Center for Instruction and Research Technology

2023

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

Rozy Parlette
Director of CIRT

CIRT joins UNF Online for a potluck lunch and office scavenger hunt.

As a department, CIRT is committed to providing faculty with the highest quality services and our mission of supporting faculty through training, resources, and consultation. In 2023, we saw a significant surge in our support and services to the UNF academic community.

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

- Significant increase in online learning support interactions
- Increased usage of CIRT's Knowledge Base
- Increase in faculty attendance at CIRT workshops and events
- Opened an enhanced video studio in Building 4
- Introduced a revamped participation model for the Open Educational Resources (OER) Initiative

- Open Educational Resources Week celebration
- Increase in online course design quality reviews
- Sustained growth in video production
- Increase in faculty participation in workshops

Throughout the year, we managed to infuse some enjoyment into our routine, with highlights including our Valentine's Day celebration and office scavenger hunt. These enjoyable occasions were shared with our esteemed colleagues at UNF Online. Additionally, we convened for our annual CIRT Retreat at MOCA Jacksonville. During this retreat, our primary focus revolved around shaping strategic goals for CIRT, and we had the pleasure of partaking in a guided tour of MOCA Jacksonville.

CIRT Annual Retreat at MOCA Jacksonville.

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.

CIRT Services sheet for quick reference.

Instructional Design
- Instructional design best practices
- Program and course development
- Transition of traditional classroom content to digital platforms
- Training and development
- Quality course review
- Open educational resources
- Document and media accessibility

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
- Survey support
- Graphic design for print and web publication
- Maps for print and web publication
- 3D Printing

Equipment
- Laptops and tablets
- Digital cameras and camcorders
- Digital voice recorders
- 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 supports faculty teaching and research technology through project consultation, media development, and general technology assistance. Essential services include equipment lending, video production, 3D scanning and printing, graphic design, online survey tools, and faculty web publishing support.

Creative Team Projects

During the 2023 academic year, the Creative Team tackled 654 projects, assisting 266 distinct faculty members. Figure 1 offers a detailed distribution of our staff's engagement, categorized by the type of service provided. It should be emphasized that Figure 1 counts the contributors per project, which could lead to a count that exceeds the total number of projects. This discrepancy arises because each project differs, ranging in duration from just a few hours to several months, and may involve collaboration between one or many individuals.

This year, the Creative Team's endeavors have been directed toward expanding our video services. Establishing a more functional studio in Building 4 and improvements to our video equipment have yielded tangible results, with Figure 1 highlighting an increased volume of video-related project work. Additionally, graphic design remains one of our most sought-after services.
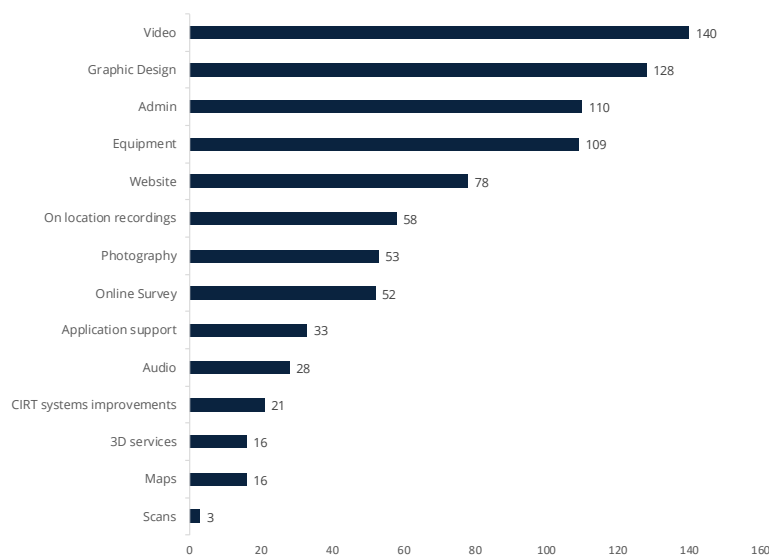
Video Studio Expansion

The Creative Team has relocated the Video Studio to a new area in Building 4. We have retained the sound booth in Building 1 to enable concurrent usage of both the studio and the sound booth. The new studio boasts increased space and enhanced flexibility compared to its previous location.

