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Annual
Report

Creating BU's
Future Today



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2020 came upon us as a perfect storm. Although the storm has not yet fully settled, 2021 brought along the glimmer of a rainbow.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our faculty and staff, Boston University weathered the COVID storm better than many institutions. DL&I spent the first half of 2021 continuing to support the Learn *from* Anywhere initiative: managing faculty coaches, communicating best practices, supporting classroom moderators, and helping faculty with questions of teaching technologies.

One of the most consequential results of our efforts has been the establishment of faculty networks for the dissemination and exchange of best practices and new ideas in teaching and learning. The Lightning Talks series and the Faculty Coach Program have generated a lot of interest and created lasting bonds among our faculty. Both initiatives will continue beyond the COVID emergency.

Throughout 2021, DL&I's Instructional Production Services and Educational Technology groups continued to support the production of Questrom's successful Online MBA, Boston University's first online at-scale degree. The Online MBA has provided Boston University with valuable experience, paving the way for broader involvement in the space of online at-scale programs.

Digital Learning & Innovation (DL&I) and its affiliated units—the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL), Educational Technology (EdTech), and Digital Initiatives—help Boston University leadership, faculty, and staff implement innovative ideas in education by incubating select pilot projects and offer BU educators consultation, training, and production support in the areas of teaching, technology, and online education.

As we look to the future, DL&I is gearing up to support Boston University in its strategic plan implementation. The field of teaching and learning is entering an exciting phase of continuous transformation, in part driven by student demands for inclusive and personalized learning, active student engagement, better support for learning communities, tighter integration of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, stronger emphasis on developing future-proof “soft” skills, and better preparation for the ever-shifting world of work. The recently announced Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation will focus on pursuing digital innovation in residential education and will be an important partner, catalyst and accelerator of these objectives.

I am proud of our accomplishments in 2021 and I am excited to continue supporting educational innovation at Boston University in 2022 and beyond.



Chris Dellarocas

Boston University's Associate Provost for Digital Learning & Innovation and Shipley Professor of Management at the Questrom School of Business.

Digital Learning & Innovation: Six Years of Growth

2016: The Office of Digital Learning & Innovation was established. Hosted First Annual Teaching with Technology Festival.

2017: Managed the production and successful launch of BU's first two MicroMasters Programs.

2018: Supported the rollout of Adobe Creative Cloud licenses to all undergraduate students, select graduate students, and faculty.

2019: Digital Initiatives unit created to assist with the production of residential and distance digital learning initiatives.

2020: DL&I led the emergency move to remote and, later, Learn *from* Anywhere teaching and learning; launched production of Questrom's Online MBA.

2021: Hosted the inaugural Faculty Forum 2021 virtual symposium and LfA Creativity & Spirit Awards; the Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation is announced.



\$8 Million Gift from Richard Shipley Will Expand Technology's Role in Residential Education

Published November 1, 2021 / BU Today Staff

Among the unexpected revelations of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the rapid adoption of an array of digital tools by faculty at BU and across the nation to transform their teaching to meet the needs of students during the pandemic. Now, an \$8 million gift from Richard Shipley (Questrom'68,'72), a BU trustee emeritus, will help the University's plan to expand digital learning, outlined in its [2030 Strategic Plan](#), become a reality.

Shipley's gift will help to fund the Richard C. Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation, an all-University resource, will be associated with the [Center for Teaching & Learning](#) and will report to Chris Dellarocas, associate provost for Digital Learning & Innovation (DL&I).

"The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all of us—faculty and students alike—to understand the potential for both synchronous and asynchronous remote education to transform higher education and to expand our program offerings to new cohorts online," says Robert A. Brown, BU president. "Further, we can augment the quality of our residential programs by enhancing our use of rapidly evolving digital capabilities in our in-person classes. We are greatly indebted to Dick Shipley for his support of this transformation."

Shipley, a longtime BU trustee and the founder and former leader of a private equity firm investing in early expansion-state technology companies, points to the profound changes that digital innovation has wrought in the business world. "Why should academia be different?" he asks.

"BU is very fortunate to have the kind of clairvoyant leadership that embraced digital learning prior to COVID," Shipley says. "We really know how to execute in the digital space."

COVID, he adds, has ended resistance to the digital transformation in business, education, and other fields. The University is well-positioned to maintain a leadership position in that transformation.

