

Tales from the Trenches: "Nine Percent"

Abstract

Just nine percent of the colleges who responded to a poll indicated that they had a plan to use technology for instructional continuity in the event of a pandemic. Yet despite this, most colleges managed the pivot to emergency remote teaching and heavily leveraged instructional technology to do so. These are the stories of five organizations, as told by individuals involved in everyday operations, regarding how they rose to the occasion during the COVID-19 crisis, including lessons learned and a call to action for better preparedness in the future. Our peers discuss the importance of planning and other resources and reactions that made this possible.

Nine percent! Just nine percent of the colleges who responded to a quick poll¹ conducted by the Instructional Technology Council (ITC) in May of 2020 indicated that they have a formal plan to use instructional technology, including but not limited to your institutional learning management system (LMS) or web conferencing platform, for instructional continuity/curriculum delivery in the event of an epidemic, pandemic or other public health emergency that forced campus closure. And yet, just a few months earlier most if not all of the ITC member institutions did turn to their academic technology infrastructure to continue education students during one of the most "interesting" and disruptive semesters in recent memory, the novel coronavirus 2019 pandemic.

Because so few colleges had a formal plan to leverage technology in the pivot to emergency remote instruction, it seems counterintuitive that it happened as quickly and smoothly as it appears to have occurred. Obviously there were struggles and setbacks, along with enormous effort involved. But what factors impacted this transition to remote learning and made it easier, if not actually easy? Is having a plan critical, or is it better to be flexible and well-funded? Can decisive leadership turn the tide in the absence of formal planning? Is teamwork all that's needed to succeed in such troubling circumstances? And what can we do to be better prepared for similar disruptions in the future?

Here are the stories of community colleges who rose to the occasion, each one different but each with certain similarities. By reading these narratives we can learn from their collective experience and be better prepared to leverage the resources we already have in place and emerge from this crisis stronger and more nimble.

Rowan College at Burlington County (NJ)

Martin Hoffman – Dean, Learning Resources

We happened to be part of the 9% who did have a formal, written plan for this. But to quote Douglas Adams, that plan was "on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying 'Beware of the Leopard'."² In other words, the plan was a bit old and not at all well publicized. I originally wrote the plan back in 2009 in response to the H1N1 pandemic. It spoke directly and explicitly about what we did in March of 2020; a complete pivot to online learning due to a requirement for social distancing as a result of a pandemic. Eleven

years ago most of the college employees and all of the emergency management team and academic administrators were familiar with the plan. But we lucked out and didn't really need it at the time. We did have a few chances to test it, on a limited basis: during a major power failure that took out two buildings for almost a week (2010), after hurricane Irene (2011) and again after hurricane Sandy (2012) and each time the plan was refined and revised. But eight years later the plan, while still relevant, was slightly obsolete and largely forgotten. Nonetheless we shooed away the leopard, dusted our plan off and ran with it. Having a plan made things easier, but certainly not easy! One complication was actually stopping people from causing chaos and confusion by trying to

¹ Poll results: https://intc.memberclicks.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77:monthly-quick-poll-results&catid=20:site-content

² Adams, Douglas. 1989. *The hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy*.

write their own plans instead of using the one we had. But that was understandable because many of our senior leaders had no idea that the 2009 plan already existed.

Key Takeaway: Have a plan but keep it current and well publicized!

Another key factor that made the pivot to all online easier (but not easy) was that usage of the school's learning management system (Blackboard) had been inculcated into our culture over many years. When COVID-19 hit, approximately 33% of our adjunct faculty and a whopping 83% of our full time faculty had been fully trained and certified to teach online asynchronous courses as a result of our internal training program. Every credit bearing course section at the college had a Blackboard shell and for a few years all of the academic deans had been encouraging or even mandating Blackboard use for all course sections. Although "mandated" usage was minimal, as would make sense for many course sections, especially those we never expected to be taught online, it did mean that the vast majority of our faculty had experience logging in, uploading documents (like a syllabus, and handouts) and using announcements and the grade center. Students also had experience logging and accessing those documents and tools. So we were not starting from zero but rather from probably like 70-80% and trying to react full adoption by faculty and students.