Figure 2 provides a breakdown of bookings by service type. We adjusted our booking categories mid-year to align them with how people utilize the studio. This realignment also lets us prepare the studio appropriately before a recording session. We now offer two types of bookings: Quick Video/Lightboard Recording and Video Consultation.
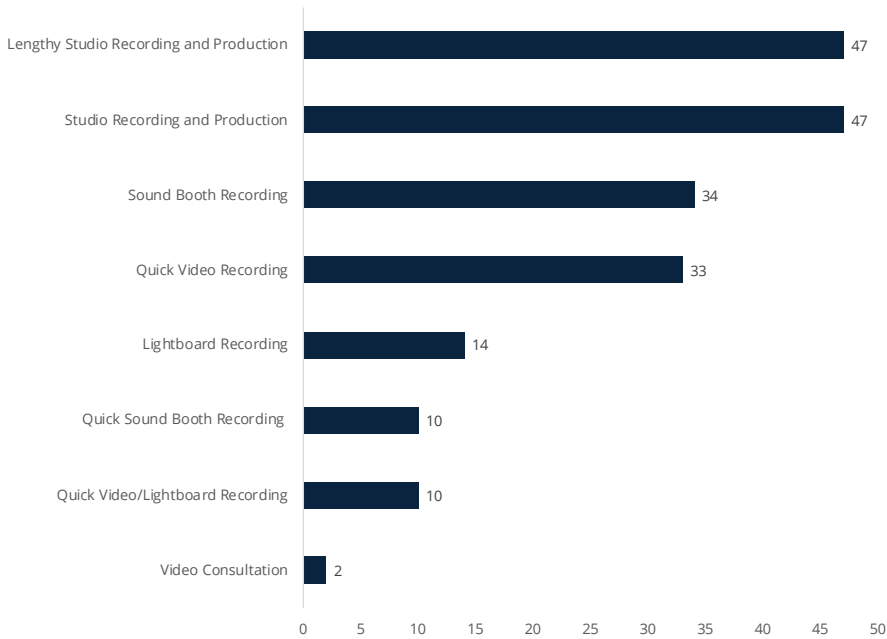
Projects by Service

Figure 1. Creative Team staff project work by type of service.

Team Reports

Video Studio Bookings

Figure 2. CIRT Video Studio bookings by service type.

Term	Hours Booked
Fall 2022	46
Spring 2023	280.5
Summer 2023	80
Total	*406.5*

Table 1. Studio hours by semester

Table 1 illustrates the hours of studio usage, and it's evident that there has been a rapid increase in studio utilization. We attribute this growth to two primary factors: the relocation to the new studio and increased campus activity.

To view examples of some of the videos, visit the CIRT Lab YouTube channel.

CIRT's video studio allows instructors to include visually-engaging material in their teaching and research.

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 empowers instructors by offering feedback on the accessibility of uploaded files and guiding them on improving document accessibility. Additionally, Ally automatically generates alternative formats for uploaded files, such as HTML, electronic braille, and audio, making them accessible to students and instructors.

Over the past year, CIRT conducted workshops and provided individual consultations focused on enhancing accessibility for faculty members. We also actively promoted this initiative through CIRT's social media channels and newsletter.

