

HALLOWEEN EDITION

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DISTANCE LEARNING & STUDENT SERVICES

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TOP NEWS

■ ACCREDITORS ENCOURAGE AI USE TO BOOST CREDIT TRANSFER PROCESS

"More than half of those who seek to transfer credit report losing credits, which is a major barrier to degree completion. But AI can help streamline the process and reduce credit loss." (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

[READ MORE HERE.](#)



CHATBOTS IN HIGHER ED: BENEFITS, CHALLENGES, AND STRATEGIES TO PREVENT MISUSE

"There is no question that the educational potential is significant, but so too are the concerns about academic integrity and the consequences of students relying too heavily on these tools." (Source: Faculty Focus)

[READ MORE HERE.](#)

AI BOOM DRIVES SURGE IN DEMAND FOR TECH SKILLS IN 2025

"The online learning platform Udemy has seen a fivefold increase in AI-related enrollments this year, but some experts warn against falling for hype that frames AI as a quick fix for issues in education and the workforce." (Source: GovTech)

[READ MORE HERE.](#)



**DLSS
UPDATES**

FL-IDN LATEST WEBINAR: GENAI IN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN: SURVEY FINDINGS ON ID USE, CHALLENGES, AND NEEDS

Last month, FL-IDN hosted the webinar, “[GenAI in Instructional Design: Survey Findings on ID Use, Challenges, and Needs](#).” This presentation shared the results of a survey exploring how instructional designers (IDs) in higher education use generative AI (GenAI) in their practice.

IDs use GenAI in online and blended course development (e.g., to develop materials) and also guide faculty on GenAI use for teaching. IDs identified several challenges with GenAI, including credibility, ethical, and academic integrity concerns. They reported struggling to keep up with rapidly evolving GenAI technologies and the need for various types of support to successfully implement GenAI at their institutions.

Ariel Gunn (Johns Hopkins University), Swapna Kumar (UF), Margeaux Johnson (UF), and Albert Ritzhaupt (UF) discussed the implications for their research for IDs and GenAI integration into teaching and learning processes at institutions of higher education.

Many thanks to our guest speakers for sharing their knowledge and experience with our IDN community.

In case you missed it, here's the [recording](#) and [presentation](#).



FL-IDN UPCOMING WEBINAR: SIMULATION-BASED LEARNING IN ONLINE SCIENCE COURSES

This month, FL-IDN will host the webinar, “[Simulation-Based Learning in Online Science Courses](#).” Students enrolled in fully online courses have limited access to experiential learning opportunities, which are essential for enhancing engagement, developing practical skills, and reinforcing instructional materials. Therefore, there is a need for equitable, experience-based learning activities that allow fully online students to engage with instructional materials and apply their knowledge dynamically.

To address this issue and provide learners with a holistic learning experience, our team developed a prototype laboratory simulation for a fully online Drug Analysis and Chemistry course using Articulate Storyline 360. In this interactive, gamified online learning activity, students explore a lab and complete tasks while applying theoretical and foundational knowledge they learned in the course.

Our guest speakers, Anamary Tarifa and Michael Trainor (FIU), have a goal to reach instructional designers and faculty, sharing innovative solutions to current real-world challenges.

October 14, 2025 | 2:00 - 2:50 PM (ET) | Register for free [here](#).

The recording and other resources related to this webinar will be sent to the FL-IDN and MCDLSS listservs as soon as they are made available.



■ FL-IDN UPCOMING LIGHTNING ROUND WEBINAR: (1) BEYOND BARRIERS: HOW AI IS REVOLUTIONIZING ACCESSIBILITY & (2) EMPOWERING EDUCATORS: A THREE-STEP PROCESS FOR INTEGRATING AI IN TEACHING

Next month, FL-IDN will host a lightning round webinar.

The first presentation, “[Beyond Barriers: How AI is Revolutionizing Accessibility](#),” will be presented by Anastasia Bojanowski from UCF. They will showcase AI platforms that can translate text and equations from screen captures, provide alt-text to images, caption videos and provide transcripts, improve contrast for readability, as well as better supporting those cognitive disabilities with bots.