Key Takeaway: Build mind share early and reinforce it often. Don't "start from zero!"

Because we had established a baseline, we could build from there. Once the call was made to pivot, faculty formerly teaching face-to-face were told to post a message in Blackboard by Monday, March 16 advising their students when the first lesson will be available

online and then transition their coursework online by Friday, March 20 while preparing to remain online through the spring semester. In other words, faculty had four days to go from "minimal usage" to "fully online course." Or did they? The first communication to faculty, after they received that bombshell, was really intended for those instructors who made only minimal use of Blackboard. It came from my Office of Distance Education and included an unscripted video with limited production values where I took a mostly empty Blackboard shell and built it out to meet the college's minimum expectations. The video was ten minutes and nine seconds long. The title was "[Don't Panic! \(It's easier than you think...\)](#)"³ which became a recurring theme in a series of emails entitled "Blackboard Baby Steps - Your Guide to Moving Online in a Hurry." The Baby Steps series of emails were sent out daily for about a week and each one focused on a specific action that faculty members needed to do, starting with a review of creating announcements and uploading files, then on to: organizing content with folders, moving and linking content, using Student Preview mode, using the assignment drop box, creating discussions and so on. I assured faculty that if they took one baby step each day for a week they would easily meet minimum expectations by the deadline, and move on from there. I tried to keep the messages light and short. I received very positive feedback both on the humor and the value of the step-by-step, just-in-time nature of the emails. Interestingly, many experienced online instructors indicated that they would be keeping copies for future reference. We also deployed additional student support materials, but I'm sure some of my colleagues⁴ at other colleges did that better, so I'll remain faculty focused for now and let them talk about their

³ Can you tell I'm a Douglas Adams fan?

⁴ "'Foreshadowing' - your clue to quality literature." Breathed, Berkeley. 2015. *Bloom County: The Complete Library*.

challenges and successes.

Key Takeaway: Meet your constituents where they are. Then build to where you need to be.

My colleagues are wonderful! Not just my colleagues at RCBC, but throughout North America. As a dean and the college's Chief Online Education Officer I have the privilege of being involved in a statewide distance education affinity group and I also sit on the board of directors of ITC, which gives me access to peers throughout the continent. Sadly, not everyone has this opportunity, and of those who do, not everyone partakes, to their detriment. Shortly after COVID hit, I received a comment/complaint (disguised as a question) from a faculty member at my institution. It began "I have been working tirelessly to convert my class to the online format, putting in long hours for no additional pay..."⁵ and my first, rather unkind thought was "yeah, you and every other faculty member in the USA!" A moment's reflection provided the thought that this individual did not have the perspective or support group that I had. So it was incumbent on me to use my contacts and share resources as appropriate. Right around that time, a fellow ITC Board Member, Cristina Sullivan, Ed.D., Dean of Academic Affairs at the Tarrant County College Connect Campus⁶ shared some documents they we implemented in an Online Essentials Training at their campus. These documents fit perfectly into my "Baby Steps" series and I asked for, and promptly received permission to share them with my faculty (with appropriate credits/citations, of course). Even more than the great content that was included, was the sense that we were not alone – everyone else was in the same boat! This collegiality and sense of perspective was

⁵ Thanks to the CARES act, many faculty were eventually compensated for course development.

⁶ Foreshadowing, again!

⁷ Surprisingly, not a Douglas Adams quote. The Beatles. 1967. *With A Little Help From My Friends*.

especially beneficial in the turmoil of "The Great Pivot" (as it may someday be called) but can be helpful and should be cultivated at all times.

