Supporting Remote Teaching and Learning in Florida

State-Based Approaches, Institution Practices, and Feedback on Top Issues and Next Steps for the "New Normal"

March 2021

EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES

The Ada Center

The Ada Center in Brief
Supporting Higher Education IT Capacity

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HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY AND PROCESS SUPPORT

- Founded on the belief that **technology is not a silver bullet** to any problem, but with the right planning and implementation, software can play an important role in advancing student success and equity.

- Supports **national initiatives** such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Frontier Set, Achieving the Dream, State Success Centers, AACC Pathways, and others.

- Develops **research-based resources** for the field and works directly with colleges and states in need of technology strategy, purchasing, and implementation support.

Meet Our Namesake

"A new, a vast, and a powerful language is developed for the future use of analysis, in which to wield its truths so that these may become of more speedy and accurate practical application for the purposes of mankind than the means hitherto in our possession have rendered possible."

– Ada Lovelace, Founder of Scientific Computing

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This report was created by The Ada Center in March of 2021 for the Florida College System (FCS) and Florida Student Success Center (SSC) in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, which required colleges to rapidly digitize operations, including teaching and learning.

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For further information about this project or the contents of this report, please email Brittney Davidson, Principal, The Ada Center at Brittney@theadacenter.org.

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Project Background and Research Methodology

Ongoing research and surveys have shown that, while colleges have made valiant efforts to transition teaching and learning to a remote environment, there is still much to learn and much that can be improved. Even before COVID-19, technology capacity across colleges was uneven; often, colleges serving the greatest number of low-income and racially-minoritized populations were the ones with the least technology experience and capacity. As the pandemic has amplified the need for virtualization, these capacity gaps have only exacerbated existing inequities. Fortunately, state entities are recognizing that they are in a unique position to take on new, potentially more impactful approaches to how they support institutions and a broader equity agenda.

The Florida College System (FCS) and the State Success Center have already made strides in this effort, having supported its 28 state colleges through an initial transition to remote learning. The team has partnered with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to provide professional development for faculty, is exploring how to support underrepresented students in workforce programs with Advance CTE, and has recently launched a Guided Pathways initiative. Yet, with such diverse institutions and programs across the state – rural and urban, academic and career and technical education-focused – adapting teaching and learning to a virtual environment at-scale is uncharted territory. By hearing directly from institution leaders, FCS and The State Success Center can gain a clearer and more accurate sense of colleges' existing best practices and greatest needs. These insights can be used to guide ongoing equity and access initiatives as well as the system's broader strategy to facilitate coordinated teaching and learning improvements in a remote environment.

Our Approach

| Initial kickoff meeting to discuss goals and key areas of inquiry | Background research on state-based efforts to support remote teaching and learning | Research interviews with state system and Student Success Center leaders | Background research on Florida colleges' remote T&L resources and practices to-date | Interviews with faculty, staff, and leadership at six selected Florida colleges |

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State System Research Overview: Key Contributors

North Carolina
Belk Center/NC State

Washington
Washington SSC

New York
NY SSC/SUNY

Additional Research

California   Texas

+ Ada Center field research

Sample Areas of Inquiry

➢ What has been the state's general approach to supporting institutions throughout the pandemic? The Center's approach?

➢ What types of questions and support requests are you getting most often from institutions? About teaching and learning?

➢ What's an example of a program or support that has been effective in supporting teaching and learning?

➢ What has been less effective in supporting teaching and learning?

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Despite Varied Structures, Contexts, and Resources, States Converged On Several Promising Practices for Institution Support

"Communities of Practice"

Washington   New York

Communities of practice bring together individuals across institutions who are focused on similar content areas to learn, problem-solve, and share practices.

COPs Varied In Specificity, Content Area
- STEM
- Starfish
- Humanities
- Workforce
- Chemistry
- Education Prep

Benefits:
- Helps augment established PD that may be focused on longer-term, broad reforms (e.g., Guided Pathways) rather than urgent, targeted support (e.g., managing remote learning for Nursing students)
- Provide more real-time opportunities for collaboration and rapid insight dissemination
- Creates a support network, reduces feelings of isolation among faculty

"This was a lifesaver when we were suddenly forced online. Thank you! I think the reason I keep going is a chance to share ideas across the colleges. It's worth it."