The new center will support all faculty working to create digital content for their in-person undergraduate and graduate courses. It will fund major initiatives by departments, schools, and colleges for creating digital content both for residential students and for online learners, and it will support innovation in digital learning by funding experiments in the application of new technologies. The endowment created by the gift will be used to underwrite work to enhance and innovate faculty use of digital tools in their work.



"I am very excited about the new Shipley Center. The wonderful gift from Dick Shipley will accelerate our efforts to incorporate digital content and innovative approaches into our residential teaching and learning," says Jean Morrison, University provost and chief academic officer.

Shipley has previously funded several other University initiatives. In 2016, he established the [Shipley Prostate Cancer Research Center](#) at the BU School of Medicine and a website with information about treatment options.

Richard C. Shipley (Questrom'68,'72), a BU trustee emeritus, will help fund creation of the Richard C. Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation. Photo by Janice Checchio

\$8 Million Shipley Gift (cont.)



Additional gifts include \$2.5 million in 2008 to endow the [Richard C. Shipley Professorship of Management](#) at the Questrom School of Business and \$4 million in 2013 to endow the [Beverly A. Brown Professorship for the Improvement of Urban Health](#). He is also chairman and a founding fellow of the University's [William Fairfield Warren Society](#).

"In the post-COVID era, the field of teaching and learning is entering an exciting phase of continuous

transformation," says Chris Dellarocas, associate provost for Digital Learning & Innovation and the Shipley Professor of Management. "The key question is how do we push towards more inclusive and personalized learning, active student engagement, better support for learning communities, tighter integration of learning experiences inside and outside the classroom, and stronger emphasis on developing future-proof 'soft' skills."

The Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation will be a partner, catalyst, and accelerator of such transformations, Dellarocas says, offering instructional design support, digital media production, educational technology consulting, project management, and funding to faculty and departmental projects that aim to transform residential education at the University.

The inaugural director of the Shipley Center will be [Romy Ruukel](#), director of the DL&I Digital Initiatives group. Ruukel joined the University in 2013 and played a pivotal role in developing BU's capacity for developing massive open online courses (MOOCs) and the MicroMasters Program. These capabilities paved

the way for BU's first online at-scale degree, [Questrom's Online MBA](#), which the Instructional Production Services team currently reporting to Ruukel is helping produce.

"I am thrilled for this opportunity to lead an effort in digital innovation at Boston University," Ruukel says, "and to collaborate with my colleagues to advance key transformational initiatives as part of the BU 2030 Strategic Plan to reimagine residential learning on our vibrant campus."



Ruukel has also served as director of [BU's Digital Education Incubator](#), a long-running initiative for funding and managing pilot projects and experiments associated with teaching with technology.

The Shipley Center will officially open its doors early in 2022.

Top left: Chris Dellarocas, associate provost for Digital Learning & Innovation. Above: Romy Ruukel, currently director of the Digital Initiatives group of the office of Digital Learning & Innovation. Photos by Mike Spencer

Building Questrom's Online MBA



Boston University Questrom School of Business, in partnership with Digital Learning & Innovation's Digital Learning Initiatives and Educational Technology teams, launched the [University's first Online MBA \(OMBA\)](#) in fall 2020, welcoming a global cohort of nearly 400. Since then, the innovative online degree at scale with its integrated curriculum has tripled its enrollment, topping off at nearly 1,200 students since its debut. September 2021 enrollment hit 500 students – the largest cohort to date.

By the Numbers

- 1150+** Students enrolled since the fall 2020 launch
- 500** Students enrolled in fall 2021 (largest cohort to date)
- 540** Hours of educational content created
- 300+** Faculty videos & interviews scripted, recorded, & produced
- 15** Instructional Production Services staff

DL&I Power Duo:

Blending EdTech and Learning Design & Production

Throughout 2021, DL&I's Instructional Production Services team of 15 – a blend of instructional multimedia and educational media producers, digital learning designers, course operations specialists, instructional production staff, and student course builders – collaboratively designed, developed, and launched 540 hours of asynchronous educational content and recorded and produced 300+ faculty videos.

“During another challenging year of coping with life during the pandemic, tight project deadlines, and ongoing resource constraints, the work completed by our online MBA teams is impressive and heartwarming,” says Romy Ruukel, director of Digital Initiatives.

The EdTech team of five is also on the frontlines of OMBA production and data analysis. Through this innovative curriculum design, educational technologists and platform administrators are tailoring the Blackboard experience while experimenting with other platforms, including Yellowdig, a digital platform designed to promote community, and peer assessment platform FeedbackFruits.