Key Takeaway: "I get by with a little help from my friends!"⁷

Tarrant County College Connect Campus (TX)

Cristina Martinez Sullivan – Dean, Academic Affairs

As a fully online campus, you might expect that TCC Connect (CN)⁸ would have it easy in a pivot to remote education, and well, for the most part we did. But that perception would be solely based on those of us at the CN campus. I imagine the 5 other campuses viewed it differently. Overseeing fully online courses and a handful of hybrid sections I observed the transition fairly easy for my full time faculty and adjuncts. I also observed full time faculty from the other campuses who teach for us had an easier adjustment to transitioning their face-to-face courses online.

The challenge came during spring break when my campus was asked to provide tools and training for those face-to-face faculty who had never taught online before and quite honestly, some of them never had the desire. Two of our campus instructional designers began to diligently work on Blackboard essentials training and one full time faculty member assisted with organizing and editing the modules. These provided the documents I was able to share with Dr. Martin Hoffman. I

⁸ About TCC Connect:

<https://www.tccd.edu/locations/tcc-connect-campus/why-choose-tcc-connect-campus/>

was not asked to work over spring break to assist but being the type of person I am, I joined the group and assisted where I could. We have 31 peer developed courses that we were able to give faculty access so they would not have to start from scratch and that helped several people. A lot of the instructors who teach for us offered to share their courses and answer questions. Granted, while most of the information shared was helpful and sent with good intentions, I had to ask some faculty to hold back on the tools and tips that were overwhelming eLearning newbies and they understood once I explained my logic.

Key Takeaway: Even when you're prepared, prepare to prepare others.

For my entire three years as dean, I have been trying to accomplish several goals regarding eLearning.

1. Create a home page/landing page to be implemented in every course so students aren't going on an Easter egg hunt with every class they are taking.
2. Get the peer developed course process to where faculty building would have a standard shell and syllabus to start from and get thorough feedback in the beginning to make the rest of the 10 week timeline when lesson are built flow more seamlessly.
3. Get a new learning management system.

So we tried tirelessly to get all 3 done but for some reason number one was put on the back burner and now that I think about it we could have worked on it along with number two simultaneously but alas, I did not connect those dots until writing this piece. Key issues involved too many players on the field and not enough campus staff and faculty which sounds contradictory but without support for the key players, it was hard to follow through. Number 3 is happening as we speak but COVID-19 hit in

the middle of the decision making process. So now we are switching our LMS and transitioning faculty over the summer. Call me blindly optimistic but I think it will go well. Even though we did not struggle as much as other institutions with the transition from F2F to online, it could have been smoother if the 3 goals I mentioned were accomplished prior to COVID-19.

Key Takeaway: Don't put off tomorrow what you can accomplish today.

And as Dr. Hoffman mentioned, being on the board of ITC and hearing what others were doing and how, was a great resource and group of support. I don't like the saying, "misery loves company" so instead I will say having others to commiserate with and compare notes created a sense of connection in a unique career world that sometimes feels a little lonely. I was also excited to be able to offer resources that would help staff and faculty at other institutions. ITC has been a wonderful group to ask questions and work together to solve eLearning challenges many of us face.

Key Takeaway: Forget your enemies and keep your friends closer.

Northampton Community College (PA)

Beth Ritter-Guth – Associate Dean, Online Learning & Educational Technology

Having survived and innovated during the aftermath of hurricane Sandy in New Jersey, I was no stranger to adopting technology in emergent circumstances, nonetheless, every situation and institution is different. In the case of a natural disaster, some elements, while unknown, were still known. The super storm

had ended, and Union County College⁹ was dealing with the aftermath. This was, at worst, short term.

I brought this experience with me to my new role at Northampton Community College (NCC) where quick thinking and strong staff were required to manage the new world of COVID-19. Unlike the hurricane, in dealing with a global pandemic, there are no known end dates; the targets are forever moving so no amount of prior experience can fully prepare you. Innovation is constant and ongoing. Northampton's President, Dr. Mark Erickson, made mindful but quick decisions to move to remote learning after extending Spring Break. This gave everyone the opportunity to use Spring Break wisely and to allow the Online Learning and Educational Technology (OLET) team to ramp up training for remote teaching. Three tiers were provided to help faculty migrate their courses. The first tier dealt strictly with the basic use of Blackboard. The second tier dealt with how to create engaging online assignments and assessments. The third tier focused on advanced technologies like Echo 360, Proctorio, and FlipGrid while emphasizing online pedagogy. This fast track system replaced the historical four-week training course offered previously.