"Ask An Expert"

Washington   North Carolina   California

Several states either created processes to connect those seeking support with experts at other institutions or staffed centralized experts on key topics within the SSC or system office. Depending on the state's focus and resources, experts were leveraged for:

IT Platforms: States or success centers connect inquiries to Canvas or D2L experts within system or at a more advanced college; offer helpdesk services.

Instructional Design: States or success centers offer webinars, 1-on-1 appointments with instructional designers to set up or improve online course.

Targeted, As-Needed How-Tos: Surveys or forms collect inquiries/asks on specific tools or challenges; 1-2 SSC or system representatives offer regular webinars to address common asks.

💡 Partnerships helped provide access to experts, management for inquiry solicitation and response

Learning to Go Remote, Remotely

New York   California   Texas

Some states capitalized on existing online teaching resources to offer more structured tutorials, workshops, and packaged asynchronous learning opportunities for faculty to develop their remote/online teaching approaches.

Online "Coursework" Package for Remote Teaching
- Asynchronous recorded webinars/how-tos
- Periodic synchronous discussions
- Curated resources tied to specific topics/lessons
- "Badging" for specific online T&L skills
- Web page optimized for easy user browsing , some utilize an LMS portal specifically for faculty learners

Sample Programs:
- NY Remote Teaching Academy
- CA Online Network of Educators (@ONE)
- DigiTex

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No Silver Bullet for Challenges That Remain, But States Are Exploring Solutions

Adapting CTE and Hands-On Courses to Remote Environment

⚠️ *"There's an anxiety within the 'academic lanes' - in classes with lab environments, like welding or biology, there's just an expectation of face-to-face instruction, so they're struggling..."*

💡 *"...Our colleague in Open Educational Resources helped with this by sponsoring virtual lab software requests and showing them how it can be run."*

- Kristi Wellington Baker, Washington Success Center Director

Curating and Organizing Resources To Provide Support Without Overwhelming Users

⚠️ Faculty report feeling "overwhelmed" by long lists of resource links, unsure where to start

⚠️ Some institutions skeptical about ideas/practices from other states or institutions that are very different from their own

💡 Structured, topical PD based on faculty asks can streamline content

💡 Varied, state-based exemplars garner more credibility, interest

Tying Teaching and Learning to Guided Pathways and Equity Discussions

New Urgency, Attention on Technology...
"Even though Teaching & Learning is the fourth guided pathways pillar, it's been the most challenging for us to tackle as part of our broader Guided Pathways work. COVID has created a golden opportunity to do that."

...And on Equity
"The national conversation on equity has really allowed us an opportunity to get granular with student outcomes data on teaching and learning, though it can be hard to have those conversations in a remote setting."

Soliciting, Analyzing and Responding to Feedback

Big Questions

North Carolina

- How do find out what institutions need?

- How do we know if we're being helpful?

- How do we do this all efficiently?

"We asked three key questions in a statewide survey at the beginning of this crisis: (1) what resources are needed for effective teaching and learning? (2) how can we get faculty and students to engage more online? (3) what work is currently being done on these issues by faculty that is going unnoticed?"

- Audrey Jaeger, Executive Director, Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research

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Florida College Research Overview

Areas of Inquiry

1) What were the most urgent asks/needs as your campus moved to remote teaching and learning? How has that evolved?

2) What practices or supports around teaching and learning were particularly successful? What was less successful?

3) What resources or supports were/are most difficult to find or provide?

4) What topics might you (or faculty at your institution) want to discuss with other institutions?

5) How are institutions addressing equity within T&L?

6) Test Interest In: Communities of Practice; Ask an Expert; Formalized, Online Training Modules

7) Ask About: CTE remote learning, CARES Act funding and rapid credentialing approaches

Daytona State College

Hillsborough Community College
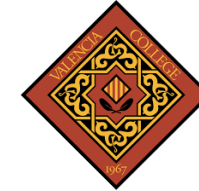
Valencia College

North Florida College

Santa Fe College

Chipola College

Institutions represented a mix of urban, rural, and suburban colleges across the state of Florida. They also represent a range of sizes, serving between ~2 thousand to over 40 thousand students.