It's worth noting that the volume of content in Canvas has steadily grown, nearly doubling over the past four years, as indicated in Figure 3. This content includes newly uploaded files and materials copied from previous courses.
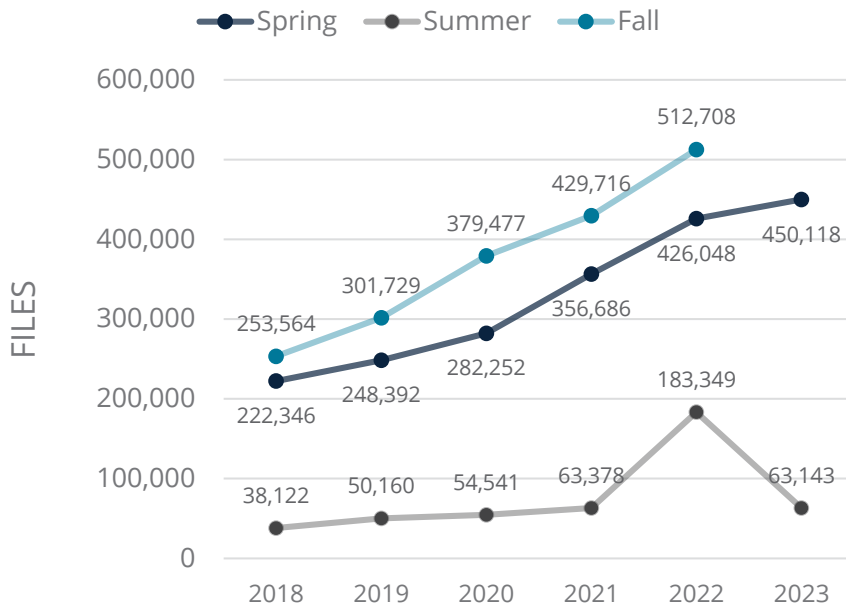
Team Reports

Total Content in Canvas

Figure 3. Total content in Canvas.

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

1. We aim to raise awareness among faculty members and encourage them to proactively address accessibility issues within their content.
2. Continually improving CIRT staff's accessibility knowledge, skills, and resources is a priority. Our staff is committed to setting a good example of accessibility practices while assisting faculty.
3. We prioritize resolving simple accessibility issues as a first step. For instance, one prevalent issue highlighted by Ally is the absence of alt tags for images. Adding alt text is a straightforward process that can significantly enhance content accessibility.
4. To optimize our resources, we delegate easily fixable accessibility issues to student employees. This approach allows our skilled staff to concentrate on addressing more complex accessibility challenges.
5. We foster a collaborative environment, ensuring faculty and CIRT work together to make content more accessible.

By leveraging these strategies, we are better equipped to tackle the increasing demand for accessible content effectively.

Captioning

CIRT also continued to promote automatic captioning tools in Canvas Studio and Zoom and video captioning services. Additionally, the Creative Team ensures it captions all video and audio content it produces. In the 2023 Academic Year (AY), CIRT captioned 56,007 minutes of content.

Moved Accessibility Services

The Coordinator of Accessibility and Training moved to the Instructional Design (ID) Team this year. This move will facilitate closer collaboration between the Coordinator of Accessibility and the Instructional Designers to improve the accessibility of Canvas content.

Team Reports

Laura Jackson
Assistant Director of Online Course Development

Interesting Fact

The top three departments for ID Consultation are Communication (124), Leadership, School Counseling & Sport Management (114), and Nutrition and Dietetics (74).

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 2022-2023 annual year include:

- 815 consultations with faculty members
- 28 program-based online courses developed
- 75 banners developed for online courses
- 152 participants enrolled in TOL training
- 63 online courses completed a course design quality course review via TOL DCD
- 16 courses acquired national Quality Matters certification

