Center for Instruction and Research Technology

2022

ANNUAL REPORT

UNF UNIVERSITY of NORTH FLORIDA

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An Academic and Student Affairs support unit, the mission of the Center for Instruction and Research Technology (CIRT) is to offer expertise, resources, and training to assist faculty in ways that enable them to develop greater capacities for using technology for teaching and research. CIRT also disseminates ideas, frameworks, and materials that apply pedagogical knowledge to the teaching and learning process.

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Executive Summary

As a department, CIRT is committed to providing faculty with the highest quality services and to our mission of supporting faculty through training, resources, and consultation.

During the past year, CIRT engaged in several important initiatives, which you will read about in greater detail in the team reports.
These include:

- Continued expansion of video production services
- Redesign of the CIRT Knowledge Base
- Increase in online course design quality reviews
- Continued growth in the impact of the OER Initiative
- Open Educational Resources (OER) Week celebration
- Creation of Student Resource group course in Canvas
- Collaboration on the development of UNF's 9 Principles for Online Teaching
- Enhancements to Canvas training and web resources
- Partnership with OFE on Innovative Teaching Panel

During the year, we also found time to have some fun with a Chili Cook-off and Campus Scavenger hunt with our colleagues in UNF Online.

In the coming year, CIRT will identify additional opportunities to support institutional goals using Canvas, expand support for faculty adoption and creation of OERs, develop recommended tools and services matrices to better inform faculty, operationalize the strategies identified to improve Canvas content accessibility, and open a new and expanded Video Studio.

DLI Chili Cook-Off and Goosechase.

CIRT Services

The Center for Instruction and Research Technology (CIRT) offers expertise, resources, and training to assist faculty in ways that enable them to develop greater capacities for using technology in their teaching and research. CIRT also disseminates ideas, frameworks, and materials that apply pedagogical knowledge to the teaching and learning process. Our facilities are open to all faculty at UNF and we are available to consult on a variety of topics.

Instructional Design

- Instructional design best practices
- Course development
- Program development
- Conversion of traditional course materials to online learning
- Training and development
- Quality course review
- Open educational resources

Online Learning Support

- Support for instructional technologies
- Canvas LMS Support
- Online proctoring
- New faculty orientations
- Live and on-demand workshops
- LMS news and status reports
- CIRT Knowledge Base collections and articles
- Scantron and Respondus services

Media

- Video and audio production
- Web design and hosting
- Conference and event posters
- Graphic design for print and web publication
- 3D Printing
- Maps for print and web publication
- Media accessibility

Equipment

- Laptops and tablets
- Digital cameras and camcorders
- Digital voice recorders
- Panoramic, photography, and video tripods
- Webcams and microphones
- Conference poster tubes
- Streaming and podcasting kits

Team Reports

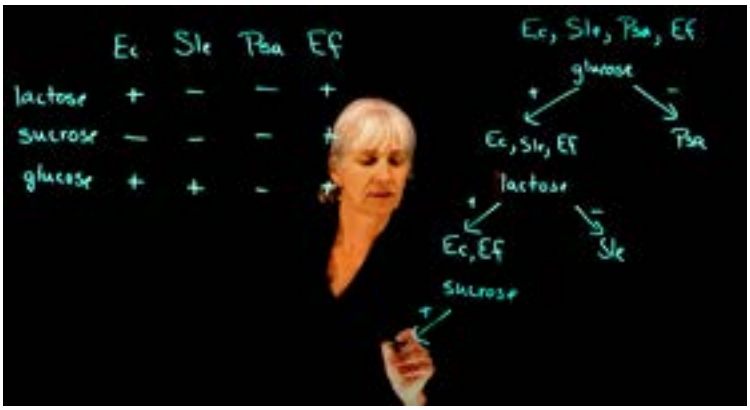
Dave Wilson
Associate Director, CIRT
and Creative Team Lead

CREATIVE TEAM

The Creative Team provides teaching and research technology support to faculty through project consultation, media development, and general technology assistance. Key services include equipment lending, video production, 3D scanning and printing, graphic design, online survey tool, and faculty web publishing support.

Video Studio Expansion

CIRT has been working to plan a move of the Video Studio to a new location in Building 4. The new space will be larger, more functional and flexible, and provide better acoustics. Plans include keeping half of the former classroom as a classroom set and conversion of the other half to green screen recording space. Other sets will support interviews, audio recording for groups, and photographic services. The new studio will also serve as an incubator space for experimentation with new media technologies.



