

# Distance Technology and Best Practices for Engaging with Students from Home

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# Webinar Overview

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- COVID-19 and Moving Online
- Overview of Distance Technologies
- Move to Online Education/Distance Comms
- Supporting Students in Online Spaces
- Potential Challenges
- Questions, Answers, and Resources



# Expert Panelists

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Stevie Guardiola

Senior Coordinator for  
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Dr. Kasandrea Sereno

Founder, HigherEd Social  
Senior Academic Advisor  
University of South Florida



# COVID-19 and Moving Online

**Bentley Grad School**  
@bentleygrad

"Academic instruction is only one part of the university's transition to online". Read full story here: [lnkd.in/f7znjpn](https://lnkd.in/f7znjpn)

#onlinelearning #virtualclassroom #virtuallearning #virtualcollaboration #leadership #management #onlinetraining #graduateschool #bentleygrad #COVID



Online classes and a new virtual community begin at Bentley  
@bentley.edu

1:53 PM - Apr 15, 2020 from Belmont, MA - Twitter for Android

## Students Without Laptops, Instructors Without Internet: How Struggling Colleges Move Online During Covid-19

By Beth McDermie April 09, 2020



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**IEEE** IEEE Continuing Ed  
@IEEELearn

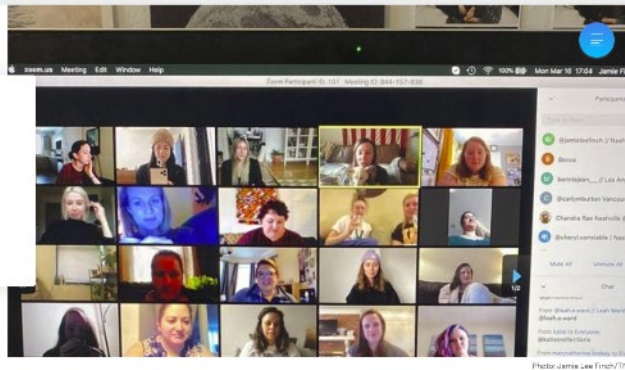
During the Covid-19 pandemic, millions of students are making the difficult transition to distant learning. What can be done to help keep their data safe? Find out in the latest IEEE Innovation at Work post. #ChildData #OnlineLearning #DataPrivacy



Understanding Child Data Privacy for Distance Learning - IEEE Innovation at Work  
The sudden switch to distant learning poses unique questions about child data privacy and how to protect students' personal information.  
@innovationwork.ieee.org

4:50 PM - Apr 20, 2020 - Hootsuite Inc.

Opinion: Class numbers dwindle as college students struggle with online learning



GET SCHEDULED BLOG | April 07, 2020  
By Maureen Downey

**Wii**  
@WorkshopWii

I'm just trying to make it through my online classes.  
#snapchat #OnlineClasses #Online #hating #struggling #struggle



Me trying to get through my online classes

0:55 - 36 views

2:14 PM - Apr 15, 2020 - Twitter for Android



# The New Normal

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# Distance Technology: Zoom

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- Launched 2011
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Requires a download, no account; can phone in.
- Free for up to 100 participants for 40 minutes (no time limit for 2 participants).
- Embeds into online learning modules (Blackboard, Canvas, Sakai).
- Over 200m users (April 2020)





# Zoom: Potential Hurdles

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- [Zoom bombing](#): an international phenomenon where someone uninvited enters a Zoom meeting and creates disruptions.
- Students now use their living rooms and bedrooms as learning spaces: [changing backgrounds to protect privacy](#).





# Distance Technology: WebEx Meetings

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- Launched 2007
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Requires a software download and a registered account.
- Free for up to 100 participants for 40 minutes.
- 324m users (April 2020, largely businesses)







# Distance Technology: GoToMeeting

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- Launched 2004
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Limit of 250 attendees, 26 participants per call.
- Requires a software download and a registered account.
- Limited 14 day free trial, then paid subscriptions only.



**GoToMeeting**



# Distance Technology: Adobe Connect

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- Launched 2018
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Limited free trial for 25 participants, then paid subscriptions.
- Requires an account, cannot join anonymously.
- 2.5m users (April 2020)



Adobe® Connect™



# Distance Technology: Microsoft Teams

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- Launched 2017
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Free trial, then paid subscriptions.
- Packaged with Office 365.
- Users can join a call without an account (anonymously).
- 45m users (April 2020)





# Distance Technology: Panopto

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- Launched 2007
- Available on nearly all devices (Windows, Mac, iPhone, and Android).
- Free trial, then paid subscriptions.
- Emerging as popular education platform at major universities; excellent for web accessibility.
- 500 institutional clients (2019)





# Distance Technology: Other Video Options

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## [FaceTime](#)

Limit 32 people on a call, only for Apple devices, free with Internet.