Consultations

The ID team regularly consults with faculty members on designing, developing, and delivering online and hybrid courses. During the 2022-2023 annual year, the ID Team logged 815 faculty consultations (Figure 4) with 192 unique faculty members. This figure represents a 45% increase in consultations from the previous year.
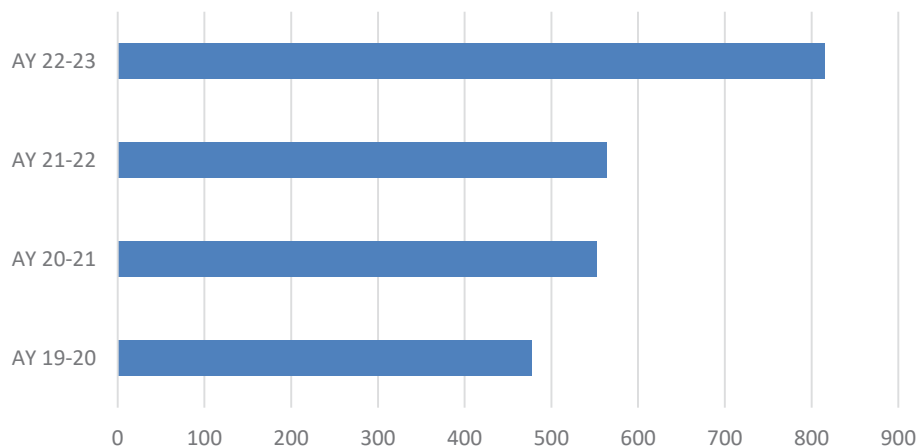
Program Development and Online Course Design Quality Reviews

In addition to consulting with individual faculty members to meet their personal course development goals, we also work with departments and programs to transition entire degree programs to entirely online. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the ID Team developed 28 program-based online courses (Figure 5).

Instructional Design Consultations

Figure 4. ID Consultations.

Team Reports

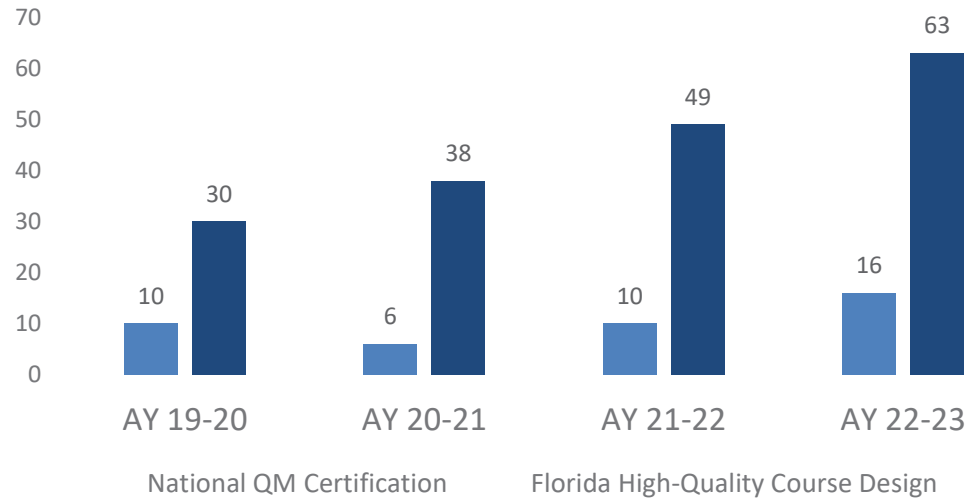## Online Course Design Quality Reviews

Figure 5. Online Course Design Quality Reviews.