Dr. Elizabeth Stotz-Potter recording on the lightboard.

Onsite Video Recording

In January, the Creative Team started providing onsite recording services, where faculty can request onsite recording and streaming services for events on campus and in UNF's local area. These might include special speakers, performances, student presentations, lab demonstrations, experiments, and other events. CIRT has provided onsite services for 49 events since launching the service.

Teaching Innovations and Exemplars Website

CIRT partners with the Office of Faculty Excellence (OFE) to produce the Teaching Innovations and Exemplars website. This website was born of a desire to document and share imaginative teaching innovations developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic by faculty at the University of North Florida. It features case studies of teaching innovations and provides a rich environment to document and share the exceptional work of UNF faculty. New case studies added this year include Robert Zeglin, Public Health, who submitted a case study on flipping the classroom, and Elizabeth Stotz-Potter who submitted a case study on using a lightboard within Zoom to enhance student engagement & understanding of experimental design.

Team Reports

Canvas Accessibility Initiative

The Canvas Accessibility Initiative promotes and improves the accessibility of instructional materials in the Canvas LMS to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. The University uses Ally to improve and monitor the accessibility of instructional materials in Canvas.

Ally provides instructors with feedback on the accessibility of uploaded files and guidance to make those documents more accessible. Ally automatically provides alternative formats for uploaded files, including HTML, electronic braille, and audio. These alternative file formats are available to both students and instructors. During the past year, CIRT provided workshops and individual consultations addressing accessibility for faculty and promoted the initiative through CIRT's social media channels and newsletter.

The amount of content in Canvas has been steadily increasing, nearly doubling over the past four years as shown in Figure 1. Content includes new files that are uploaded as well as files copied from previous courses.

Canvas Total Content

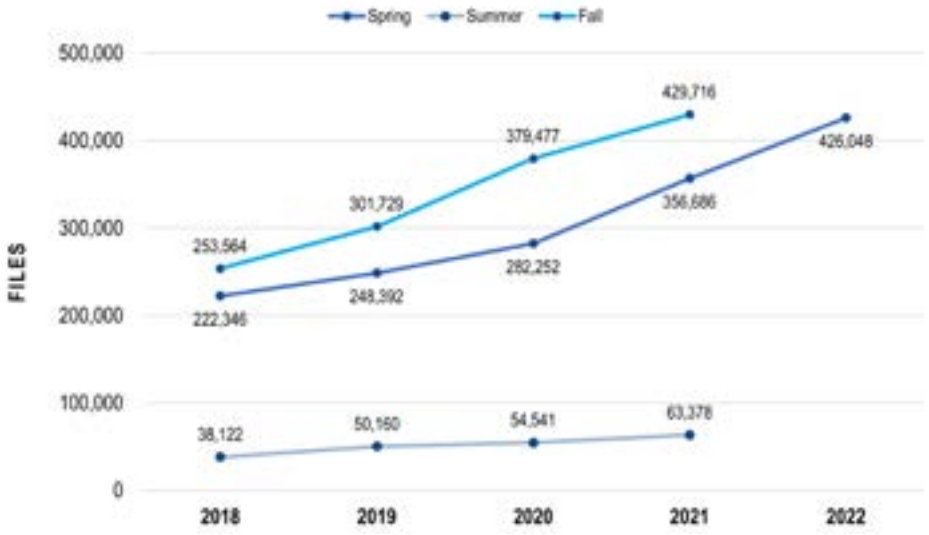


Figure 1. Canvas Total Content

As the amount of content increases, ensuring that content is accessible becomes more challenging. CIRT developed five strategies to address this challenge:

1. Encourage more faculty to become aware of and proactive in fixing accessibility issues.
2. Continually improve CIRT staff's accessibility knowledge, skill, and resources. All staff should exemplify good accessibility practices when helping faculty.
3. Fix the simple issues first. The leading major issue found by Ally is images without alt tags. Adding alt text is an uncomplicated process that can make a noticeable difference in the percentage of content that is accessible.
4. Assign easy-to-fix accessibility issues to student employees, freeing more skilled staff to work on the more complex accessibility issues.

Captioning

CIRT continued to promote the use of automatic captioning tools in Canvas Studio and Zoom, and to support the use of external video captioning services. The total minutes captioned decreased compared to last year, as shown in Table 1. The decrease may be related to the University returning to regular operations after the end of remote teaching due to COVID.

