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■ DATA SHOWS AI 'DISCONNECT' IN HIGHER ED WORKFORCE

“Most university employees are using AI, but many aren’t sure how their institution wants them to employ the tools or how they feel about them, according to a new report published by Educause in partnership with the National Association of College and University Business Officers, the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources, and the Association for Institutional Research.”
(Source: Inside Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).





AN AI BOT IS MAKING PODCASTS WITH SCHOLARS' RESEARCH. MANY OF THEM AREN'T IMPRESSED

"Last summer, Bonnie Shucha, a librarian at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, sat in her office listening to an AI voice attempt to distill her 41-page research article on scholarship visibility into a five-minute podcast. So far, the new feature on the popular site Academia.edu was struggling mightily."
(Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education)

Read more [here](#).

FAFSA COMPLETIONS FOR CLASS OF 2026 OUTPACING LAST YEAR'S

"The high school class of 2026 has completed a collective 1.6 million federal student aid applications for higher education for the 2026-27 school year as of Jan. 23, or about 52% more than the class of 2025 by the same date, according to a tracker from the National College Attainment Network."
(Source: Higher Ed Dive)

Read more [here](#).



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■ NEW PARENT AND GUARDIAN PERSONA NOW AVAILABLE IN THE FLORIDASHINES APP

FloridaShines has added a new user persona to its free [FloridaShines mobile app](#) that provides convenient, on-the-go access to FloridaShines resources most frequently used by Parents and Guardians.

The new persona connects parents and guardians to trusted resources for exploring college and career options, understanding college admissions requirements and costs, and navigating financial aid. It expands the app's existing personalized experiences for High School Students and College Students, creating a more complete support system for families throughout the college planning journey. In addition to availability within the mobile app, these resources are also available for free from the [FloridaShines.org website](#).

High school students can use the app to explore colleges, degree programs, and financial aid options, while college students can manage enrollment, check transcripts, find online courses, and track progress toward graduation.

The FloridaShines app is free and available on the Apple App Store and Google Play, providing 24/7 access to college success tools for Florida students and families.

Parents and guardians can download the app at [FloridaShines.org/app](#) and select the persona that best fits their college planning needs.

■ INSTITUTION SPOTLIGHTS ON FLORIDASHINES COMING SOON

This is a friendly reminder that an upcoming feature on the FloridaShines website—designed to highlight your Florida institution on the homepage—is going live soon.

To ensure your institution is accurately represented, we kindly ask that you complete the form linked below to provide your institution's details.

The form requests an official institutional image (campus photo) and a brief description; additional instructions are included within the form.

Please submit your information by **February 15, 2026**, and don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Complete the form [here](#).

■ MCDLSS SPOTLIGHT: IRSC AND SUPERHUMAN PARTNER TO ADVANCE AGENTIC AI INTEGRATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

“Indian River State College (The River) today announced an expanded partnership with Superhuman (formerly Grammarly) to deploy an agentic AI infrastructure across its campuses. This step makes The River the nation's first open enrollment state college to implement a comprehensive, institution-wide AI strategy from Superhuman that embeds intelligent assistance into the familiar digital tools students, faculty, and employees already rely on for learning, teaching, and work. Building on a successful 2025 collaboration with Grammarly—Superhuman's writing assistance platform—the new partnership leverages Superhuman Go, designed to enhance student learning, streamline faculty workflows, and modernize administrative operations.

“Our partnership with Grammarly has been transformative, and Superhuman Go represents the next evolution of that vision,” said Dr. Timothy E. Moore, President of Indian River State College. “AI is reshaping every industry, and our responsibility is both to equip students with the skills they need to thrive in this intelligence-driven economy and to transform our own operations to meet this moment. Colleges and universities won't be able to position themselves for the future without working closely with AI experts who understand higher education.” (Source: IRSC News)

Read more [here](#).

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■ MCDLSS SPOTLIGHT: COULD AI LEAD TO THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH? A TEAM LED BY A UCF SCIENTIST IS TRYING TO FIND OUT

“UCF computer scientist Yu Tian wants to discover real solutions for longer, healthier lifespans, and the team he directs in the AI and Imaging in Medicine (AIM) lab might not be far off from doing exactly that... They’ve been building a system that can learn from each patient’s history, exams, MRIs, CTs and life information. Given the copious amount of data, the AI model would then predict the person’s future medical trajectory.” (Source: UCF News)

Read more [here](#).