Course Media

CIRT provides an array of media development services to faculty developing online and hybrid courses. During the 2022-2023 annual year, the ID Team developed 75 banners and 75 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 2022-2023 academic year, 152 faculty members completed TOL, including developing 63 new DL courses via the TOL-DCD module (Figure 6).
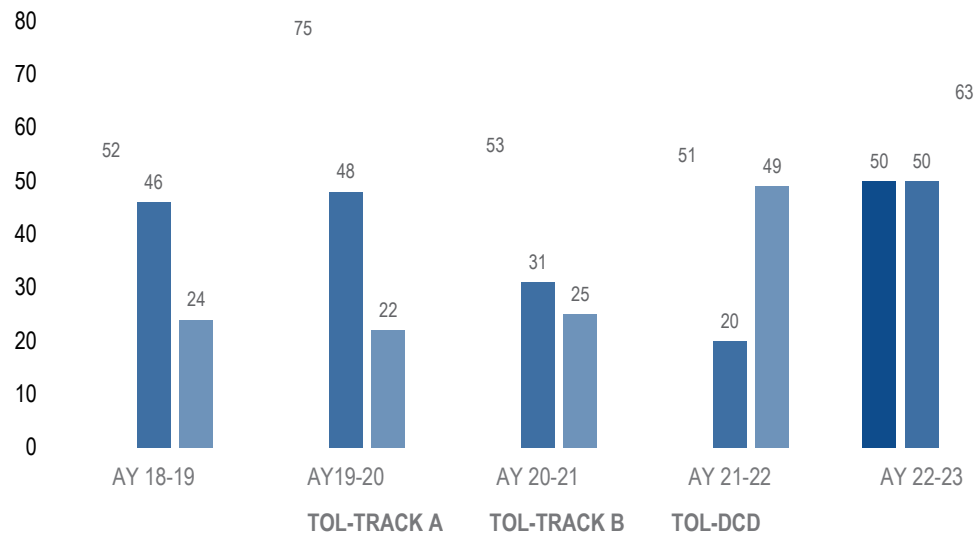
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Faculty Development

Figure 6. Faculty Development.

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 2022-2023 academic year, 14 faculty members completed OER training, and six faculty completed the initiative and fully implemented OERs in their courses. Since its inception in Spring 2018, UNF's OER Initiative has impacted 13,050 students, saving them more than $1.5 million.

In Spring 2023, UNF participated in Open Education Week for the fourth year. Open Education Week is a celebration of the global Open Education Movement. Its goal is to raise awareness about the movement and its impact on teaching and learning worldwide. Events during the week included an Introducing Pressbooks workshop, student engagement activities on social media, information sessions on Affordability Counts, and a Faculty OER Panel Discussion.

Team Reports

Michael Russo
Assistant Director
Online Learning Support

ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT TEAM

The Online Learning Support (OLS) team is dedicated to offering comprehensive Canvas LMS and instructional technology support — as well as documentation and training resources — tailored to meet the specific needs of UNF instructors. Our primary objective is to empower faculty by addressing their technical concerns, thus allowing them to channel their efforts toward excellence in teaching.
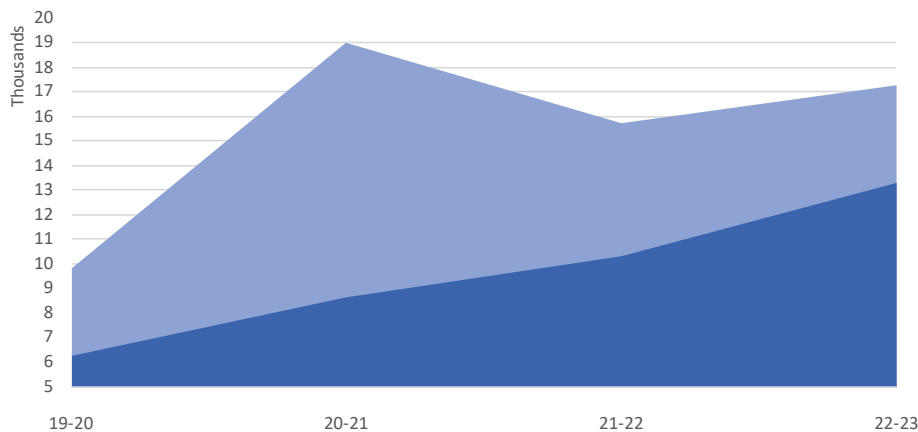
Support Growth Over Time

Figure 7. Support Growth Over Time.

Comprising a team of dedicated professionals and student assistants, OLS works to uphold the principles of care, kindness, and mentorship outlined in the UNF Strategic Plan. Our commitment to offering quality service extends throughout the year, with availability and support provided seven days a week, including email and chat support on weekends.