Term	*AY 19-20*	*AY 20-21*	*AY 21-22*
Summer	1,088	10,840	5,083
Fall	420	14,627	15,950
Spring	4,746	9,524	8,052
Total	***6,254***	***34,991***	***29,085***

Table 1. Video Captioning Minutes Using External Tools

Team Reports

Rozy Parlette
Associate Director
Instructional Design

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN TEAM

The primary role of the Instructional Design (ID) Team is to support UNF faculty with the systematic process of designing, developing, and delivering instructional materials. The ID Team is available to consult on instructional design best practices, assist in the conversion of traditional course materials to the online learning format, provide training and development related to the practical and pedagogical skills necessary for developing and delivering interactive and engaging instructional materials, and promote dialog between instructional design professionals and the academic communities they serve.

Significant accomplishments for the ID Team during the 2021-2022 academic year include:

- 564 consultations with faculty members
- 120 participants enrolled in TOL training
- 75 banners developed for online courses
- 49 online courses completed a course design quality review via TOL-DCD
- 12 program-based online courses completed a course design quality review
- 10 courses acquired national Quality Matters certification

Instructional Design Consultations

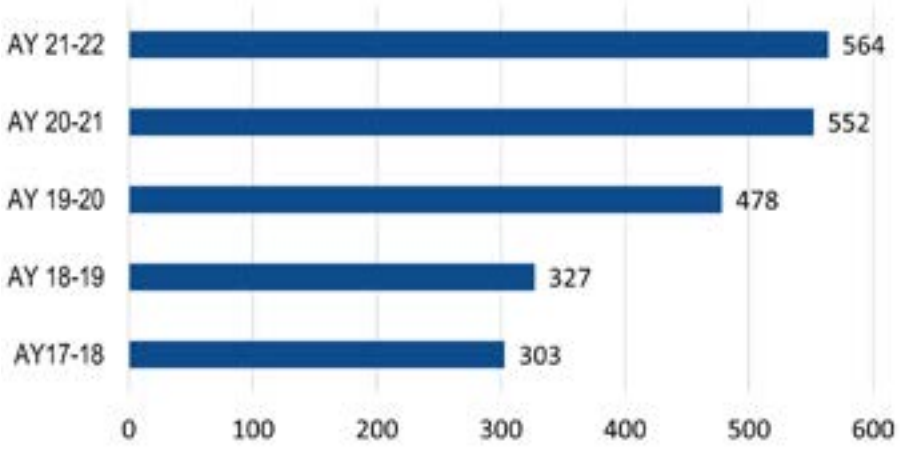


Figure 2. Instructional Design Consultations

Consultations

The ID team regularly consults with faculty members on designing, developing, and delivering online and hybrid courses. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the ID Team logged 564 faculty consultations (Figure 2) with 198 unique faculty members. This represents a 10% increase in the number of consultations over the previous year.

Program Development and Online Course Design Quality Reviews

In addition to consulting with individual faculty members to meet their personal course development goals, the ID Team also works with departments and programs to transition entire degree programs online. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the ID Team developed 12 program-based online courses.

Interesting Fact

Top 3 Units for ID Consultation: Communication, Management, and Marketing and Logistics.

9 Principles for Online Teaching

The ID team collaborated closely with the University's Distance Learning Committee on the development of 9 Principles for Online Teaching

1. Establish a strong presence
2. Manage your time effectively
3. Communicate clearly and effectively
4. Create opportunities for active learning
5. Provide resources for students to succeed
6. Stay current
7. Promote inclusivity
8. Be accessible
9. Reflect on your teaching

These principles provide a focus for quality delivery of distance learning courses. Each principle is supported by current research and the input of experienced UNF online instructors. A set of curated resources provide specific strategies and ideas for implementation.