LMS Systems:

4 Canvas

2 D2L Brightspace

Interviewees Came From a Range of Departments, Roles:

Sample Titles

- Provost
- VP of Workforce and Economic Development
- Learning Resources and Support Leads
- Director of Instructional Technologies
- Director of Online Teaching and Learning
- Faculty (Liberal Arts and CTE)

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Individuals Interviewed Across Institutions

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"My Answer Depends...": Florida Colleges Illustrate How Practices, Challenges and Triumphs Vary Across the Pandemic Timeline

During our interviews with various state and system officials, Audrey Jaeger (NC) sketched out how NC State's Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research did not experience the shift to remote learning as one "big wave," but rather as three distinct phases, each of which came with unique challenges that required varied responses. Florida college leaders' responses to questions about challenges and best practices for remote teaching and learning mirrored some of Jaeger's perspective; critical questions, needs, and strategies shifted over time.

Emergency Response	Sustain and Improve	Prepare for the "New Normal"

Emergency Response

Faced with going "suddenly remote" in the Spring, institutions worked quickly to communicate changes to students, support faculty and staff, and learn new ways of leveraging technology.

Sample Top Cited Questions
Initial inbound inquiries from faculty and staff were often handled by individuals in Library Services, Online Teaching and Learning, and Instructional Affairs/Learning Resources departments. Questions revolved around **initial set up** within the LMS and **basic how-to** instruction for other relevant remote technology.

- How do I upload things to the LMS?
- How do I use Zoom? Teams?
- What should be on my course page?
- How do we support students without internet access or computers? (CARES Act funding here)
- Help, my audio isn't working! (And other real-time technical troubleshooting)

Sustain and Improve

As the initial dust cleared and institutions recognized that remote teaching and learning would continue for months, urgent requests for basic technology support and set-up gave way to concerns about teaching and learning quality, equity, and academic integrity.

Sample Top Cited Questions
Colleges noted that, at a high level, top-of-mind issues became more focused on education quality and access; supports also needed to become **more targeted and more systematized**, as leaders noticed some faculty and staff were able to more easily adjust to the online environment than others.

- How do I keep students engaged online?
- What can be used to ensure academic integrity? How do these work with our existing tools?
- How do we reach students that have "disappeared" or are clearly struggling?
- What are my peers doing to support T&L at our college? What tech tools are they using?

Prepare for the "New Normal"

As colleges have begun to come back for in-person classes and support, they are reflecting on how lessons learned through this period could redefine everything from the way the institution's workforce is managed to how to tackle equity and access in teaching and learning going forward.

Sample Top Cited Questions
Looking forward, colleges are thinking more strategically. Many noted that the pandemic has changed the way the institution sees technology, and questions revolve around **thinking more holistically and long-term** about what the future of higher education should look like.

- What would it look like to continue to have a partially remote workforce going forward?
- How should we be rethinking faculty and staff onboarding and professional development? What roles and responsibilities need to evolve?
- How do we leverage technology to maximize access and equity without sacrificing quality?

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"In the future, given mixed modalities that will be present in our support and learning environments, individuals who were predominantly online will want connection with other human beings, and those that were primarily in-person will realize the convenience of being online.

We need to be prepared to meet the challenges of both."

Wendi Dew, AVP Teaching and Learning
Valencia College

Emergency Response: Florida Colleges Benefit From Existing LMS Infrastructure and Online T&L Expertise

In other states and at other institutions, Learning Management System (LMS) platforms were sometimes in transition, not fully implemented, or poorly used before the 2020 shift to remote instruction. These states and institutions reported facing an uphill battle to quickly implement, scale, and train faculty and staff on new LMS tools.

These six Florida institutions were largely spared this acute struggle. Each institution had already implemented either D2L Brightspace or Canvas. Each of the institutions also benefitted from past investments in online education delivery.

However, like other colleges nationwide, Florida colleges grappled with the ways in which the pandemic tested their bandwidth and resources, and they grappled with how the crisis exposed and exacerbated existing inequities.

Architecture for Success

❑ **Established and Well-Utilized LMS:** All Florida colleges interviewed benefitted from having established LMS platforms. Those with smoother transitions had also invested in (1) LMS experts on staff who could teach others about LMS features and/or troubleshoot LMS issues (2) LMS-specific professional development and training (3) Clear and universally accepted standards for LMS usage.

❑ **Established Online Programming:** Institutions leveraged local "experts", or those on staff that already had experience teaching all or part of their course online. Some colleges, like Daytona State and NFC, benefitted from a decades-long push into distance education that was originally meant to expand access across the service area.

