



# DISTANCE LEARNING & STUDENT SERVICES

SUPPORTING THE LEARNING NEEDS OF FLORIDA STUDENTS

## Time to Spring Forward

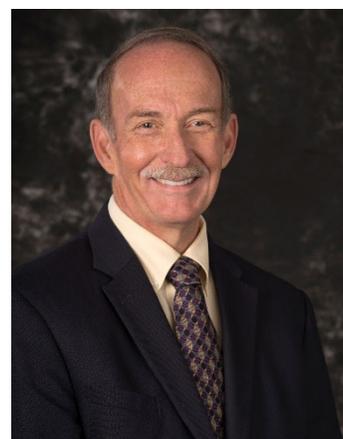
Welcome to Spring and what we all hope will be a change from the COVID pressure we have all been under. There are a lot of new initiatives underway with the potential for others as we reach the end of the Legislative session. This is a busy time for all with considerations for the changed world post-pandemic. A few immediate items, some of which we covered during our recent meeting.

First, the FLVC 2022 Textbook Survey will be out for data collection by the time you read this. We are hoping to contribute a better understanding from the students' perspective as to how many of the significant efforts to help reduce the cost of textbooks and instructional materials that have taken hold since our last survey have improved things. The survey draft report should be out early this summer. Thank you all for your help and participation in this effort.

Second, there are a number of state legislative issues under consideration as I write this that may impact online learning so stay tuned for more discussion as we see what emerges by session end. At the Federal level, there has been a series of Proposed Rulemaking meetings with the U.S. DOE that have, rather surprisingly, considered a tightening of the professional licensure notification requirements. The recent discussion involves requiring institutions to ensure that their programs leading to licensure in a particular state meet the requirements in

that state in order to access federal financial aid. Our friends at WCET have provided their usual excellent coverage and advocacy on those issues which we are all watching closely.

Third, you may recall that we considered some of the many modes of delivery that emerged as a result of the shift for COVID-19, the various descriptions and potential faculty training and support needs for each. There are discussions within both the FCS – CIA and the SUS Board of Governors concerning the study and development of best practices for some of the new delivery modes. I am sure we will hear more on these efforts moving forward.



*John Opper, Ph.D.*

*Executive Director, FLVC Distance Learning & Student Services*

Finally, I hope that you all will take a minute to enjoy the Spring after the difficult last two years. I am not sure what getting back to normal will mean for each of you but perhaps at least you can have a little more time for thinking and proactive activities and less of the constant stress that has characterized our online learning and support efforts.

Thank you all for your continued support and please let us know if we can assist you in any way!

Connect with the [Florida Virtual Campus](#) and [FloridaShines](#) on Facebook!  
Connect with the [Florida Virtual Campus](#), the [DLSS Members Council](#), and [FloridaShines](#) on Twitter!  
Connect with the o [Florida Virtual Campus](#) on LinkedIn!

# COLLEGE 101



## **College 101 webinar series held in February**

Thousands attended five College 101 events held virtually in September and October that gave students “College 101: Think It, Plan It, Do It” – a series of free, informational webinars for everyone from students preparing for high school to adults looking to advance their careers – were held each week during February. Fifteen educational organizations from across Florida partnered to offer the series.

The first webinar was designed for adults interested in returning to school to earn a college degree, certificate, or other credential to help advance their career or prepare for a new one. Experts shared information on how to start the process to reenroll, course options, admissions requirements, the factors that influence college choice and financial aid.

The second webinar, for high school seniors and their parents, gave a detailed overview of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the many other types of aid available to help pay for college. This webinar also helped students understand complex financial aid offer letters and how to navigate the verification process.

The third College 101 webinar was designed for high school juniors, sophomores, and freshmen to help them get ready for their senior year and explore post-graduation options, including college, workforce, and the military. Students who attended were provided with checklists of what they should be doing each year of high school to prepare for college.

The final webinar was designed for middle school eighth graders and their parents to prepare them for high school and give them tips on how to chart a path toward college, and beyond.

To view the video recordings of all four webinars, visit <https://www.floridashines.org/go-to-college/get-ready-for-college/college-101-event>.

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## **RESTrofit project underway to strengthen connections to FloridaShines**

The FLVC is actively working on the RESTrofit effort, to connect Florida’s public colleges and universities with upgraded technology, moving from older EDI technology to a RESTful API platform. This effort will allow institutions to maintain and strengthen their connections to FloridaShines.

Seven institutions were already using the API platform Illuminate so they have simply migrated from Illuminate to connect with FLVC directly API.