Online Course Design Quality Reviews

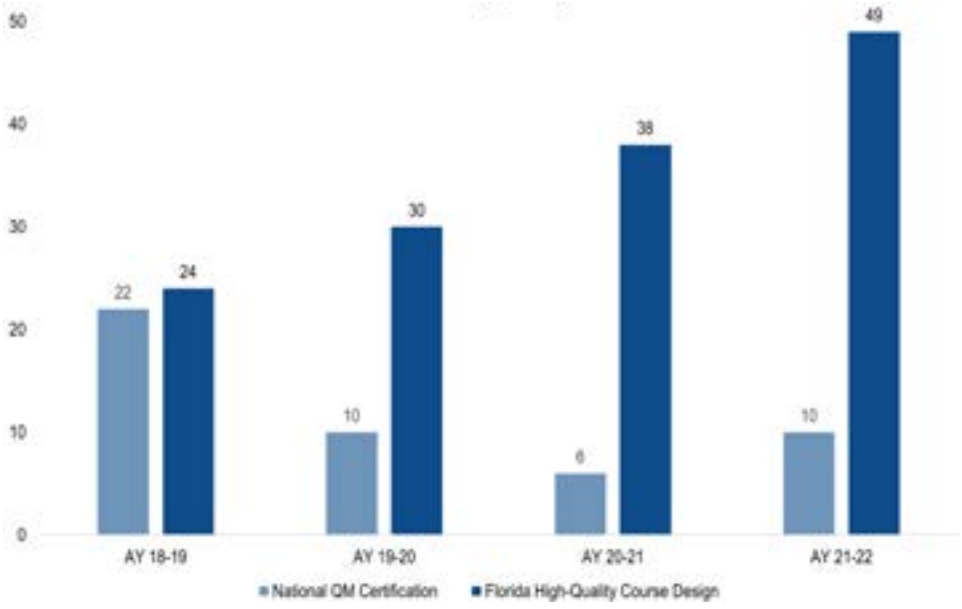


Figure 3. Online Course Design Reviews

Team Reports

Course Media

CIRT provides an array of media development services to faculty developing online and hybrid courses. During the 2021-2022 academic year, the ID Team developed 75 banners and 72 course cards.

Faculty Development

The ID Team provides comprehensive faculty development through two Teaching Online (TOL) tracks, a DL Course Development (TOL-DCD) module, and professional development workshops focused on effective instructional technologies. During the 2021-2022 academic year, 71 faculty members completed TOL, including developing 49 new DL courses via the TOL-DCD module (Figure 4).

Faculty Development

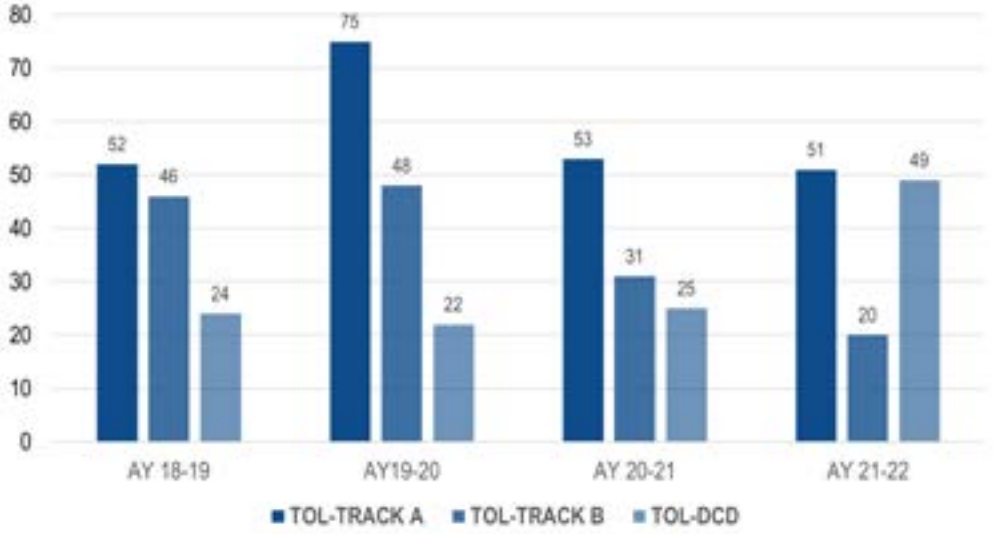


Figure 4. Faculty Development

To provide faculty with guidance for meeting the U.S. Department of Education's requirement for regular and substantive interaction (RSI) in online courses, strategies were added to the Student Engagement module in TOL. The module offers methods for taking an active role in supporting and providing students with regular, predictable interactions throughout the duration of an online course.

CIRT also partnered with OFE to offer the Innovative Teaching Practices: A Faculty Panel with sessions in November and March.

OER Initiative

UNF's OER Initiative is a joint project by the Center for Instruction and Research Technology (CIRT) and the Thomas G. Carpenter Library. The initiative seeks to lower college costs for UNF students by encouraging UNF faculty to adopt quality open resources in their courses. Faculty participating in the initiative have access to instructional design and curriculum alignment services from CIRT and library faculty to identify resources.