Key Takeaway: Make Swift but Careful Decisions.

Before the pandemic, the OLET department at NCC had an Associate Dean, an Assistant Dean, one instructional designer, 2 academic technologists, one FT Blackboard Admin and 1 PT Blackboard Admin. As a result of going completely online, the PT Admin was made FT and two new instructional designers were hired. One was hired for the credit side and one for the non-credit side where no support had previously been provided. A FT

trainer was hired, as well, to manage all of the new training that was necessary to run the college remotely. This included some software packages outside of OLET like Zoom and Teams. Having enough staff on deck helped everything run smoothly as instructors and students learned to navigate the virtual space.

Key Takeaway: Hire Enough Staff.

In addition to the Blackboard LMS, NCC utilizes a lot of 3rd party software. One program, Respondus, did not work on Chromebooks and NCC's ITS department purchased Chromebooks for students without computers. A quick switch to Proctorio was put in place to address the needs of accreditation programs and the lack of Chromebook usability. By tracking usage of all of the plug in software, we were able to see which software packages were worth the additional costs and which ones are not cost effective. These changes will happen at the end of the fiscal year.

Key Takeaway: Know Your Software.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is to be flexible. The scenery changes daily and challenges arise around every corner. Be supportive of your colleagues in other departments; they might have to replace old systems and processes to come into the digital world. Provide lots of opportunities for students and faculty to get help. We added Blackboard wraparound services to provide 24/7 help. Stay connected to your colleagues in fun ways outside of work like virtual game nights or Netflix movie nights. Most importantly, pay attention to self-care. If the leader isn't well, the vine will dry up.

Key Takeaway: Be Flexible, both personally and professionally.

⁹ Leadership, Governance, & Policy Innovators: Union County College. 2013. *Campus Technology*.

<https://campustechnology.com/Articles/2013/07/23/2013-Innovators-Union-County-College.aspx?m=1>

Chemeketa Community College (OR)

*Colin Stapp – Learning Technology Facilitator,
Center for Academic Innovation*

In Mid-March of 2020 it became apparent from news reports that our college would be moving to remote learning because of statewide restrictions around COVID-19. College administration quickly held series of meetings with stakeholders across campus to discuss the pivot to remote learning and the impact of that transition. The decision was made to extend Spring Break an extra week, and to delay the start of the spring term, to allow instructors the time to get ready for remote learning.

Our college has a long-standing online program so some of our instructors are used to using the LMS for course delivery. One challenge though was many instructors who taught face-to-face had limited LMS experience. Another challenge is that most of our faculty weren't familiar with the term remote learning or even what that type of instruction would "look like." And the other challenge was that it had just been announced about college transitioning from Blackboard to Canvas during the spring and summer. Needless to say, LMS migration plans were put on hold so the focus could be on the transition to remote instruction.

Key Takeaway: It's never too late to plan¹⁰.

At Chemeketa, the Center for Academic innovation is our teaching a learning center and we have a great team of faculty, administrative and technical support personnel, and administrators. Our six-person faculty team is comprised of instructional technologists,

instructional designers, a media specialist and accessibility advocate. We all have experience using a wide range of instructional technologies and work close with instructional faculty across all academic disciplines, so knew we could provide support, albeit in a condensed timeline. One challenge was making sure people knew of all of the resources available.

Our first task was that our faculty team came together to brainstorm what we could do. We host the college-wide faculty resources website, so we began building a new section titled Remote Learning. That became a one-stop area for faculty to locate information for a wide range of technology, like how to get started using Zoom, and how to record lectures using Kaltura, our media server. We also started researching what other institutions were doing to support remote instruction. We also started gathering teaching resources from organizations like ITC and our statewide distance association. We then worked with college administration to provide messaging about the website, resources available, and how our team could help.