“We’re continuing to experiment with these platforms and innovate within this space to find the right mix to optimize the OMBA teaching and learning experience,” says Ernie Perez, director of EdTech. “These tools amplify communication, connect students and faculty, and foster rich interaction.”



Building Questrom's Online MBA (cont.)

During a recent in-studio filming session, Questrom Associate Professor of Operations and Technology Management [Jay Kim](#) walked into the studio and was energized, well-prepared, and fully supported by DL&I media producers and a learning designer.

"They are new coaches that I have never had in my teaching career; they teach me how to teach," Kim says. "While coaching me on the structure and process, the team asked me very interesting questions about the contents from the learner's perspective - from the initial design of the course. I am now thinking about students and how they would interpret my lecture."



DL&I Digital Learning Designer Jaclyn Eichenberger supporting Questrom Associate Professor of Finance Andrea Vedolin through the online course development process in fall 2021.



Questrom Associate Professor of Operations and Technology Management Jay Kim.

Looking Ahead

Ruukel and Perez agree that partnering with Questrom leadership and faculty during a global pandemic to produce the Online MBA has been an important learning experience and an "exhilarating opportunity to co-create and support an innovative BU initiative."

Ruukel and Perez are also keeping their eyes on a 2022 prize: OMBA commencement. "This time next year, the founding cohort will have completed the entire online MBA," says Ruukel. "And that will be a moment of great accomplishment for not only the students but for the entire Questrom, Digital Initiatives, and EdTech team."

Photo credits: Maureen McCarthy, Digital Learning & Innovation; George Vaga, BU Questrom School of Business

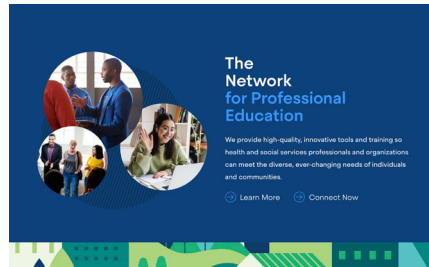
Digital Education Incubator: Harnessing Innovation at BU

Harnessing innovation requires three critical actions:

1. Define needs and opportunities;
2. Identify novel solutions, and
3. Access resources and move ideas to implementation.

Since its inception in 2015, the [Digital Education Incubator](#) has been a transformative force for innovation at Boston University, funding and co-managing over 50 digital education projects. This year, Incubator-supported experiments continued to pilot novel approaches to deliver increasing value to our students, alumni, and learners looking to enhance their skill sets to meet the demands of their professional fields. The following is a spotlight of 2021 projects and innovations in the Incubator pipeline.

The Network illustration by Hairpin



Leveraging BU Alumni Expertise for Workforce Development

The [Network for Professional Education](#) (The Network) launched in April 2021. The BU School of Social Work-initiated [project](#) has two key objectives: 1. Provide access to high-quality training and career development programs for health and social service professionals and agencies and 2. Via The Trainers Hub, engage School of Social Work alumni to share their expertise by providing training and consultation services. With guidance from The Network Alumni Advisory Board, the project team is focused on expanding outreach.

Tapping into BU Alumni as Mentors

In February 2021, BU's College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences: Sargent College and the School of Social Work jointly launched the [Interprofessional Leadership in Healthcare Certificate](#).

Tapping into the vast experience of BU alumni, the pilot recruited 30 health-care professionals to create an interdisciplinary coalition of e-mentors who, going forward, will coach participants through the multi-faceted curriculum.

Awarding Digital Badges in Curriculum Pathways

The Professional Development & Postdoctoral Affairs (PDPA) [Badgr Pro Pathways](#) project team deployed an online digital badging platform for BU doctoral students to plan, track, and share their progress in completing curriculum pathways aligned with the [PhD Core Capacities](#). In summer 2021, the team completed a pilot with doctoral students from the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. It [plans to expand](#) access to all BU doctoral students and add pathways so that competencies can be highlighted with mentors and employers.



Creating Digital Experiences in Arts Education

In August 2021, the Incubator confirmed its support for a Visiting Interdisciplinary/Interactive Media Artist in Residence that will allow the College of Fine Arts to develop and deploy an [innovative software tool](#) for interactive, generative computer graphics in a narrative setting. With a focus on interdisciplinary collaboration and practice-based work, BU students will be able to hone their skills in interactive design, generative graphics design, media production, and coding in an aesthetic context; their efforts will culminate in an on-campus theater production.