■ FL-IDN CELEBRATED NATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS DAY (NID DAY) ON FEB. 10

National Instructional Designers Day (NID Day) is a national public awareness campaign founded and hosted by the Florida Instructional Designer Network (FL-IDN). Observed annually on the second Tuesday of February, NID Day celebrates the contributions of instructional design professionals and raises awareness of the essential role they play in education, training, and workforce development. NID Day recognizes instructional designers, learning designers, instructional technologists, curriculum developers, and related professionals who design accessible, engaging, and effective learning experiences for learners of all ages.

Purpose

- Honoring and celebrating instructional design professionals
- Raising awareness of the impact of instructional design on student success and workforce readiness
- Strengthening collaboration and trust among instructional designers, faculty, staff, administrators, and institutional partners

Who Participated?

- Colleges and universities
- School districts and training organizations
- Faculty, staff, and administrators
- Instructional design and educational technology teams
- Professional associations and networks

Event & Additional Activities

- IDN Professional Development Webinar
 - Certificate of Participation provided
- Attendees shared reflections and experiences in the [NID Day 2026 Online Guest Book](#)
- Attendees recognized instructional designers through internal communications
- Attendees shared NID Day materials and messages on social media
 - See a [sample message](#) and [event flyer image](#)
- Attendees sent [“Happy National Instructional Designers Day” cards](#) to colleagues
- Attendees were encouraged to host local celebrations or recognition activities
- Attendees were encouraged to promote professional reading and discussion related to instructional design and learning technologies



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FL-IDN LATEST WEBINAR: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING: BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY FROM THE GROUND UP

Earlier this month, FL-IDN hosted the webinar, “[Project Juggling for Instructional Designers: Staying Sane and Delivering Excellence](#).” Instructional designers rarely work on one project at a time—most are juggling multiple course builds, initiatives, and collaborations, all while navigating evolving priorities like accessibility and AI integration.

This webinar introduced sustainable, repeatable practices for managing a high volume of instructional design work without sacrificing quality. With insight from both a practicing instructional designer and an ID manager, attendees gained a dual perspective on workflow challenges and solutions. Topics included prioritization frameworks, batching strategies, project tracking tools, and values-aligned routines to reduce stress and prevent burnout.

Our guest speakers, Carrie Cole and Cairo Jones (Virginia Commonwealth University), provided templates, tools, and an interactive planning activity to support immediate and ongoing application.

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

In case you missed it, here are a couple resources below:

[Recording](#) | [Presentation Slides](#)



FLVC HOSTED A VIRTUAL MCDLSS MEMBER RESOURCE WEBINAR ON FEB. 12

This week, FLVC hosted a virtual orientation of the FLVC Members Council on Distance Learning and Student Services.

This was a great opportunity for members, new and old, to learn about the benefits of membership, their responsibilities, FLVC services and resources, key distance learning state and federal statutes and regulations, current contracts and agreements, and much more.

In case you missed it, here are a couple resources below:

[Presentation Slides](#) | [Member Resource Guide](#)



UP NEXT



FL-IDN UPCOMING WEBINAR: IMPACTFUL INTERACTIONS IN INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN MENTORSHIP

Next month, FL-IDN will host the webinar, “[Impactful Interactions in Instructional Design Mentorship](#).” Mentoring, both formal and informal, is a powerful tool for professional growth – especially in the broad field of instructional design.

This webinar draws on findings from a doctoral research study that examined the specific types of interactions that new and less experienced instructional designers found most impactful for their professional development.

Our guest speaker, Melissa Dietrich, Ed. D. (Orbis Education), will explore four key themes that emerged from the study: creating a nurturing environment, developing soft skills, developing hard skills, and helping career advancement.

Participants will leave with practical suggestions to foster meaningful mentor-mentee interactions and enhance or implement mentorship structures within their own organizations.

March 10, 2026 | 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.