"We're rural Florida and have the largest district with one of the smallest populations. So, distance learning was necessary to do ages ago. We asked, if they [students] didn't want to drive 45-50 mins, how do we serve them?" - Dr. Jay Welch, NFC

❑ **Organized Overcommunication:** All colleges noted the urgent need for updates during the shift; leaders emphasized the need to clearly and consistently communicate with students and staff. Leaders posted frequent updates to dedicated webpages (or front pages), understanding that emails could get buried in busy inboxes. Importantly, the most successful colleges ensured that the most critical information was properly emphasized and dispersed through multiple channels and *kept all updates organized (e.g., posted at regular intervals in the same location) so as not to confuse students and staff.*

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Emergency Response: Bandwidth and Resources a Universal Challenge, But Nuances Arose According to College Size

Challenges and Lessons Learned

⚠️ **Resourcing Students Amid The Shift: "Band-Aids Rather Than Solutions"**

CARES Act funding proved critical for Florida colleges, with all noting that some funds went toward procuring laptops and other materials for students. However, other acute and unexpected resourcing needs arose:

- Many colleges put up **wi-fi hotspots** in parking lots for students that did not have internet access at home but noted that not all students had ready access to a car from which they could work.

- Some faculty noted that remote learning came with **unexpected costs**, particularly for hands-on labs that required "not only a textbook, but a separate lab kit that students didn't know they'd need to pay for," or worksheets that "required printers that students didn't have."

"One colleague told me that at one point, we were all competing for these rock kits for a science course. The vendor ran out of them! Then what?"

-Faculty, Hillsborough Community College

⚠️ **Balancing Urgency with Realistic Faculty and Staff Bandwidth**

In the early weeks of the pandemic, the shift to remote T&L revealed two major categories for support: (1) Technical Training and (2) Pedagogical Training for an Online Environment:

- Long lists of resources popped up on internal and external websites, but faculty were at times overwhelmed and unsure how to mine the **ocean of resources** for what they really needed.

- Some colleges deployed **intensive PD**, but quickly realized that teaching new technical skills and pedagogy simultaneously (while faculty were still teaching full course loads) left faculty confused, overwhelmed, and less likely to absorb critical information.

"We were trying to do technology how-tos and pedagogy in-depth and at the same time. It was just too much. We realized, 'gosh, we would never teach our students a new skill this way, why are we doing that to our faculty?!'"

- Teaching and Learning Lead, Valencia College

Experiences Varied According to College Size, Capacity

Smaller Institutions

- More reliance on LMS vendor for troubleshooting; vendor help lines often busy

- Limited capacity for specialized roles (e.g., instructional designers)

Larger Institutions

- More friction in rolling out policy/practice changes,; longer timeline for decision-making

- Large numbers of faculty and staff that required varied support

👍 Quality Matters standards and FLVC resources given high praise by both large and small institutions

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Case Study: Valencia College's Case Management "Triage" Approach Deploys Peer Support For Faculty at Scale

The Problem

As a larger institution, Valencia had hundreds of faculty members that needed support during the transition to remote teaching and learning.

However, faculty were at vastly different proficiency levels, with some needing intensive support to get up to speed on online instruction, others requiring some light direction, and a few already highly adept at online teaching and learning practice and technology.

The Valencia team wondered: How do we meet such varied development needs quickly and at scale?

The Solution

Data Gathering

Examined **LMS data** and data warehouse data to assess professional development needs. Data examined included:

- Has an instructor taught an online class before?
- For how many terms has an instructor taught online?
- How many different types of courses has an instructor taught online? (# course preparations)
- What relevant PD has the instructor done before?

1800 Faculty Analyzed and Segmented

Segmentation and Triage

Data was compiled into a faculty "transcript", allowing the Valencia team to model out anticipated levels of support needed against existing capacity to provide this support:

- Recognized ~3-4 different levels of need based on faculty background and experience online
- Developed ~7 level triage system with sequenced action steps, from light support to deeper intervention
- Identified "critical contacts," defined as those with little online T&L experience and minimal online instruction PD

600 Faculty Identified as "Critical Contacts" for Intensive Support

Assign Mentors and Dedicate Time

"Critical Contacts" were each assigned a mentor (leveraging existing mentor program) within their field for intensive 1:1 support. Elements of success:

- Mentors: Consisted of 60-70 faculty and members of T&L staff; able to activate existing mentorship programs
- Consultation Guide: Standardized set of questions filled out before mentorship sessions to guide discussion
- Realistic Expectations: Emphasized "teaching enough," but not allowing perfect to be the enemy of the good; reduced number of course preps

100 Mentors Drawn from T&L Staff and "Highly Proficient" Faculty

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Sustain and Improve: Effective Practices and Key Challenges

Architecture for Success

Simple, Broad Guidelines

Short, simple resources helped illustrate baseline effective practice for LMS usage, video lectures, and student communication; longer more intensive resources were often too "overwhelming" for faculty.