Field Investigations for Informed Transformations

In an effort to stay current with educational innovation trends and transformations related to Incubator focus areas, field investigations are periodically conducted, and findings are shared with appropriate BU academic leaders and collaborators to help inform potential experiments at Boston University.

The Digital Education Incubator (cont.)



Supporting Peer Tutoring

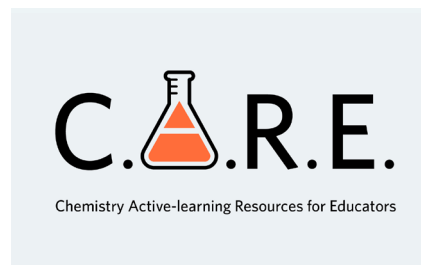
Through the [Tutoring Writing in the Disciplines \(TWID\)](#) project, the Boston University College of Arts & Sciences Writing Program, in partnership with collaborating academic departments, provides peer tutoring opportunities for student writers in the disciplines. Leveraging the WCONLINE platform, BU student tutors provide discipline-specific assistance and assume important peer-to-peer mentoring roles. The Program team plans to develop further partnerships with other BU academic units in which writing is crucial for undergraduate course work.

Supporting Lifelong Learners through a Theological Lens

To address the needs of clergy, faith-based, and social justice leaders, [BU School of Theology](#) launched the [Lifelong Learning Project](#) with a focus on congregational issues and peer-based community building. [Programming](#) consists of short, practical faculty- and alumni-led online workshops wherein participants develop plans and processes they can implement within their own communities.

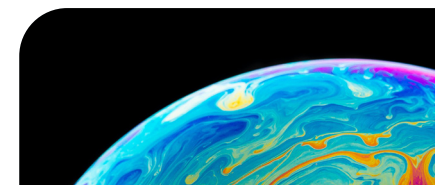
Developing Novel Professional Development Technology

The Training Opportunities to Augment Learning ([TOTAL](#)) web app, a digital platform connecting biomedical trainees to professional development events, launched in fall 2020. Offered in collaboration with [seven institutions](#), career development events cover a wide spectrum of opportunities, including academic, business, administration, and industry research, law/compliance, policy, and others. Looking ahead, the project team plans to expand programming to include additional disciplines and broaden the approach with other units within Boston University and beyond.



Transforming Chemistry Education vs. Course-Level Transformation: Bridging the Gap to Organic Chemistry

The [Prepare with CARE](#) project's suite of online materials features the use of innovative educational technologies to support students in their transition to upper-level chemistry courses. The project team also partnered with the [Educational Resource Center](#) to redesign and launch [OrgoPrep](#) and has plans to extend the CARE model to other BU disciplines and to high school educators.



Beyond BU Funding Opportunities

The Incubator maintains a database of external [funding opportunities](#). Aligning with Digital Learning & Innovation educational innovation and digital learning [goals](#), this resource is intended to encourage consideration of a diverse range of funding options for the implementation and sustainability of relevant experiments and to foster university research efforts focused on the impact of novel educational technologies on teaching and learning.

DL&I Supports BU Educators through the Pandemic

When describing the response of Boston University's faculty, staff, and students to the COVID-19 emergency, Chris Dellarocas, associate provost for DL&I, says several words come to mind: heroism, resilience, community, and growth.

"The past 18 months have been a singularly challenging experience for every member of the BU community," says Dellarocas. "Throughout this critical time in our history, BU leadership, faculty, staff, and students exhibited incredible resolve in the adoption of new teaching and learning modalities."

Heroism and Resilience

From January to late August 2021, BU was firmly embedded in the [Learn from Anywhere \(LfA\)](#) hybrid modality—a model of instruction allowing students to attend classes remotely or in person. Under this blended teaching and learning format, BU leadership, faculty, and staff continued to develop and manage support services, increased investment in technology, and connected with colleagues and learning communities while adhering to University-wide COVID-19 protocols.



Community and Growth

Joining the ranks of countless BU departments, Center for Teaching & Learning and Educational Technology remained in full support mode, catalyzing a variety of critically necessary projects. These include the [Remote Teaching Coordinator](#), [Faculty Coaches](#), and [Student Classroom Moderator programs](#); expanding the LfA Faculty Resource site; and building community through the Lightning Talks speaker series, Faculty Forum 2021 virtual symposium, and more. Each initiative was a connective force in the areas of teaching and technology at BU.