The other 33 colleges and universities will need to be upgraded from EDI to REST technology. Two pilot programs to start this process are already underway with Valencia College and Florida State University. Valencia College is already live with the upgraded technology and Florida State University’s upgrade is slated to be completed by June. Once these pilots are completed, FLVC will be reaching out to other institutions to begin these improvements.

## Transient Student Admissions Applications

To assist students in the completion of their degree requirements, your institutions approved 5,514 Transient Student Applications for this past Fall Term (August 2021 - December 2021). There have been 1,114 applications approved for this Spring term (2022) with more every day. Thank you for supporting the mission of the Florida Virtual Campus and being a part of the Transient Admissions Application process to support your students. Please do not hesitate to contact the Florida Virtual Campus Help Desk, throughout the semester, for further assistance.

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## Education news from Florida and Beyond

### *The Future of Education?*

Many of you will remember our last Summit on the Future of Higher Education where many of the unescapable factors facing higher education that would push change were discussed. Among those were a weakening financial/business model, shifting demographics, enrollment pressures and competition from outside players in the market. We have begun to see some of the impacts of those already. Due to enrollment declines and fiscal pressures, the State of Connecticut began to look at options for its college system in 2018. One idea was to merge them all into a single college with branch campuses. As the recent article in Inside Higher Education reports, that option seems to have cleared any hurdles with their accreditor. Looks like major changes are happening in the near future for the Connecticut college system. Read here:

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/03/09/accreditor-approves-connecticut-community-colleges-merger>

**Florida colleges and universities continue to shine in U.S. News and World Report's annual ranking of online programs** The University of Florida tied for first for best online bachelor's programs in the country while the University of Central Florida tied for seventh with two other universities. Daytona State College, Pensacola State College and the University of North Florida were featured in the top 50.

Congratulations to these institutions! Read the full list

here: <https://www.usnews.com/education/online-education/articles/us-news-ranks-best-online-programs>

**Drop in college enrollment threatens to cause long-term economic, social consequences**

The latest decline in college enrollment could have far-reaching consequences including reductions in earnings, health, life expectancy and tax revenue.

Read in The Washington

Post: <https://apple.news/AqwhSX9STRIWMzwa4X-ciGA>

**New research shows how bad the pandemic has been for student mental health.** Read in Education

Week: <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/new-research-shows-how-bad-the-pandemic-has-been-for-student-mental-health/2022/01>

## News from the Florida Instructional Designer Network



### *Florida IDN Professional Development Webinar Series continues in Spring 2022*

The Florida Instructional Designer Network kicked off the Spring 2022 Professional Development Webinar Series in January. Our next webinar, *Age, Gender, and Cultural Biases on Online Course* is scheduled on April 11 from 2:00 - 2:50 p.m. (ET). The guest speaker will be Tina Calandrino from the University of Central Florida.

Visit the IDN website at <https://dlss.flvc.org/idn> for resources and webinar recordings. Subscribe to the listserv and receive newsletters and announcements on professional development, career opportunities as well as rich resources shared by the IDN community members.

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### News from Florida Academic Success and Quality (FLASQ) Initiative

Please join us in congratulating the following Florida institutions for having one or more courses recently Quality Matters-Certified:

- Florida Atlantic University
- Florida International University
- Florida State College at Jacksonville
- Polk State College
- University of Florida
- University of North Florida
- University of West Florida



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### The IDN Digital Badges & Awards Winners

The IDN Digital Badges Pilot Project in Fall 2021 was a great success. Nineteen IDN community members successfully met the required earning criteria and received the IDN Professional Development Digital Badge & Award. Four guest speakers received the IDN Guest Speaker Award. Congratulations!



The IDN officially launched the digital badges & awards system in January 2022. Qualified IDN event and webinar participants will be awarded digital badges, which they can include in their annual performance review with their employers and proudly share on their social media accounts. Earning Criteria: Participating in at least two IDN webinars/events in Spring 2022, you will earn an IDN Professional Development Award badge. Digital badges and awards are also available for the IDN guest speakers and partners.

## Members Council presentation slides and resources

Thank you for attending the Feb. 16 DLSS Members Council meeting. We look forward to seeing you in June. Here are the links to the presentation slides and resources:

[DLSS MC February 16, 2022](#) meeting slides.

[Academic Integrity and the New Cheating Economy](#) presentation slides.

[WCET SAN - Professional Licensure Update](#) resource handout.

[Improving Academic Integrity and Authenticity in Online Assessments](#) panel slides.

[Improving Academic Integrity and Authenticity in Online Assessments](#) resource handout.

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