we do what we do.
- It has revealed the importance of writing and maintaining/gaining client relationships.
- Positive attitude and respect of the profession. Also, self pride to be an engineer.
- I want to be a better professional. I am excited to get back to work with renewed energy.
- I now have more imperative to promote my profession and contribute to my community.
- I feel angry about how the world views us and that it is essentially our fault. It makes me want to do something about it. I feel prouder to be an engineer than ever before.
- The importance of listening and communication.
- Increased sense of pride.
- Need to work on client relations.

- Better understand of my firm's market position.
- Managing risks/client representatives.
- Reminder of importance of professionalism/pride in our profession.
- Greater respect for engineers' role in society.
- Pride in the profession. Focus on quality and continued learning.
- The seminar was very motivating and stimulating. Feels as though I have a new ambition to excel in my profession.
- I now understand the importance of being visible outside the firm.
- Become more aware of my professional behavior and how I express myself professionally.
- My perception of the necessity of active voice and why it is important. I didn't think it was necessary before.
- Appreciation for profession, inspired to have an impact on the community and tomorrow's leaders.
- Risk-management. Branding/image building. Community service.
- Communication is a major key. Don't assume that others know what is in your head.
- Listen to others before making any decision.

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

Yes 56
No 3

a. If No, why not? (8 responses)

- It was more of an inconvenience than anything else.
- Yes for the technical writing growth and no for the research itself.
- I learned more about my company.
- It was beneficial, mostly for writing lessons, but it gave me an opportunity to look into something that benefitted a personal professional goal.
- If I did it over, it would be more beneficial. I do believe it helped my writing, but it caused a great deal of stress personally for me, due to my own pitfalls.
- It was a great way for me to get to know my firm and the leaders.
- Seemed to be more of a benefit to my firm vs. my development as an engineer.
- Too time consuming.

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

Yes 55
No 3

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

- My topic had nothing to do with my firm.
- Not yet. I hope to discuss with my mentor/office manager to determine how it can be used.
- Yes, because we need the "carrot" to offer a voluntary "AWS." No, because of the flexible work schedule/hours some offices allow.
- Only for the reason that I valued the company. They already make experts to do that.
- I would like to think it could be. It's an overall/general approach to business development.
- Incredible!
- Some may have thought it was important. Others called it "not real." It has not yet been implemented (and I was in FOPP class 26!).

9. Do you have any additional comments? If so, go to it! (21 responses)

- The "We Paint the Earth" slogan in the case was funny on the second read-through.
- Awesome program.
- Thank you for your time and effort throughout the course! Great speakers and presenters.

- I thank you for the constructive criticism on my research. I feel as though it has given me new perspective on how to communicate knowledge effectively.
- Thank you for your dedication to improving our profession.
- Thanks for a great experience.
- Awesome time and experience.
- I am one that loves what Mr. Bachner has done with the program and wish it success for many years to come!
- I look forward to being a mentor to future participants in this program.
- Jim's presentation and story is one that will last with me for the rest of my career. Thank you for all of your time and effort to make this such a great program.
- The best part about the program was that it encouraged me to learn more about my firm, and what services would be beneficial. I learned in talking with the partners what is involved (internal and external) to implement a service, and I am excited to move it forward.
- Excellent seminar, inspiring experience. I made excellent connections with excellent people. Thank you!
- Great/effective class that was somewhat painful but I truly believe it will help me in aspects of my career and even in my personal life.
- Fantastic opportunity! Thank you, Nancy!
- Thank you!
- Great program for an engineering professional. Valued information and people.
- Thank you!
- The Denver portion of the program was amazing! I'm glad I will have the experience to draw on the rest of my career.
- Great program. I will recommend it to my colleagues.
- Jim's presentation was one of the most impactful presentations I ever saw.
- Thanks, John.