IDN
Instructional Design Network
1000+ Members Dedicated to Collaboration and Continuous Professional Development

IMPACTFUL INTERACTIONS
in Instructional Design Mentorship

Guest Speaker
MELISSA DIETRICH, ED.D.
Orbis Education

Professional Development Webinar
MARCH 10, 2026
2:00 - 2:50 PM (ET)

FREE REGISTRATION:
<https://tinyurl.com/2mepu9hn>

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■ FLVC TO HOST MCDLSS SPRING 2026 MEETING VIRTUALLY ON FEB. 25 AND FEB. 26

A virtual meeting of the FLVC Members Council on Distance Learning and Student Services will be held on Wednesday, February 25 from 1 - 5 p.m. and Thursday, February 26 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Microsoft Teams.

Free registration, resources, and other information can be found below.

REGISTRATION & DEADLINE:

Please register your attendance below.

Registration closes on Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

<https://forms.gle/qDFem2n3eQnCbJrd6>

RESOURCES

The agenda, presentation slides, Oct. 2025 minutes, and other meeting items will be shared with registered attendees prior to the scheduled event.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact [Brooke Tome](#).



The graphic features a woman with curly hair in a brown top, seen from behind, gesturing in a meeting room. The background is a bright orange and teal color scheme. Text on the graphic includes: 'SPRING 2026' in a blue banner, 'MCDLSS MEETING' in large white letters, 'FEB. 25-26, 2026 MICROSOFT TEAMS' with a calendar icon, and a profile for 'KEVIN CORCORAN 2025-2026 Chair, UCF'. At the bottom, there is a 'REGISTER NOW' button and the URL 'HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/QDFEM2N3EQNCBJRD6'.



SAN
BOX

■ FLVC STATE AUTHORIZATION LISTSERV

FLVC has launched the Florida State Authorization Network Listserv to help institutional contacts stay informed with timely updates, alerts, and developments related to state authorization. We also encourage you to use this Listserv to ask questions, share resources, and exchange best practices with your colleagues across the state. As a reminder, the Florida Virtual Campus provides an annual group membership to the State Authorization Network (SAN) for all Florida College System (FCS) and State University System (SUS) institutions. Since 2011, SAN—a division of WCET—has been a national leader in providing guidance, professional development, and support on regulatory compliance for out-of-state activities of postsecondary institutions. FLVC has periodically hosted SAN representatives at Members Council meetings to share expertise and insights.

You may access the **SAN Member Portal** [here](#).

Username: Florida Virtual Campus | **Password:** SANhelps1819

■ NEW SAN OPPORTUNITIES

- [Beyond Disclosures: Proactive Professional Licensure Compliance in Higher Education](#)
 - Virtual registration is now open. March 4, 2026; Webcast.
 - As professional licensure requirements continue to evolve—alongside heightened federal and SARA expectations—colleges and universities face a complex and high-stakes compliance landscape. This webcast explores the essentials of professional licensure compliance.
- [SAN Implementation Workshop 2026](#)
 - In-person registration is now open. March 18-19, 2026; Boulder, CO.
 - This workshop will be a hands-on opportunity to work through practical implementation exercises related to professional licensure, state institutional approvals, communication with key stakeholders, and other compliance areas.

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ARTICLE DIGESTS

■ SEE THE 2026 U.S. NEWS RANKINGS FOR BEST ONLINE PROGRAMS

“Enrolling in an online college program can often be a more affordable and flexible alternative to an in-person degree, especially for students juggling a job or family responsibilities. While online learning increased in popularity at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, many institutions – like some ranked in the 2026 U.S. News Best Online Programs – were ahead of the curve, having offered online degree options for years. For the 2026 Best Online Programs rankings, U.S. News assessed nearly 1,850 online bachelor's and master's degree programs and ranked the majority...” (Source: U.S. News & World Report)

Read more [here](#).

■ HIGHER ED PREPARES FOR NEW ERA OF ACCESSIBILITY

“Mitigating...digital accessibility disparities is also the spirit behind looming new federal regulations, which aim to reduce the hurdles students with disabilities face in accessing increasingly complex information on web pages and mobile apps. But many colleges and universities are scrambling to meet the April deadline, creating a situation one higher ed analyst described as a “regulatory time bomb.” (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

■ SURVEY: COLLEGE STUDENTS LUKEWARM ON AI COURSES

“While roughly half of college students believe proficiency with artificial intelligence tools is important to their future careers, a new survey suggests that far fewer are turning to their university for instructions on how to use it. According to a survey of roughly 1,000 college students that Honorlock published last week, only 31 percent of students are aware of AI courses their college or university offers, and fewer than 20 percent have taken them.” (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

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■ **WHEN AI MEETS DATA: THE PROMISE AND THE PRESSURE OF BRINGING AI INTO HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS**

“The implications of AI for data governance and security don’t often grab the headlines, but the work of incorporating this technology into institutional culture is vital, complex, and illuminating... Bringing AI into real, regulated institutional data environments is not just a technology project; it’s a test of our entire data governance and security philosophy.” (Source: Educause)

Read more [here](#).

