

Smart Schools Program



The Smart Schools Program is a community service initiative of Smart Communications Inc. that promotes Information and Communications Technology in basic education through partnerships with public schools, its officials and parents-teachers-community associations (PTCAs). Specifically, it aims to provide public school teachers with Internet access through the PLDT group's wide range of communications solutions, access to online content and teacher training. It is implemented through the Philippine Business for Social Progress, with the support of the Department of Education, Learn.ph Foundation, and the Smart Wireless Engineering Education Program or SWEEP.

This year will witness the launch of the second batch of SMART Mentors, a specialized training and development program for faculty members of Smart Schools Program partners. It includes a full scholarship to an 11-month action research course that can earn teachers a Master of Arts degree in Instructional Design and Technology. The goal is to develop a corps of mentors actively participating in training and in developing and implementing the mentoring component of the Smart Schools Program.

Partners:



SMART Mentors



The SMART Mentors Program has two components: Scholarship and Mentoring.

Scholarship

The scholarship covers an action research course that focuses on the application of information and communications technology (ICT) in the development, implementation and evaluation of learning environments and teaching strategies.

The course lasts for eleven (11) months with a maximum extension period of one (1) month. It starts with a two (2)-week, live-in, intensive face-to-face learning experience. After this, student-faculty will implement and evaluate their action research projects in their teaching contexts.

During this period, the student-faculty journeys with an expert who provides enabling interactions towards the achievement of the research agenda. Interactions will be mediated by telementoring, i.e. via email, discussion boards, text messages and/or face-2-face meetings.

At the end of the course student-faculty is expected to:

- Understand and fully appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of cognitive theories to know their implications on instructional design, teaching and learning contexts and environments.
- Understand, appreciate and critique various models of ICT applications to teaching and learning.
- Formulate and implement ICT-enabled learning environments.
- Develop the attitude and skill to regularly subject own teaching practices to reflective and scientific analysis to improve and transform one's profession.
- Develop and sustain a community of practice where professionals with the same interests or discipline can engage in collaborative and constructive exchanges to hone the ability to deliver quality and effective services.

During the 2-week face-to-face session, the student-faculty is expected to complete ten (10) modules:

- Module One: Mining the Internet
- Module Two: Digital Storytelling
- Module Three: Educating the Net Generation: Modes of Technology Support for Learning
- Module Four: Integrating ICT Across the Curriculum: Mapping Out ICT Competencies with Subject Area Competencies
- Module Five: Problem/Project-Based Learning
- Module Six: Authentic Assessment
- Module Seven: Telecollaborative Projects: Leveraging Communications Technologies for Knowledge Construction Beyond the Classroom
- Module Eight: Laying the Foundations for Peer Mentoring
- Module Nine: Learning Theories, Methods and Strategies on Teaching with Technology
- Module Ten: Action Research

Upon completion of the 11-month course under the SMART Mentors Program, the student-faculty shall be awarded a Master of Arts Degree in Instructional Design and Technology.



Mentoring

The goal of the scholarship program is to equip teacher-champions with the tools necessary to empower them to mentor other teachers in the science of Instructional Design. Mentoring is achieved when the SMART Mentors train, guide and coach other teachers to develop (or improve), implement and evaluate new (or existing) ICT-enabled Learning Activities that, in the end, help improve student learning.

Through the technology of the web, the influence and impact of the SMART Mentors are no longer confined to the boundaries of schools or divisions. Teachers from all over the country can benefit from the knowledge and skills of the teacher-champions.

Immersion into mentoring begins right after the two-week face-to-face learning experience. SMART Mentors are expected to mentor 15 other teachers within the 11- to 12-month scholarship period and submit regular reports on the status of their mentoring. Mentoring should continue at least a year after the scholarship period, with SMART Mentors training other teachers within and outside their respective schools and divisions.

Advisory Board

On top of mentoring through training, SMART Mentors will form the core of teachers that will have a hand in setting the direction for the Smart Schools Program. A representative will be elected from the pool of SMART Mentors to sit on the Advisory Board, the body which will be convened regularly to consult on directions and initiatives for the Smart Schools Program.

The SMART Mentors will also be the champions of various Smart Schools Program initiatives in the field of training, program development and rewards and recognition.