"Heroic" Learning Technologists

Library services and teaching and learning staff became indispensable, offering on-call support, webinars, and customized how-to materials.

Peer Support, Exemplars

Existing peer mentorship programs were reconstituted to scale effective teaching and learning practice across disciplines.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Continued Challenge to Provide Access

Some students remained underresourced for remote learning; many also required already-scarce IT support to adjust to the remote environment.

Apprehension About New Structures, Change

Some faculty resisted new LMS/course shell standards, others worried self-service portals for students to manage degree plans and course changes might "make it too easy" for students to circumvent program requirements.

Depleted Stamina

Long hours taxed faculty and staff morale and stamina, many wondering how to "support students and ourselves" at the same time.

Distant Learning Automotive Technology
108 views • May 13, 2020   4 / 0
👍 4   👎 0   ↗ SHARE   ☰+ SAVE   ...
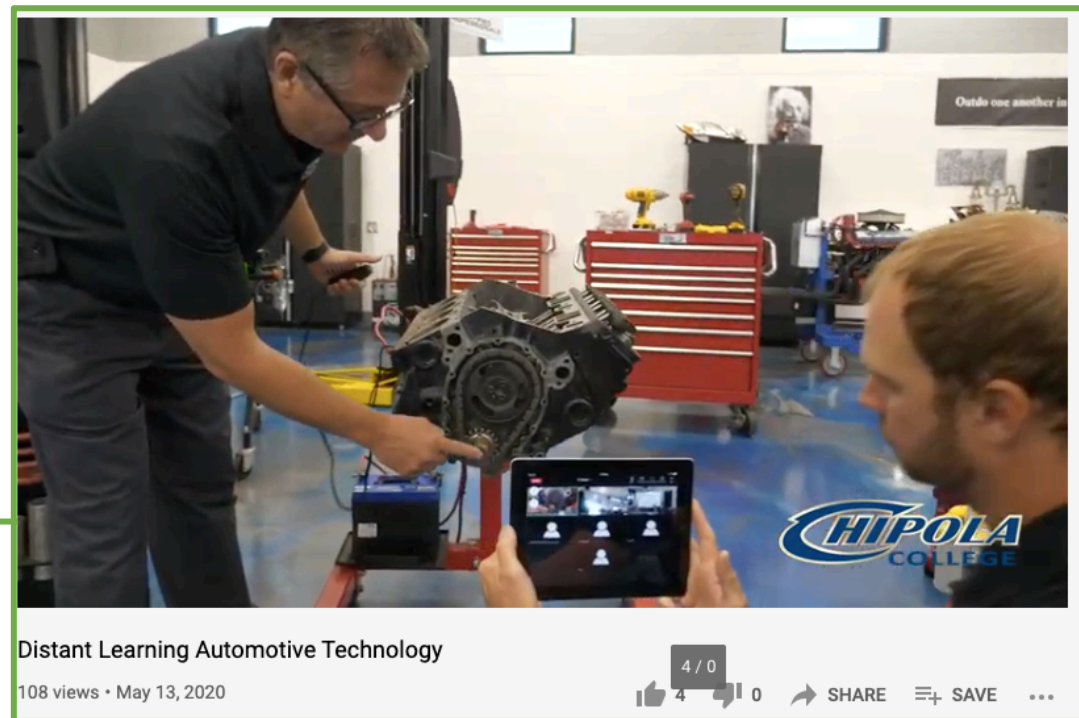
"John Gardner, our automotive instructor helped other CTE instructors understand how to do video-based 'capsules' of instruction. His videos were interactive, and the **students preferred watching instruction from their own professor** *on YouTube rather than just a stock video."*

-Vikki Milton, Director of Learning Resources, Chipola College

See John Gardner's video series on "TechGarage"

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Case Study: Multiple Colleges Begin to Establish Clear, Universal Guidelines for LMS Usage

Sample LMS Standards

Chipola College's LMS guidelines are split into two levels: Minimum Standards and Proficient Standards. Minimum Standards are required for all courses and Proficient Standards are meant for online courses. Standards included:

❑ Utilizes the customized "Pages Front Page" to address a Welcome and Course Introduction

❑ Publishes Final Exam date and time on calendar; location added when determined

❑ Records daily attendance

❑ Contains link to First Day Handout (Must be titled "First Day Handout")

...But Leaders Should Be Prepared for Some Faculty Resistance

"There has been some pushback on the gradebook standards...the tension is, students need consistency, and our faculty demand flexibility."