## [Google Duo](#)

Limit 8 people on a call, free with Internet.



## [Facebook Messenger](#)

Cross-platform, free with Internet.



## [WhatsApp](#)

Limit 8 people on a call, free with Internet.



## [Skype](#)

Max 50 people on a call, supports calls/text, free with Internet.



## [Loom for Chrome](#)

Free Chrome browser add-on, creates instantly shareable videos.



# Student Engagement



# Mindfully Serving and Being a Constant

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## Availability, Resources, and Channels:

- All offices updated website pages sending memos and available via Skype, Zoom, email and regular office lines.
- President sent message “We are here for you” to remind students to reach out and assure we are available to them
- Teams discuss cultural mindset of sensitivity to situation
- Remain empathetic and understanding before making our student take action
- Various offices conducting wellbeing checks on the forefront while connecting with the student
- Keeping students informed of new information and resources at a central Emergency Notifications webpage



# Distance Learning Initiatives Across Campus

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- Classes are offered via Canvas and virtual classrooms in Zoom.
- Student Services offered by answering office lines at home as well as Skype and Zoom “walk ins” and appointments available.
- Academic Technology Services and Technical Support Services webpage created a user-friendly one-stop shop for accessibility and resources.
- Financial Assistance updated webpage for information on Special Conditions process related to COVID-19.
- Office of Student Retention contacted students on their wellbeing and discussing registration.
- Business Office relaxed payment deadlines, fees and holds.
- TRIO Student Support offered weekly group chats, one-on-ones and workshops for continued learning and resource help.
- Counseling Center offering free chat and video counseling and working on a COVID-19 anxiety resource workbook.





# Creating a Sense of Community in a Virtual Environment

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- Creating and promoting virtual events led by faculty and guest speakers.
- Offering wellness tips and local resource guides.
- Offering virtual backgrounds for Zoom use.
- Providing free counseling via chat or video by on-call counselors.
- Celebrating virtual graduation ceremony to honor Class of 2020.



# University of South Florida Context

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- Metropolitan Research University, 48k students.
- **Diversity:** 42% of students are African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or multiracial.  
**Countries Represented:** 141
- 55% of all USF baccalaureate graduates have received Pell Grants (41% at UF and 38% at FSU).
- 33% of all USF baccalaureate degrees are awarded to African American and Hispanic students (28% at UF and 26% at FSU).
- National model for eliminating the completion gap.



# Rethinking the Work

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- Not just moving our existing work online but rethinking the way we do business and what is possible.
- Using a combination of Canvas/Teams/Phone/Email/Video to connect to students.
- What do they need now? What are they worried about? How can we address that worry and “care out loud?”
- Proactive outreach: seniors, new incoming students.
- Book appointments online, with option for phone/Skype/Teams. 95% are choosing phone.
- <https://www.usf.edu/coronavirus/index.aspx>



# Challenges for Our Students: Technology

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- **Internet access:** Students may have relied solely on campus-provided Internet and may lack Internet at home = the [“digital homework gap.”](#)
- **Technology hardware access:** Students may have relied solely on campus-based hardware.
- **Lack of training:** [Students and instructional staff may not know how to move online](#), use/download software, operate learning platforms, troubleshoot.
- **Lack of IT:** Better resourced institutions may have much stronger IT support for students.
- **Availability of electronic signatures/processes:** How can students complete processes usually completed in-person?
- **Online and screen fatigue:** Research already suggests that students and teachers are [tired of online learning](#) and [crave face-to-face instruction](#).



# Challenges for Our Students: Personal

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- **Limited access to work spaces and privacy:** Students may be using their living room or bedroom for their new learning space, potentially violating their sense of privacy.
- **Virtual socioeconomic disparities:** Students “see” the income levels of their peers when they see their home space during Zoom calls.
- **Creating a new schedule and time management:** Students may have never had to drastically change their routines to incorporate online and potentially self-paced work.
- **Work conflicts:** Students may be working jobs that are considered essential, so they are expected to work more hours.
- **Family commitments:** Students may be providing care for younger siblings while parents work, in addition to other caretaker responsibilities.
- **Overwhelmed by new and increased assignments:** If work is all online, are instructional staff overwhelming students?
- **Resisting a culture of care and empathy across campus:** Are faculty, staff and other stakeholders aware of student stress and difficult circumstances? Are they adjusting and being flexible?



# Questions, Answers, and Resources

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# List of Distance Technology Resources

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- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/>
- Webex: <https://www.webex.com/>
- GoToMeeting: <https://www.gotomeeting.com/>
- Adobe Connect:  
<https://www.adobe.com/products/adobeconnect.html>
- Microsoft Teams: <https://products.office.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/group-chat-software>
- Panopto: <https://www.panopto.com/panopto-for-education/distance-learning/>



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