During the 2021-2022 academic year, 26 faculty members completed OER training, and 13 faculty completed the initiative and fully implemented OERs in their courses. Since its inception in Spring 2018, UNF's OER Initiative has impacted 8,654 students saving them more than $1.17 million.

Team Reports

Michael Russo
Assistant Director
Online Learning Support

ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

The Online Learning Support (OLS) team provides Canvas LMS and instructional technology assistance and training to UNF faculty so that they can focus on teaching and learning rather than technical issues. This team also maintains the CIRT Knowledge Base, updating articles specific to UNF-instructor needs; editing and publishing articles on our blog; curating support collections that help with navigating the complexities of instructional technologies. The OLS team includes professional staff and student assistants who pride themselves on courtesy, clarity, and quality of service. We are available to help seven days a week, with email and chat support on weekends.

Support Interactions by Channel

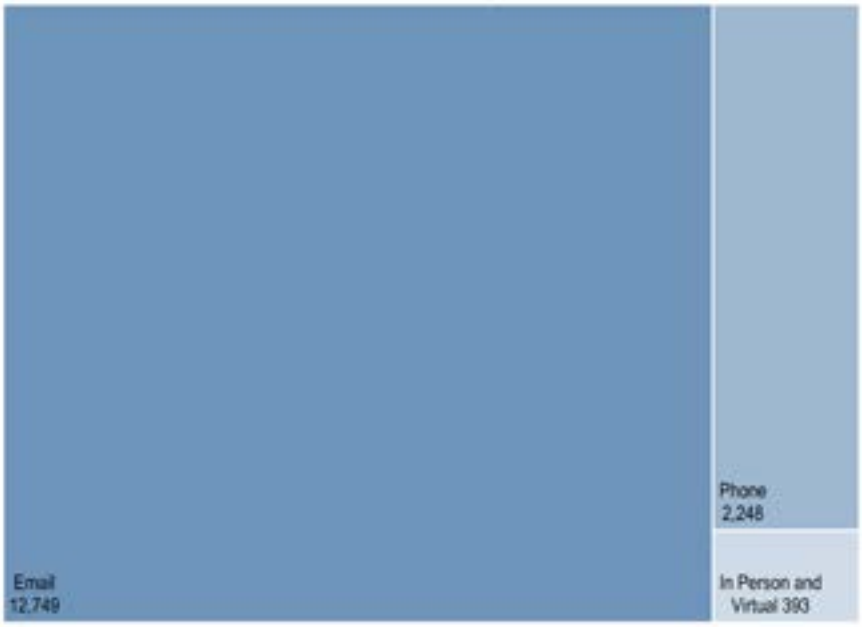


Figure 5. Support Interactions by Channel

SUPPORT SUMMARY

In academic year 2021, the OLS team logged more than 15k support touches across a variety of channels (including email, telephone, videoconferencing, and face-to-face consultation). 10,353 of these touches can be categorized as unique interactions (single issue) with faculty.

These 10,353 unique support interactions represent a 20% increase over last year — meaning that the OLS team has not only sustained but provided increased levels of support in a post-pandemic environment. To put these numbers in perspective, the OLS team experienced a 65% increase in support requests over the last two years.

In 2020, in response to the pandemic, nearly all support interactions took place virtually – and this year was no different. Apart from 230 individual Scantron appointments, less than 1% of all support interactions have taken place face-to-face. Since implementing a VOIP phone system and scheduled Zoom consultations, most faculty still prefer engaging with the OLS team virtually.

In addition to routine support requests — which include course copying and set-up; quiz creation; online proctoring; general troubleshooting of Canvas and other instructional technologies — the OLS team logged 319 Respondus quiz creation requests. In total, we completed and uploaded

567 question banks to Canvas. Most of these requests were completed in under 48 hours.

LMS Policy

To assist the University in maintaining compliance with applicable policy, procedures, and law the LMS Team, which includes representatives from CIRT, ITS, and the Registrar's office drafted a set of policies which address important considerations for the use of a Learning Management System at the University of North Florida. The LMS team also gathered input from Faculty Association committees. These policies better define procedures for data retention and common LMS functions: course shell creation, course combining, and the addition of external users to our Canvas instance.