Stephannie Joseph (COM'23 and Lightning Talks student presenter) gets a hands-on lesson in the elastic properties of Jell-O in her Physics of Food lab. Photo by BU Today's Cydney Scott

Lightning Talks Focus on Teaching & Technology; Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion



In support of BU's LfA hybrid modality and the transition to in-person teaching and learning in fall 2021, Digital Learning & Innovation and the Center for Teaching & Learning called on the ingenuity and resourcefulness of BU faculty, staff, and student presenters for the Lightning Talks 2021 speaker series. Content themes highlighted student experiences; diversity, inclusion, and social class inequities in the classroom; and strategies to engage students.

"Our approach was to include topics that ran the gamut from really granular immediate things that people could do in the classroom to encouraging people to think about much bigger aspects of teaching and learning, such as diversity, inclusion, and anti-racist pedagogy," says Deborah Breen, CTL director.

Elevating and Celebrating Community

Since its inception in 2020, the Lightning Talks series has celebrated the experiences and expertise of over 80 faculty, staff, and student presenters and facilitators with over 2,200 attendees to date.

"The Lightning Talks are such a valuable series for ideas," says Jon Wisco, associate professor, BU School of Medicine, a Lightning Talks presenter, moderator, and attendee. "One of the most important aspects of a community is solidarity. In the case of education, I felt connected to colleagues, some of whom I have never met, knowing that we share many common perspectives toward innovating engaged learning spaces."

By the Numbers 2020-21

- 14** Lightning Talks since inception May 2020
- 65+** Faculty/staff presenters
- 14** Student presenters (undergrad, grad, postdoc)
- 14** Moderators
- 89** Lightning Talks videos
- 2,200** Attendees



Faculty Forum 2021: A Day of Exploration & Community Engagement

The move to the Learn *from Anywhere* framework during the 2020-'21 academic year called for faculty to adapt to challenging new teaching modalities and manage unfamiliar technologies while supporting the needs of students during uncertain times. In recognition of the momentous shift to hybrid teaching and learning, and in celebration of the ingenuity and creative spirit of BU educators, DL&I hosted the **Faculty Forum 2021** virtual symposium on May 10, 2021.

Drawing on the teaching and technology experiences of more than 50 faculty and staff presenters, panelists, and facilitators, the symposium, co-chaired by Deborah Breen, director of CTL, and Ernie Perez, director of EdTech, kicked off with a keynote address by Chris Dellarocas,

followed by 10 hands-on/interactive sessions and panel discussions, eight EdTech Expert Stations, and the [Learn from Anywhere Creativity & Spirit Awards](#) ceremony.

"It was inspiring and refreshing to see so many BU faculty and staff from across the BU campus interacting with each other on big ideas as well as the nuts and bolts of learning and teaching in the soon-to-be-post-pandemic era," says [Hamid Nawab](#), professor in the Department of

Electrical and Computer Engineering at BU College of Engineering and a panelist in the "Applying Inclusion and Equity Principles in the Classroom" session. "I came away with a reawakened appreciation of the intellectual caliber of BU faculty and staff and their dedication to the educational enterprise."

In celebration of connection, community, and resilience, Faculty Forum 2021 closed with a recorded "Unity Medley" performance from the BU Inner Strength Gospel Choir.

[View the event-day recordings.](#)



[VIDEO LINK](#) *The BU Inner Strength Gospel Choir*

Learn from Anywhere Creativity & Spirit Awards 2021

Remote Teaching Instructor Award Recipient

Thomas Field
BU School of Medicine

Hybrid Teaching Instructor Award Recipient

Cheryl Knott
BU College of Arts & Sciences

Part-Time Faculty Award Recipient

Swati Rani
BU College of Arts & Sciences

Student Classroom Moderator Award Recipients

Muhamad Doufesh
BU College of Arts & Sciences
Team: Sofia Oliva & Rana Barakat
BU School of Dental Medicine

Faculty Coach Award Recipients

Team: Sue Griffin & Alison Carberry
BU College of Arts & Sciences
Deborah Jaramillo
BU College of Communication

Remote Graduate Student Instructor Award Recipient

Maya Peters Kostman
BU College of Arts & Sciences

Hybrid Graduate Student Instructor Award Recipient

Peter Kováčik
BU College of Arts & Sciences

*Faculty Forum 2021 illustration
by Alexis Williams*

Back2BU Fall 2021:

Supporting the Transition to In-Person



In March 2021, Boston University President Robert A. Brown announced plans to [phase out](#) the Learn from Anywhere model and return to in-person classes for the fall 2021 semester. University leadership, faculty, staff, and students mobilized and prepared for the long-awaited, fully residential campus reopening. Key Digital Learning & Innovation initiatives included establishing faculty networks, managing faculty coaches, supporting classroom moderators, and communicating teaching and technology best practices.