Support Summary

Academic Year 2022-23 has been busy for CIRT's Online Learning Support team. We logged more than 17,000 support interactions across various channels (including email, chat, telephone, videoconferencing, and face-to-face consultation). 13,304 support actions were categorized as unique interactions (single-issue) with UNF faculty.
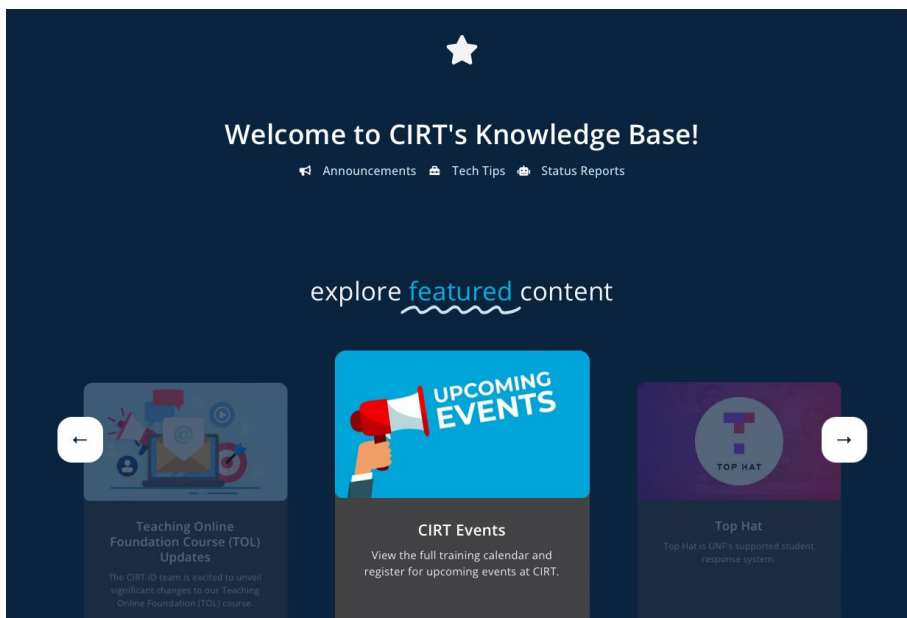
These 13,304 unique support interactions represent a nearly 30% increase over last year. Considering these numbers, the OLS team is handling more than twice as much support volume as we were before the pandemic (representing a 112% increase to be precise). At the same time, we have reduced the length of our support chain: most issues are resolved in less than one interaction, and our average response rate is less than two interactions long.

UNF faculty very much prefer our online support offerings: over 10 thousand issues were resolved via email or chat; nearly 2 thousand via telephone or videoconference; only 163 (excluding Scantron requests) via walk-in support. UNF faculty are also making much use of our asynchronous self-service options: the CIRT Knowledge Base was visited 4,653 times for a total of 10,333 pageviews; of the 301 Scantron requests the OLS team oversaw, more than 1/3 made use of our new drop-off service.

Team Reports

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 440 Respondus quiz creation requests and uploaded 1,012 question banks to Canvas (78% increase over last year). It's noteworthy that the majority of these Respondus requests were fulfilled in less than 48 hours.

CIRT's redesigned Knowledge Base homepage.

The CIRT Knowledge Base

Last year, OLS completely redesigned our Knowledge Base by adding advanced features like semantic search, dynamic hyperlinking, and both mobile and desktop accessibility options. We also started offering tool recommendations based on UNF vetting procedures and internal support

matrices. Our efforts seemed to have paid off. Of the 4,653 visits we logged, 62% found what they were looking for in a single search effort — averaging about 4 minutes per page view. By streamlining our content and better surfacing the most relevant information to UNF instructors, we can confidently say that visitors to the CIRT Knowledge Base will find what they are looking for in less than three clicks.

Concerning user engagement, the highest levels of visitor interest were directed toward support articles on grading and academic integrity. Specifically, articles focusing on the Canvas Gradebook, the Grade Transfer Tool, Attendance Taking, the TurnItIn LTI, Honorlock, and Respondus Monitor collectively accounted for over 30% of unique visits. As a supplement to our support-related content, the three most-read blog posts included the introduction of UNF's new student response system (Top Hat), the establishment of the CIRT Video Studio, and advice on authoring Open Educational Resources.