Canvas Apps, Integrations, and Features

UNF faculty gained access variety of new functionality in Canvas in AY21-22. The OLS team tested and released several new features in Canvas – including but not limited to updates to the Gradebook/SpeedGrader, Assignment Details, the Rich Content Editor, Rubrics, Celebrations, and more.

To provide greater accessibility to users with visual impairment, our Canvas instance was updated to align with the University's color palette and to include ADA compliant hyperlinks. We also installed Microsoft's Immersive Reader in Canvas, which allows for all pages to be read aloud using text-to-speech. These accessibility features complement upgrades to the Ally accessibility tool, which automatically checks for accessibility issues and generates alternative accessible formats using advanced machine learning algorithms.

The OLS team worked with Instructure and ITS to streamline videoconferencing options within Canvas – disabling Big Blue Button in favor of complete Zoom integration.

We have also worked with academic departments at UNF to test/update/install several new tools, including TopHat and Labster LTI (Learning Tools Interoperability) v.1.3.

CIRT is committed to providing UNF faculty with the tools and information they need to extend Canvas in ways that improve teaching and learning. To facilitate future adoptions, the OLS team piloted and/or tested other Canvas integrations, including MS Teams, LinkedIn Learning, Badgr, and Canvas Blueprint. We expect that many of these tests will prove fruitful in the coming years as we work to make Canvas even better for UNF.

Redesigned Knowledge Base

The CIRT Knowledge Base serves as a repository for information specific to UNF's implementation of digital tools, helping faculty find answers to questions that are not easily found on third-party websites. After performing an extensive audit on the existing Canvas knowledge base, the OLS team redesigned and republished a new and improved version, which includes revised support articles and collections, status reports, and a regularly updated blog.

The new knowledge base replaces and expands upon the efforts put forth in our previous version. New features include a semantic search box and tagging system, dynamic links to related content, training archives, accessibility features, and more. We hope that these collections — including guides for new faculty — will prove valuable to UNF and beyond.

Scantron Updates

The OLS team retired our old Scantron machine and software in favor of a new optical mark recognition solution: Remark OMR. This new solution offers a more streamlined user experience and includes more than 50 new types of Scantron reporting options. In response to faculty's increased interest in virtual support — and with respect to faculty's busy schedules — we also planned a new Scantron drop-off process that will roll out in Fall 2022. Faculty will no longer need to wait in CIRT for us to complete the scanning procedures. Details about Remark and the new drop-off procedures have been published on our Knowledge Base.

Workshops and Training Events

The Online Learning Support team coordinates CIRT's faculty workshops. In Academic Year 2022, CIRT hosted 101 training events focused on Canvas, online proctoring, accessibility, and a variety of educational technologies, including LMS integrations. Post-workshop surveys reveal that the 339 faculty who attended found the workshops provided useful information with clear goals focused on teaching and research.

CIRT by the Numbers 2021 – 2022

CIRT provides a variety of services from equipment checkout to high-level project consultation. Here's a look at some fast facts from the past year.

- ***10*** National Quality Matter Course Certifications
- ***26*** Faculty Completed OER Training
- ***39*** New Faculty Domains
- ***59*** Quality Course Design Reviews
- ***75*** Canvas Banners
- ***120*** TOL Completions
- ***147*** Events
- ***176*** Video Studio Bookings
- ***222*** Videos/Live Streams Produced
- ***342*** Equipment Checkouts
- ***564*** Instructional Design Consultations
- ***890*** New Qualtrics Accounts
- ***8,620*** Canvas support Interactions
- ***29,085*** Minutes of Video Captioning

Strategic Updates

Strategic Action Items Completed or Significant Progress Made in 2021-2022

1. Creation of a Student Resource group site in Canvas in collaboration with the Dean of Students to connect students with important campus resources.
2. CIRT staff participation in AAC&U OER Institute.
3. Continued increase in DL course design quality reviews.
4. Presentation of CIRT Services at three academic department meetings.
5. CIRT staff participation in Digital Badging Taskforce.

Annual Goals 2022-2023

1. Raise awareness of the opportunities and services CIRT provides by presenting at department or college meetings.
2. Promote 9 Principles for Online Teaching.
3. Review and revise current workshop model
4. Identify opportunities for Canvas to help meet strategic institutional goals.
5. Develop a service matrix for faculty research support in partnership with ITS.
6. Develop and publish a recommended tools matrix.
7. Open new video studio.
8. Implement strategies designed to improve the accessibility of instructional content in Canvas.

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