– Cabinet Member, Mid-Size Florida College

Why Does This Matter For Our Students?

90%

Students claim they strongly prefer to take classes with faculty that use the LMS calendar, grading, and discussion board features. Overall, LMS standardization reduced student anxiety and barriers to learning, critical adjustments to enable student success.

The Ada Center Student Focus Groups, 2019

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"We were nimble during this period, because we had to be. But there have been a lot of lessons learned, and there are things that are going to need to evolve going forward.

The truth is, **this airplane just doesn't fly backwards...** "

Dr. Ed Bonahue, Provost
Santa Fe College

Returning to a New Normal: Reflections From Institutions Illuminate Which Top-of-Mind Issues States Will Need to Consider Going Forward

Supporting An Effective Teaching & Learning Technology Infrastructure

Preparing for New Roles and Responsibilities

Exploring New Hybrid Models for Teaching, Learning, and Working

Putting Access and Equity at the Forefront of the Future of Higher Ed

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Returning to a New Normal:
Supporting an Effective T&L Technology Infrastructure

For institutions nationwide, including those in Florida, the shift to remote teaching and learning illuminated how much more could be (and needed to be) done with existing major technology platforms, like the LMS and student success CRMs. But it also put the spotlight on tools with features specifically catered to the remote learning environment. As the usage of these tools grows, so does the need to understand the product market landscape and explore how to scale tools effectively and sustainably.

Proctoring Tools
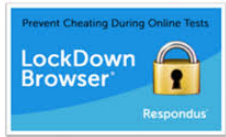
Florida colleges are currently using different proctoring tools, often procured or scaled quickly due to the urgent transition:

- Current contracting enabling costs to balloon over time as users are added.
- More guidance needed around how to orient students to these tools; national research from The Ada Center indicates that students have been caught off-guard, stressed by new technology used in high-stakes testing contexts.

Student Communication Tools

- Usage rates for **chatbots** skyrocketed at Florida colleges that had already invested in a tool (Ex: Daytona State College saw # of chats increase by 10X)
- Similarly, existing **CRM** technologies were leveraged more heavily to enroll and advise students remotely
- Colleges universally note that **appointment scheduling** features (sometimes included in CRM tools) were invaluable for students and reduced barriers.

How Can the State Help?

"It'd be great to have a ***clearinghouse*** *or discovery portal of technology tools and reviews."*

"Is there a way to get these ***proctoring*** *applications to be less expensive by coordinating as a state?"*

"We need each of these things to ***integrate*** *and work together, right now they don't play well. It'd be great* ***to know if others have encountered this issue****, or if we could pressure the vendors for a fix. It's not going away. "*

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Returning to a New Normal:
Evolving Roles and Responsibilities

Hiring for the Future of Higher Ed: A Changing Landscape

- **Instructional design skills** will be in increasingly high demand

  "They're like IR staff, difficult to recruit and maintain. That combination of tech, teaching and humanity…it's very rare!"

- **Job descriptions** for faculty and staff are already changing

  "We've already re-written a few job descriptions for flexibility across multiple modalities…"

- **Support staff** roles are shifting from basic calendar management to on-hand basic IT support

  "The job has changed. I need a quick SharePoint tutorial, MS Forms, a Zoom set-up, not diction!"

Onboarding and PD: Setting New Standards

- **Peer mentorship** programming within institutions expanding to address the intersection of pedagogy to modality

  "During this period, we proved to ourselves how adaptable and nimble we could be…and will need to be."

- **Mandatory training** now including more intentional LMS orientations, equity and access discussions, and baseline online T&L practices (though what is "baseline" versus more advanced is still being defined)

  "We're trying to be less reactive and more proactive about setting standards for online learning…"

  "We're implementing mandatory LMS training and more intensive training for online and hybrid educators"

How Can the State Help?