The CIRT Status page — which includes information on Canvas and related LTI feature updates, process changes, and alerts users to downtime and outages — was visited over 500 times. Unsurprisingly, the most visited status alerts were related to intermittent outages.

Team Reports

Canvas Apps, Integrations, and Features

During academic year 2021 – 2022, UNF faculty gained access to a diverse range of enhanced functionalities within the LMS. Canvas feature options that were tested and subsequently made available included anonymous grading, anonymous instructor annotation, gradebook moderation, and default quiz log auditing. Distance Learning instructors, specifically, were provided access to Respondus Monitor as an alternative to Honorlock for online proctoring. And all Canvas users can now download content to e-readers to be later read offline (a helpful feature for faculty or students traveling to a conference or those with accessibility issues that may have difficulty concentrating while on a traditional laptop or computer).

CIRT provides training to address your specific challenges.

Several integrations that were tested or piloted last year have yielded fruitful results. UNF identified Top Hat as its new student response system — the rollout was accompanied by support documentation, blog posts, and face-to-face and virtual training sessions. The LinkedIn Learning LTI was successfully installed in Canvas, allowing instructors and students to access a wide range of professional development content from experts in education, technology, business, sales, and more. Our participation in the Digital Badging Task Force resulted in an early, limited adoption phase that is now being evaluated. And finally, Canvas Blueprint functionality passed the pilot phase and was made available to CIRT's instructional designers. In addition to the external knowledge that CIRT shares on its website, the OLS team also maintains and manages an Internal Knowledge Base. This year, we created 126 new support articles to be used by our support staff to troubleshoot and resolve issues quickly.

Workshops and Training Events

The Online Learning Support team plays a pivotal role in organizing faculty workshops and training events. This academic year, CIRT revised our workshop model by slightly decreasing the number of training events, emphasizing a commitment to excellence over volume. This approach yielded a notable outcome: increased participation across the board, coupled with heightened engagement from faculty who actively contributed feedback through post-event surveys.

In summary, a total of 64 events were conducted (20 explicitly focused on Canvas accessibility), attracting 377 participants. The topic of our most popular event this year with ChatGPT and its pedagogic value. Survey responses indicated that attending faculty found all workshops valuable and relevant, with a strong emphasis on teaching, research, and professional development objectives.

CIRT by the Numbers 2022 – 2023

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.

56,007 Minutes of Video Captioning

17,304 Canvas Support Interactions

979 New Qualtrics Accounts

815 Instructional Design Consultations

437 Equipment Checkouts

247 Videos/Live Streams Produced

197 Video Studio Bookings

64 Events

152 TOL Completions

75 Canvas Banners

63 Quality Course Design Reviews

16 National Quality Matter Course Certifications

14 Faculty Completed OER Training

Strategic Updates

Strategic Action Items Completed or Significant Progress Made in 2022-2023

1. Presented CIRT services at department or college meetings.

2. Increased the number of course design quality reviews.

3. Promoted the 9 Principles for Online Teaching.

4. Reviewed and revised the current workshop model.

5. Identified opportunities for Canvas to support strategic institutional goals.

6. Developed and published a recommended tools matrix.

7. Opened a new video studio.

8. Implemented strategies to enhance the accessibility of instructional content in Canvas.

Annual Goals 2023-2024

1. Transition the Teaching Online Course (TOL) to a single course available to all faculty.

2. Implement a revamped Distance Course Development (DCD) process for online course development.

3. Continue to improve faculty training modes and workshop models.

4. Create a more robust service model for Canvas integrations (LTIs).

5. Identify additional opportunities to support institutional goals.

6. Expand visual design, video, and audio support.

7 Collaborate with ITS to refine the technology research support model for faculty.

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