Key Takeaway: Invest in faculty support and professional development¹¹

Our team decided we needed to be readily available for faculty, so during spring term, we implemented weekday, drop-office hours via Zoom. Working in pairs, our faculty team were available 2 hours in the morning and again for 2 hours in the afternoon. We helped a lot of faculty and one thing we noted was that support extended to faculty that we hadn't previously worked with. The word spread among faculty about our office hours and how helpful it was to get just-in time support. We

workshops provided by organizations like ITC or through your statewide associations.

¹⁰ But any existing plan must be reviewed and updated annually at the minimum.

¹¹ It could be an investment in your own teaching and learning center, or at the least, investing in

are still continuing our office hours support now into 2021.

Then for fall term (2020) we implemented "Zoom practice sessions." We had set times where faculty practice using breakout rooms, polls and other features with our team, and not feel the pressure of trying something new in the middle of their synchronous class. In addition, we also facilitated faculty sharing sessions. This was an informal time where faculty could share what was working for them in remote instruction, and other faculty could get ideas and talk through scenarios. These sessions helped our team stay abreast of new tools being used, questions that were arising and what we could add to our menu of support items. Our team made it a priority to assist faculty across all academic disciplines, and through that support, we learned a lot from our colleagues that helped us determine the next steps for our plan, support and resources needed.

Key Takeaway: Be available for faculty.

Virginia Community Colleges System (VA)

Sheri L. Prupis - Director, Teaching & Learning Technologies

In December of 2019, the instructional designers (eLET – eLearning and Educational Technology committee) of the Virginia's Community Colleges were preparing for our annual in-service professional development meeting. The 23 college instructional designers, plus to the two representatives from the system office, met live three times a year, mostly, to share tips & tricks and to work on important projects across the colleges. For the annual February meeting, however, I tend to bring in an outside expert or facilitator. In a move that could only be described as prescient, I invited

an expert on Academic Continuity Plans to facilitate the meeting. The goal was for each instructional designer to write his or her own academic continuity plan. Every college, as required had a COOP (Continuity of Operations Plan). However, upon closer inspection in preparation for this meeting, it was quickly learned that academic (classroom) continuity was only one line that simply said – "classes will meet online."

Key Takeaway: Having plan is better than no plan – it's easier to edit than create from scratch.

Two years prior, all 23 colleges moved to a single instance of a new learning management system. As part of this shift, the 23 instructional designers developed a holistic plan for training and development for the faculty across the system. Thus was born the eLET Road Show. In pairs, instructional designers crisscrossed the state to provide on-site, in-person training for the 10,000 faculty. In the second year, this training morphed from only how-to's to educational professional development to help faculty create engaging online learning opportunities for their students.

Key Takeaway: Create a Foundation - testing, training, professional development should be ongoing, not done in response to an emergency.

Fast forward to March 2020. Stay-at-home orders were introduced in Virginia. Colleges extended their spring break. Faculty had about a week to move nearly 40,000 courses online. The eLET Committee sprang into action. Instead of the normal 8-12 online webinars for faculty, eLET provided hundreds. These sessions reached nearly 80% of all faculty. Sessions ranged from LMS Basics to Authenticate Assessments to Aligning Courses to Objectives to Engagement Tips & Tricks for both the LMS and Zoom. The quality of online courses, as expected, depended on the

experience and creativity of the faculty, and was often uneven. Professional development sessions continue today. Faculty still attend. The content of the sessions and quality of faculty interaction continue to improve and consequently, so do both the synchronous and asynchronous courses.

Key Takeaway: Share Responsibility and have a buy-in from stakeholders at step one.

Our success was founded on the trust we carefully created among and between the instructional designers and the faculty over two years ago. Our pivot to online learning was built upon it. Those instructional designers and their teams are the unsung heroes in our educational system. As a small token of appreciation, each instructional designer was gifted with a hat that says, "VCCS Instructional Designer: Because "Freakin' Awesome" is not an official title."

Key Takeaway: Community, Community, Community - it takes a village.