" *I'm a part of the College System Council for Instructional Affairs. It's really valuable, but instead of me going, I'd like to have more faculty engagement, an opportunity for them to come together and do the same kind of thing at their level with their peers."*

- Lynne Wyche, Director of Learning Resources, NFC

80% Of Florida interviewees expressed interest in Communities of Practice for faculty

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Returning to a New Normal:
New Models for Hybrid Teaching, Learning, and Working

Big Questions Arise As Colleges Contemplate a Hybrid Approach

Work from Home for Faculty and Staff? Critical Questions:

- How do we decide who gets to work remotely?
- How do we resource faculty and staff to work remotely part time?
- Could allowing more remote work allow us to more easily fill roles that are persistently difficult to source?
- Could allowing more remote work help us better serve students?

Daytona State College
Having a hybrid workforce allowed the college to extend its support services hours: "We realized that **33%** of student activity was happening during our previously 'closed hours.' What did we miss before?"

Mixed Modality Considerations for Students

- Communication: Course modality – and considerations for that modality – will need to be clearly articulated in student friendly language. (Note: Faculty acknowledged that students could become confused by terms like "Hyflex")

- One Size (Modality) Does Not Fit All: While some students, particularly adult learners, benefitted from the flexibility of distance learning, many were also eager to return to face-to-face classes.

What About CTE?

Remote instruction was most challenging for hands-on, workforce-focused programs. Most CTE leaders leveraged CARES Act funding for laptops, PD, and niche applications. But through this challenge, Valencia College recognized an opportunity to re-think the architecture of these programs:

Synchronous online lecture covers theory, knowledge

Labs open Monday - Saturday for hands-on learning component; students come at time that works for them

Instructors provide in-person support in labs; split hours

*Can be recorded for students to review

"If I have a construction program and the timing of the course does not work for a student, that student doesn't register. You hope they register next time, but they might not…. Our hope is that this will make access to advanced courses much easier."

- Dr. Nasser Hedayat, AVP Career and Workforce Education Valencia College

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Returning to a New Normal:
Equity and Access At the Forefront of the Future of Higher Ed

Florida Colleges Unanimously Cite Concern for Student Needs in Remote Environment

Equipment Needs come into focus, as students were forced to become more self-reliant for remote classes, many lacking internet access and laptops.

Digital Literacy takes new dimensions, with less tech-savvy students facing more barriers in class.

Basic Needs became apparent to faculty in new ways; Zoom provided a window into students' lives as they shared increasingly limited space, time, internet access, and even food while juggling competing demands (e.g., childcare, shifting job hours); conversations about equity and accessibility abounded across departments and units at colleges.

Accessibility grows in importance, with faculty unsure of how to be ADA compliant and/or identify student needs remotely.

Financial Needs an increasing challenge for students who have lost their jobs and confront the costs of education , with many reaching out for help to our faculty and staff.

How Can the State Help?

*"Requiring physical textbooks is a real barrier for our students. Textbooks cost as much as classes! We should explore **OER resources** as a part of this new phase of teaching and learning."*

*"Access to **laptops and wifi** hotspots is still spotty. We need a longer-term solution."*

*"How might we collaborate better with **high schools** to make sure students come to us with the baseline digital literacy skills?"*

A Note On Rapid Credentials

The economic crisis brought on by the pandemic created unique workforce education challenges and opportunities. Rapid credentials offered the opportunity to upskill students at record speed, but also ran the risk of "creating more unemployed workers, more quickly." Leaders noted that employers should have "skin in the game" for these credentials to ensure that "we aren't giving them 100 students for one position, which is great for them, but terrible for our graduates." (Note: Most workforce programs have shifted back to some in person instruction).

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From My Home to Yours:
*The Surprising Ways Remote T&L Built Empathy and
is Spurring Momentum Toward Greater Access*

Dr. Nasser Hedayat (AVP, Career and Workforce Education, Valencia College) described speaking with a CTE faculty member who observed a student on Zoom slouching during a lesson. "Can't you at least sit up?", the instructor asked. The student explained that he, in fact, could not; he had injured his back lifting heavy materials at work but didn't want to miss a moment of class.

"Normally, this instructor would come to class and likely see an empty chair. By providing distance instruction, instead, he saw that student's commitment. It made him more committed and more empathetic as a teacher." Dr. Hedayat explained.