The second presentation, “[Empowering Educators: A Three-Step Process for Integrating AI in Teaching](#),” will be presented by Skylar Johnson, Holly Fremen, Chris Egan, and Kaitlin Alexander from UF. They will demonstrate a three-step process for instructional designers and educational specialists that supports their subject matter experts (SMEs) in learning about and implementing AI in teaching and learning.

November 4, 2025 | 2:00 - 2:50 PM (ET) | Register for free [here](#).

The recording and other resources related to this webinar will be sent to the FL-IDN and MCDLSS listservs as soon as they are made available.



For more IDN webinar recordings, visit: <https://dlss.flvc.org/idn-webinars>

■ INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHT: UF DEVELOPS BREAKTHROUGH MAGNET THAT COULD TRANSFORM METAL PRODUCTION

“Imagine if producing steel parts for agricultural equipment or even aluminum soda cans required only a fraction of the energy it does today. A University of Florida-led innovation may soon make this a reality.

In a groundbreaking collaboration backed by a nearly \$11 million federal grant, UF researchers have developed a first-of-its kind superconducting magnet that could advance metal production and position the United States as a global leader in alloy production.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Advanced Manufacturing Office, the project uses Induction-Coupled Thermomagnetic Processing, or ITMP, an advanced manufacturing method that integrates magnetic fields with high-temperature thermal processing.

The national consortium of industry, academic and national laboratory partners is now led by [Michael Tonks, Ph.D.](#), UF’s interim chair of [Materials Science and Engineering](#), who succeeded Michele Manuel, Ph.D., the [project’s](#) long-time leader.

“This revolutionary technology has the potential to substantially reduce the cost and energy use of heat treatments in the steel industry, and we are excited to help pave the way for its adoption in industry,” said Tonks.”

Read more [here](#).

MEETING INFO



FLVC AND SSC TO HOST MCDLSS FALL 2025 MEETING

A regular meeting of the FLVC Members Council on Distance Learning and Student Services will be held on Tuesday, October 14 from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday, October 15 from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at Seminole State College's Sanford/Lake Mary Campus in Sanford, Florida.

AGENDA

[SharePoint Link](#)

MEETING TIMES:

Tuesday, October 14

Lunch: On Your Own

Meeting: 1-5 p.m. ET

Wednesday, October 15

Breakfast: 8:30 - 9 a.m. ET

Meeting: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. ET

LOCATION:

Seminole State College, Sanford/Lake Mary Campus

AT Building, Rm. 102

100 Weldon Boulevard, Sanford, FL 32773

PARKING:

Parking Lot 18 and 19 are the closest to AT Building.

Free of charge.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Westin Lake Mary, Orlando North

2974 International Parkway, Lake Mary, FL 32746

(407) 531-3555



ARTICLE DIGESTS

■ THE DIFFICULT HUMAN WORK BEHIND RESPONSIBLE AI USE IN COLLEGE OPERATIONS

"Artificial intelligence-based products and software for college admissions and operations are proliferating in the higher education world. How to choose from among them? Well, leaders can start by identifying a problem that is actually in need of an AI solution. Jasmine Solomon, senior associate director of systems operations at New York University, described a "flooded marketplace" of AI products advertised for a range of higher ed functions, from tutoring systems to retention analytics to admissions chatbots. "Define what your AI use case is, and then find the purpose-built tool for that," Solomon said. "If you're using a general AI model or AI tool for an unintended purpose, your result is going to be poor." (Source: Higher Ed Dive)

■ LAW SCHOOLS EMBRACE AI

"As more and more law firms integrate generative artificial intelligence into their practices, a growing number of law schools are preparing future lawyers to adapt. Nearly three years after OpenAI's ChatGPT went mainstream—followed by Anthropic's Claude, Google's Gemini and a host of other similar platforms—some 30 percent of law offices are using AI-based technology tools, according to data published by the American Bar Association this past spring." (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

■ TOP THREE FACULTY USES OF GEN AI

"A new report from Anthropic provides insights into how higher education faculty are using generative AI, both in and out of the classroom. The company analyzed 74,000 anonymized conversations from faculty around the world on its Claude.ai platform, as well as surveyed 22 faculty from Northeastern University, to provide an "empirical snapshot" of educator AI adoption in university settings, according to a news announcement. Faculty uses of AI ranged from developing course materials and writing grant proposals to academic advising and managing administrative tasks, Anthropic said." (Source: Campus Technology)