Call to Action

Each of the stories above comes from a unique perspective. Intentionally so! The authors were chosen for diversity in terms of their geographic location, position within their institutions and organization type and size. Yet each contains many similarities. This document can serve as a call to action for Vice Presidents, Provosts, Presidents and Chancellors, from those of us on the front lines. Together we can change the dialogue so that it's not just nine percent with a plan and 81% flying by the seat of their pants. Here's a brief summary with concrete recommendations:

1. Draft an educational continuity plan. Do it now! It's never too late to write a plan, but don't wait. You don't need all of the information and it doesn't have to be perfect. It's easier to edit and revise a flawed plan than create one under duress.
2. Revisit the plan periodically. Include multiple constituencies. Make sure the plan is widely disseminated and well publicized. Each iteration should be better than the last
3. The plan can be aspirational. Articulate a starting point and a goal. Start now, meet your constituents where they are now and build to where you need to be.
4. Inventory and evaluate your assets and marshal your resources. Know your software and hardware licenses and limitations. Understand current training practices and professional development opportunities. Again this can be aspirational but the more robust the infrastructure and the more trained employees you have in place prior to need, the easier it will be to transition from normal operations to wherever you need to be in an emergency.
5. Include among your assets and resources peer and partner institutions as well as all local, statewide, regional and national membership organizations (such as ITC) which can be useful to you as your circumstances change. This could include collective bargaining units, political entities and competitors.
6. Your plan must include a swift, consistent communication component. In times of crisis your constituents will want quick, decisive leadership, communicated effectively and efficiently. Even the "wrong" decision is better than no decision¹². But be flexible. Revisit those decisions as often as needed, and make changes when absolutely necessary. And be prepared to explain the decision making process.
7. Remember the human. Having a battery backed-up, generator powered, multiply-redundant Internet connected learning management system with 99.999% uptime metric means very little if the students are too sick to sit at a computer and log In or if the faculty are too busy taking care of incapacitated family members. In times of crisis, a little bit of compassion goes a long way.

¹² "In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing." - attributed to Theodore Roosevelt

Key Takeaways by Topic

- Key Takeaway: Have a plan but keep it current and well publicized!
- Key Takeaway: It's never too late to plan.
- Key Takeaway: Having plan is better than no plan – it's easier to edit than create from scratch.

- Key Takeaway: Share Responsibility and have a buy-in from stakeholders at step one.
- Key Takeaway: Meet your constituents where they are. Then build to where you need to be.

- Key Takeaway: Build mind share early and reinforce it often. Don't "start from zero!"
- Key Takeaway: Don't put off tomorrow what you can accomplish today.
- Key Takeaway: Create a Foundation - testing, training, professional development should be ongoing, not done in response to an emergency.

- Key Takeaway: Hire Enough Staff.
- Key Takeaway: Know Your Software.
- Key Takeaway: Invest in faculty support and professional development

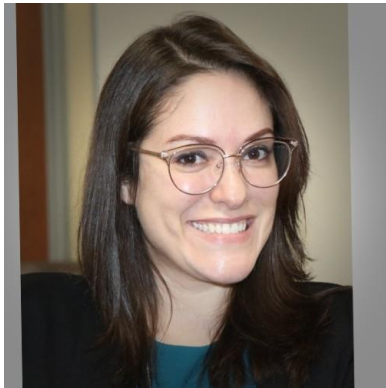
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- Key Takeaway: Even when you're prepared, prepare to prepare others.

- Key Takeaway: Make Swift but Careful Decisions.
- Key Takeaway: Be Flexible, both personally and professionally.
- Key Takeaway: Be available for faculty.