"Given the choice between in-person and online learning, anyone will tell you: there are things you get from being in person that you can't replicate online. But being online means we can create more access for our students. It means instead of seeing an empty chair and thinking, 'Oh, this person stopped out because life got in the way…', or 'This student is just another absentee…', we can say, **'Life can get in the way of you coming to campus, but it doesn't have to get in the way of your education.'"**

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Feedback Overview: Given Top-of-Mind Issues, How Can State-Based Leaders Help Going Forward?

Tested Ideas from Other States

Communities of Practice (COPs) — 80%

Colleges were particularly interested in discipline-specific opportunities for faculty.

Many pointed to the FLVC as an exemplary model for Library Services staff that could be extended to other roles.

(See "Recommendations" on p. 25)

Ask an Expert — 50%

Smaller schools could benefit from external LMS experts and instructional designers, but larger schools found in-house staff responsive and adept enough to fill this need.

Many interviewees noted that, after the "emergency response" period, the kinds of questions that were asked required individuals that were 1) familiar with the institution's chosen LMS, 2) familiar with the institution's particular guidelines for course shells, and 3) in some cases, familiar with specific academic content.

Learning to Go Remote, Remotely — 20%

Interviewees noted that one-size-fits-all professional development for online teaching and learning would likely be too generic to be worth the lift required to create modules.

Several larger institutions already have robust online teaching and learning modules in place, including "badging" or other special recognition for faculty and staff that complete it.

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Feedback Overview: Given Top-of-Mind Issues, How Can State-Based Leaders Help Going Forward?

Potential Ideas to Explore:

	Anticipated Lift	Potential Impact
Support and Evolve Existing State-Based PD to Address Equity, Access, and T&L Modality Leaders across hierarchies and units noted that discussions about modality, equity, and access (e.g., What are best practice LMS/online T&L guidelines? How should these be implemented in onboarding and internal PD? What do emerging, effective "hyflex" approaches look like?) from across institutions should be embedded in Guided Pathways workshops; colleges were apprehensive about separate, new PD that might overtax institution bandwidth.	Low	High
Support the Creation of IT Inventory Databases (Centralized or Institution-Based) Proctoring applications, chat applications, and CRMs are likely to continue to be vital going forward. An understanding of the pros and cons of applications that are being used across different colleges would be helpful, though colleges could also benefit from institution-specific technology inventories that capture T&L applications being used across different departments; several faculty members noted that they were often unaware of the tools being used in within their own colleges.	Medium to High, Depending on Approach	Medium
Explore State-Wide Procurement or Partnership Efforts to Lower Costs, Improve Student Experience There was some appetite for a leveraging a state-wide contract to reduce the cost of proctoring applications and standardize the remote test-taking experience for students. Colleges also universally noted that access to technology resources (namely laptops) and internet access continued to be pain points for students, as well as for some faculty, leading to multiple asks for further support in establishing more and stronger internet hotspots throughout communities and funds for technology tools.	Medium to High, Depending on Approach	Medium-High
Explore Potential for Faculty-Centered or Topic-Specific Communities of Practice Ideally, COPs should be catered toward faculty and focus on sharing exemplary practices within disciplines. Colleges noted the COPs should meet every 3-6 weeks, but that an ongoing, well-moderated listserv about top-of-mind topics and questions could help to keep faculty in touch across institutions. Several interviewees noted that, if not formal COPs, opportunities to discuss topics such as managing a remote or partially remote workforce could also be helpful. *A Note on FLVC:* *80% proactively mentioned FLVC as an increasingly important infrastructure to maintain to support libraries/distance learning. Several noted that FLVC also offers an exemplary model for cross-institutional COPs.*	High	Medium-High

Suggested Guiding Questions to Inform Next Steps For State-Based Leaders

1) Which top-of-mind **topics** might the State or SSC be best positioned to support going forward?

2) Which **types of individuals**, faced with evolving roles and responsibilities, (e.g., leaders, faculty, instructional designers, teaching and learning leads, etc.) might the State or SSC be best positioned to support going forward?

3) What are the **best modalities** for delivering support for this/these topics (e.g., webinar, COP, website) given what already exists at colleges and within the state?

4) How might **other entities**, like FLVC, or ongoing programming, like Guided Pathways workshops, be helpful in deploying this support? What can we learn from them?

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Supporting Remote Teaching and Learning in Florida

March 2021

EDUCATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATES

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