■ USING AI AND PREDICTIVE ANALYTICS TO SAFEGUARD STUDENT SUCCESS

"Colleges and universities are navigating an increasingly complex landscape. Rising rates of anxiety, depression, and burnout are colliding with growing concerns about physical safety. Meanwhile, staffing shortages and stretched budgets are putting traditional support systems under immense pressure. As these realities converge, institutions are revisiting foundational questions: What does "safety" really mean on campus and how can we better support the whole student? One answer is emerging with increasing clarity: Technology, especially AI, offers powerful new ways to scale support, personalize interventions, and strengthen campus resilience." (Source: eCampus News)

■ WANT TO FUTURE-PROOF YOUR CAMPUS? START HERE

"Higher education is at a crossroads. Our institutions are wrestling with enrollment cliffs, questions of relevance, technological disruption and the age-old challenge of governance. Boards debate how to remain solvent. Presidents strategize about new programs and partnerships. Provosts explore AI, online expansion or micro-credentials. Everyone is reaching for levers they hope will strengthen the institution. Yet beneath all these efforts lies a single, urgent question: How do we make our institutions stronger in a time of change? In my experience, the answer is deceptively simple: develop leaders." (Source: University Business)

■ GOING OLD-SCHOOL: PROFESSORS USE PRINT BOOKS TO TEACH AI

"University of Southern California professor Helen Choi had a pretty basic assignment for her students this fall: Read a book. To be sure, Choi's pedagogical choice isn't novel for many faculty; 71 percent of professors use print materials in some capacity in their classroom, a Bay View Analytics survey found. But Choi teaches Advanced Writing for Engineers, a course focused on teaching STEM students how to write across disciplines. Many of them "think nothing of shoveling a writer's work into a chatbot for a summary," Choi said. So this fall, Choi is encouraging students to close their laptops and spend time with Karen Hao's book *Empire of AI*, about the evolution and tech behind AI." (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

■ YOU GOTTA WATCH THIS: TASK

"Set in the working-class suburbs of Philadelphia, an FBI agent heads a Task Force to put an end to a string of violent robberies led by an unsuspecting family man." Starring Mark Ruffalo and Tom Pelphrey. Airs Sundays at 9 p.m. ET on HBO and streaming on HBO Max.

(Source: [Rotten Tomatoes](#))

■ YOU GOTTA TRY IT: COLORADO FONDUE COMPANY

"Starting in September, [Colorado Fondue Company](#) becomes the best Halloween themed restaurant in Central Florida. There are Halloween decorations everywhere, top to bottom. It starts in the lobby and extends to the very last corner of the dining room. Keep your eyes open and pay close attention to detail. Lighting effects bathe the entire restaurant in a spooky, but not scary, light. Candles are everywhere. Jack-o-lanterns of varying styles grin as diners browse the menu. Halloween movie clips are played on a TV above the electric fireplace. Happy haunts materialize near the entrance of the kitchen."

(Source: [This Florida Life](#))

SPOOKY STUFF

■ YOU GOTTA GO: TORREYA STATE PARK

"Forests of hardwood trees provide the finest display of fall color found in Florida.

The park is named for an extremely rare species of Torreya tree that grows only on the bluffs along the Apalachicola River.

Today, the park plays a critical role in preserving unique plant and animal species and natural communities that are of regional importance, and protecting the water quality of the Apalachicola River, which feeds the productive Apalachicola Bay. The park's high plateaus, steep bluffs and deep ravines are covered with a forest that harbors a variety of rare and endemic plants and animals, many of which are more common farther north than this location." (Source: [Florida State Parks](#))

■ YOU GOTTA READ IT: B&N OCTOBER MONTHLY PICKS

"New month, new books — our October monthly picks are here. Craving a little mystery and adventure, drama or a fascinating [nonfiction](#) read? Whatever you're in the mood for, we've got you covered. From an atmospheric whodunit and a moving historical fantasy to a gripping domestic drama and a fairytale [romance](#), there are new stories waiting to be discovered. Whether you're searching for a transformative guide or a new young reader favorite, you'll find it here."

(Source: [Barnes & Noble](#))