■ **NEW CHATBOT ‘OUTPERFORMS PHDS ON LITERATURE REVIEWS’**

“A new chatbot designed by scholars can outperform PhD students and postdocs in undertaking scientific literature reviews, according to a Nature study that says the large language model (LLM) is capable of producing reliable summaries for less than a penny... According to the study... the domain-level experts... preferred OpenScholar and ScholarQABench responses either 51 percent or 70 percent of the time respectively.” (Source: Times Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

■ **UNDERSTANDING NONCREDIT STUDENTS’ GOALS AND MOTIVATIONS**

“For researchers, a noteworthy finding was that most of the interviewees, 71 percent, had previously attended college. Almost two-thirds of those who enrolled in the past only took credit-bearing courses. Smaller shares enrolled in noncredit courses or a mix of both, 12 percent and 15 percent, respectively. A quarter of interviewees were enrolled in credit or multiple noncredit programs while participating in the study.” (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

■ **ACADEMICS MOVING AWAY FROM OUTRIGHT BANS OF AI, STUDY FINDS**

“Academics are increasingly allowing artificial intelligence (AI) to be used for certain tasks rather than demanding outright bans, a study of more than 30,000 US courses has found... Analyzing advice provided in class materials by a large public university in Texas over a five-year time frame... an education researcher... found that highly restrictive policies introduced after the release of ChatGPT in late 2022 have eased across all disciplines except the arts and humanities.” (Source: Times Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

■ **OPINION: THE HOLLOW PROFESSOR**

“Current anxieties about artificial intelligence in higher education focus overwhelmingly on students. Faculty worry that AI tools will allow undergraduates to bypass the struggle of learning by producing essays without understanding. This concern is not misplaced, but it obscures a more consequential transformation occurring on the other side of the classroom. The deeper risk is not that students will fake their way to degrees. The risk is that faculty and administrators are increasingly adopting a form of synthetic authority that preserves institutional power while hollowing out the intellectual substance that once justified it.” (Source: Inside Higher Ed)

Read more [here](#).

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TV MUST-SEE: SHRINKING

"A grieving therapist who starts to break the rules and tell his clients exactly what he thinks; ignoring his training and ethics, he finds himself making big changes to people's lives including his own." Starring Jason Segel and Harrison Ford. Season three now airing on Apple TV. (Source: Rotten Tomatoes)



YOU GOTTA TRY IT: SATCHEL'S PIZZA

"If you've ever driven through Gainesville, chances are you've spotted the quirky van or heard friends rave about the "crazy-cool pizza place" you just have to try. Satchel's Pizza isn't just a restaurant—it's an experience. From its history and art to its menu and eccentric gift shop, Satchel's has become one of Gainesville's most beloved landmarks... The centerpiece of the restaurant is Satchel's iconic van, which he once lived in and traveled the country with before opening the restaurant. Today, that van has a permanent home out front, and yes—you can actually dine inside it." (Source: Stay Gainesville)



FUN STUFF

SPINE-BENDERS: MONTHLY PICKS FOR FEBRUARY 2026

"New month, new picks. February brings frozen mysteries, whimsical folktales, a stark story about the American dream and more to get lost in. With Amity Gage's Heartwood, discover a tale of survival, or take a lovely trek through the woods with some goblins in Jessie Sylva's latest. Find those and more great reads this month." (Source: Barnes & Noble)

YOU GOTTA GO: CORAL CASTLE

"Step into this architectural marvel constructed single-handedly by Edward Leedskalnin from 1923 to 1951. Using only basic tools, he moved and carved massive limestone blocks, some weighing several tons. From the perfectly balanced 9-ton gate to intricate celestial carvings, the castle defies conventional engineering explanations. Coral Castle a modern wonder shrouded in mystery." (Source: Coral Castle)