Re-Imagining Faculty Coaches for the In-Person Experience

Peer-to-peer learning promotes engagement, collaborative thinking, and better student outcomes. This is the foundation for the Faculty Coaches Program – a model where faculty and staff provide peer-coaching services and support in the areas of teaching and technology at BU.

Based on the program’s success throughout the 2020-’21 LfA academic year, Boston University Provost & Chief Academic Officer Jean Morrison approved an extension of the Faculty Coaches Program. A small working group of coaches and faculty, led by Center for Teaching & Learning Director Dr. Deborah Breen, is reviewing the program and planning for a revised program that will pilot in spring 2022. The renewed program will provide a robust and flexible structure for peer support of instructors, including the development of a coaches training program and an assessment of program effectiveness.

Educational Technology: Supporting Faculty & Students

In addition to supporting the [LfA Classroom Moderator Program](#), Educational Technology, in partnership with BU Metropolitan College, hosted nearly 180 one-on-one consultations and faculty training sessions throughout the 2020-’21 academic year, with heightened focus on supporting BU educators for the return to in-person teaching and learning in fall 2021.

Return to Campus Resource Hub Launched

As the return to in-person teaching and learning built momentum, the need for a new centralized faculty resource hub became a necessity. The DL&I Communications team, led by Maureen McCarthy, collaborated with DL&I and University-wide partners to create the [Return to Campus Faculty Resources](#) website. To further support the dissemination of information and resources, DL&I email and social media efforts delivered University-wide technology news, pedagogical information, and thought leadership content to BU faculty and staff.



Supporting BU's 2030 Strategic Plan:

Community; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; & Research



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Digital Learning & Innovation is dedicated to achieving inclusive excellence in all aspects of our mission. Throughout 2021, DL&I proudly elevated diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness through a variety of programs and activities. These include partnering with BU Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion to host the "Class in the Classroom" spring 2021 Lightning Talks series (above) moderated by Maria Dykema Erb, director

of the newly launched Newbury Center for first-generation students; hosting the Center for Teaching & Learning's Continuing the Conversation event,

with the assistance of Megan Segoshi of the Office of Diversity & Inclusion; supporting DEI peer-to-peer learning environments via Faculty Forum 2021 (above); CTL's participation in the Inclusive Pedagogy Initiative Working Group; hosting the Graduate Student Learning Community on Inclusive Pedagogy in spring 2021; and Educational Technology's participation in BU's Information Systems & Technology Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion committee.

Sustainability

BU is dedicated to incorporating [sustainability practices](#) into all aspects of the University. In support of this mission, DL&I interviewed the BU Sustainability team and authored two awareness-building news posts: [7 Easy-to-Implement Sustainable Actions](#), highlighting a series of best practices for the higher-education classroom and the in-person or remote workspace, and [BU Sustainability: Engaging in New Educational Technologies 2021 and Beyond](#), a Q&A showcasing a variety of technology-driven initiatives from [BU's Zero Waste](#) data collection and monitoring technology efforts, new data dashboards, and BU Sustainability's newly launched website.



Engaging in HUB Research

Tools from the Adobe Creative Cloud suite have been associated with the BU Hub General Education program, especially the Digital Multimedia Expression (DME) area within the Communication capacity, since the inauguration of the Hub in fall 2018. Deborah Breen, Pary Fassihi, and Ben Keating, from CTL, are investigating the impact of Adobe tools within DME classes. The first phase of the research project, identifying the most common tools associated with DME assignments, will be completed by December 2021. Phase two of the project will delve deeper into faculty and student expertise with Adobe tools as a result of DME courses.

Sustainability photo: Sarabeth Buckley

Building Partnerships through Learning Communities

Digital Learning & Innovation is committed to building learning communities for BU leadership, faculty, and staff technology users to connect with colleagues and discuss platforms and strategies designed to improve students' learning experiences. Here is a look back at our 2021 initiatives.