About the Authors



Dr. Martin A. Hoffman, Sr. has been an administrator in postsecondary education for over three decades. He is currently the Dean of Learning Resources and a Senior Adjunct faculty member for Rowan College at Burlington County in New Jersey. Martin is a past-Chair of the New Jersey Community College Distance Education Affinity Group, the former Executive Director of the Consortium for Distance Education and is currently serving his third term on the Board of Directors of the Instructional Technology Council. He has been a peer reviewer for the Quality Matters program and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Martin earned his doctorate in Educational Technology Leadership from New Jersey City University in 2016 and is the recipient of the 2019 Educational Technology Trailblazer Award from NJCU's Doctoral Program in Educational Technology Leadership.



Dr. Cristina Martinez Sullivan started her quest at Tarrant County College as a student at the SO Campus. After receiving her Bachelor of Arts in English at University of Texas at San Antonio and a Master of Science degree in Communication Studies from TCU, she returned to TCC as a speech adjunct and became full time faculty at the SO campus in 2007. In her current role as Dean of Academic Affairs at TCC Connect, she is an administrator who stops and turns her head in your direction when you are speaking to her and then actually acknowledges and considers what you have said. She uses her powers of administration for the benefit of all faculty and students at Tarrant County College. She continues to seek training and education regarding online instruction and how to improve student success, so she can lead with informed decisions.



Beth Ritter-Guth is the Associate Dean of Online Learning & Educational Technology at Northampton Community College. She is also a long-time adjunct in the English department at DeSales University. Her current work features the Internet of Things, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Artificial Intelligence programming in addition to ethical hacking, cyber law, gaming, gamification, drones, voice programming, and the digital humanities. She's earned multiple awards for the use of these technologies including the Teacher of the Future award by the National Association of Independent Schools, the Nobel Teacher of Distinction Award, the Campus Leadership Team Award by Campus Technology, the Innovator of the Year by the League of Innovation, and the Leadership & Innovation award from NJEdge. Her work has been featured in The Chronicle of Higher Education, Campus Technology Magazine, Wired Magazine, USA Today and America Online.



Sheri Prupis is a lifelong "Jersey Girl," now enjoying the famous Southern hospitality after joining the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) as its new Director of Teaching & Learning Technologies. She has leveraged her considerable experience as an educational technology leader and consortium builder to shape and implement the VCCS vision to integrate teaching and learning resources and technology for the 23 community colleges and the system office. She also teaches social sciences where she uses the same andragogy methodologies, tools, and resources that she promotes to Virginia's Community Colleges. Sheri received her bachelor's in sociology from Douglass College, Rutgers University, a Masters in sociology from New York University, and completed a graduate certificate in educational technology from Rutgers University. She is currently a doctoral student in Old Dominion University's Community College Leadership program in the school of education.



Colin Stapp is a Learning Technology Facilitator in the Center for Academic Innovation at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon. He is also an adjunct instructor with Chemeketa, teaching First Year Experience and Technology for Educators. In addition, he has taught courses for the Oregon Education Association. Colin has been in higher education for 28 years and has been involved in educational technology throughout his career. His experience includes online teaching, faculty development, media production and integrating technology with instruction. He is also active in the Oregon Community College Distance Learning Association. Colin started his college career at Mt. Hood Community College and earned an Associate of Arts degree there. He completed his undergraduate work at Pacific University, and earned a Master of Educational Technology & Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching from Boise State University.



About the ITC

In 1977, a committee of the board of directors of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (now the American Association of Community Colleges, AACC) created the "Task Force on the Uses of Mass Media for Learning." In 1993, the renamed Instructional Technology Council, ITC, became its own separate non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. ITC is an affiliated council of the AACC and represents nearly 200 institutions that offer distance education courses to their students in the United States, Canada and around the world.

ITC is a leader in advancing distance education. ITC's mission is to provide exceptional leadership and professional development in higher education to its network of eLearning practitioners by advocating, collaborating, researching, and sharing exemplary, innovative practices and potential in educational technologies. ITC tracks federal legislation that will affect distance learning, conducts annual professional development meetings, supports research, and provides a forum for members to share expertise and materials.

ITC members include single institutions and multi-campus districts; regional and statewide systems of community, technical and two-year colleges; for-profit organizations; four-year institutions; and, non-profit organizations that are interested or involved in instructional telecommunications.