
Faculty and Staff Technology Training in the Connecticut Community College System

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Connecticut Community Colleges System

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Introduction

Our system-wide faculty and staff training efforts are a blend of self-directed, just-in-time, online delivered training, supplemented by classroom-based training and informal "hands-on help" sessions facilitated by System Office staff, local college staff, and faculty mentors. Ideally, our colleges' faculty and staff should be able to learn a process or skill online, and then obtain one-on-one local assistance and support that will help them apply what they've learned in order to accomplish particular job-specific tasks. They can then return to the online resources for refreshers as needed.

Two of the best sources for information about various training efforts in our system can be found at the **Instructional & Informational Technology Training (IITT)** program website, www.commnet.edu/academics/iitt, and at our system's **WebCT Resources for Faculty** website www.commnet.edu/academics/webct. Both provide easy access to training resources and documentation that enable our faculty and staff to learn to use technology to enhance teaching and learning in our system, and to inform decision-making processes at all levels of the organization.

Following are descriptions of some of the major opportunities and funding resources that are helping us accomplish our goal of a comprehensive (primarily web-delivered) just-in-time learning system for CCC faculty and staff.

Faculty & Staff Training Opportunities and Funding Sources

Waivers for Attendance at Regular Credit (Spring/Fall Term), Extension Credit, and Non-Credit Courses

With some variations and restrictions from school to school (based upon bargaining unit, number of hours per week, etc.) employees in the Connecticut Community Colleges and in some cases their spouses and dependent children, can attend many of our courses at no cost. In the case of some types of classes (such as non-credit and extension credit), attendance may be on a space-available basis only. *For details about what is available and to obtain waiver forms, staff and faculty (including adjuncts) should contact their college's Human Resources office.*

Online Courses and Multimedia Training

Many of the training needs that now arise in our system are being addressed whenever possible by the creation of online courses, online discussions (either within a course section or as a blog), and customized multimedia tutorials supplemented with written documentation.

Informal feedback from faculty and staff suggests that multimedia tutorials are strongly preferred by users, and they provide an accessible, easy-to-grasp audio/visual learning resource that is being used to fill a wide (and rapidly expanding!) variety of training needs. Following are a few examples of how online courses and multimedia tutorials are being used to support faculty and staff training in the CT Community College system:

- o Multimedia tutorials produced by CCC system application teams are being produced on a regular basis for faculty and staff training and support, and can be found at <http://www.comnet.edu/academics/webct>, as well as at www.comnet.edu/academics/iitt.
- o Training for faculty and staff in how to use Camtasia Studio, an easy-to-use application that creates multimedia files in a variety of formats, is provided through the [Instructional & Informational Technology Training](http://www.comnet.edu/academics/iitt) (IITT) program for faculty and staff, www.comnet.edu/academics/iitt.
- o Several generic Vista course sections have been developed (or licensed) to help faculty, staff, and students learn to navigate WebCT Vista's interface, collaborate on system-wide projects, participate in discussions with peers, and address pedagogical issues. Information about these classes can also be found at <http://www.comnet.edu/academics/webct>.
- o All existing WebCT Vista training is being redesigned to incorporate the new "Effective Teaching Practices for Web-Enhanced, Hybrid, and Online Classes" guidelines that were developed by the Vista Teaching and Learning Team. System-wide training will utilize a blended approach, with coordinated online and on-ground teaching and learning resources for faculty.

For more information on online courses available for faculty and staff, on how to obtain Camtasia training, or if you have an idea for some type of training that you feel could be effectively addressed in our system through the development of multimedia tutorials or an online course, please contact Tobi Krutt tkrutt@commnet.edu.

Classroom-Based Training and Hands-on Help Sessions

Classroom training that is funded through the *Instructional & Informational Technology Training (IITT) Program* in specific topics can be arranged through coordination between the IITT program manager and individual colleges' Business & Industry Services Network (BISN) directors, upon request. For example, if a college requires specialized training in a particular topic or software application that cannot be obtained elsewhere, or for enough people to warrant a contract class being scheduled, this can be arranged and funded through the IITT program.

Hands-on training classes in *WebCT Vista* are also scheduled on a regular basis at locations throughout our system. *Faculty and staff throughout the system can now find, and register online, into any of these classes through the [IITT Course Cart](#) system.*

In addition, our colleges agreed to make their own [hands-on support labs](#) open to ALL faculty and staff throughout our system. *For more information, contact Tobi Krutt, tkrutt@commnet.edu.*

Faculty-Led Forums and Workshops

Faculty-led panel discussions and workshops that address effective teaching practices that incorporate online technology have been presented throughout the system, and more are now planned for both the summers, as well as the academic terms. For more information, check the [IITT Course Cart](#) system, or email Tobi Krutt, tkrutt@commnet.edu.

Technology Training Funds

Through agreements with our system's collective bargaining units, *Technology Training Program funding* is available at all colleges for faculty and staff training purposes.

The funding available to bargaining unit members through this program is designed to enhance information technology (IT) skills in faculty and staff members, infuse technology into the teaching/learning process and otherwise expand IT training opportunities for bargaining unit members.

These dollars are to be used to expand access and/or supplement technology training opportunities that are already in place, including technology core competency training and WebCT training available through the IITT program, Banner system navigation or functional training, on-line training (e.g., [Element K](#)), or *Center for Teaching* activities and other professional development activities funded by the employer or collective bargaining agreements. Different colleges make use of these funds in different ways; at some, groups of faculty get together and produce a proposal related to some type of technology training or learning needed. At others, training for individual faculty is proposed and reviewed by the local college committee.

In the past, these funds have been rather under-utilized, and we would like to be sure that everyone who is entitled to make use of these funds for professional development purposes is aware of their availability.

The college presidents are asked each year to announce the implementation of the technology training initiative for developing and enhancing computer literacy, and a joint labor-management committee at each college will publicize the availability of technology training dollars and, where practicable, review and rank proposals in order of merit, for submission to the president. *For more information about how this funding is being utilized at your college, or to find out how to submit a proposal if you have a specific training idea or need that you would like funded, contact your college's Human Resources office.*