“The biggest benefit of faculty-to-faculty learning is the spirit of camaraderie that comes from learning together with colleagues.”

- Adobe Catalyst Program Mentor [Carla Romney](#), Director of Research, City Lab, BU School of Medicine



Teaching with Technology (TwT) Faculty Community was a core gathering place for BU faculty throughout 2021. Community Coordinators Dave DeCamp, Educational Technology, and Pary Fassihi, Center for Teaching & Learning, hosted nearly a dozen sessions ranging from roundtable discussions to faculty and student presentations and workshops. Topics focused on tools or approaches to support teaching and learning in the LfA and in-person environments.



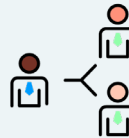
EdTech Collective: 2021 was a time of significant growth for the Educational Technology Collective. Led by Educational Technologist Damon Carlson, the Collective became a hub for University-wide Ed Tech staff. The community explored new methods of teaching and learning in the remote/hybrid and in-person environments and discussed strategies to best support faculty and students.



AR/VR Learning Community: Under the leadership of CTL's Fassihi and EdTech's Wendell Seale, the community relaunched in September 2021 and is hosting live sessions, company demonstrations, and collaborative workspaces throughout the 2021-'22 academic year. Equipment purchased by CTL – four Oculus headsets, an HTC Vive, and an Alienware laptop – will provide learning and exploration opportunities for faculty and staff in CTL's newly established consultation space.



Adobe Catalyst Program: The 2020-'21 program, led by CTL's Fassihi and BU CAS [Caterina Scaramelli](#), welcomed three Adobe Creative Cloud catalysts – [Christopher McVey](#), BU College of Arts & Sciences, [Carla Romney](#), BU School of Medicine, and [Gregory Stoller](#), BU Questrom School of Business – and nine mentees from a wide range of disciplines. Following five hands-on workshops, mentees engaged in a final showcase.



Graduate Teaching Consultants: In 2021, three Graduate Teaching Consultants conducted learning analysis polls for Graduate Writing Fellows in the BU CAS Writing Program and created a [Graduate Teaching Blog](#). Under the direction of CTL Associate Director Jean Otsuki, CTL also launched an Inclusive Teaching learning community and partnered with Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs to host an “Inclusive STEM Teaching Project” edX course.



Blackboard Buddy Program: Blackboard support was in high demand throughout 2021. Under the direction of Educational Technologist Chihsun Chiu, the Blackboard Buddy Program follows the “buddy system” approach. Here, DL&I EdTech staff provide one-on-one faculty support, propose the best solutions to integrate technology into instruction, and ensure course content is set up appropriately.

Awards, Accolades, & Honors

Chris Dellarocas, Associate Provost for Digital Learning & Innovation and Questrom's Shipley Professor of Management, was named [INFORMS Information System Society Distinguished Fellow](#), the highest honor an IS faculty can receive from the professional society. During the November 2020 ceremony, Dellarocas was recognized for his "exceptional intellectual contributions to the theory, research, and practice in the Information Systems area."

Romy Ruukel was named director of the Shipley Center for Digital Learning & Innovation and **Linda Nulty** was promoted to director of DL&I Finance & Operations.

Educational Technology Director Ernie Perez was named co-chair of BU's IS&T Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion committee. Amod Lele, DL&I's Senior Educational Technologist, also serves as a member of the 19-person committee.

Center for Teaching & Learning Director Deborah Breen was awarded a [BU College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Service Award](#) in May 2021. During the award ceremony, [Assistant Dean Daryl Healea](#) recognized Breen as a "critical leader" for the development of a range of pedagogical partnerships; for "tirelessly coordinating" with University partners to implement the Learn *from* Anywhere modality; and for the development and management of the Faculty Coaches Program.

Breen and CTL Associate Director Jean Otsuki served as members of the University-wide Inclusive Pedagogy Initiative Working Group in 2021.

DL&I Communications Manager Maureen McCarthy was named co-chair of the [BU Women's Guild Communications Committee](#) in October 2021.

CTL Assistant Director Pary Fassihi was named an Adobe Creative Campus Faculty Fellow, awarded by Adobe Education in September 2021.

Educational Technology and Incubator Project Leads Amod Lele and Dave DeCamp presented on the topic of [BU Building Blocks](#) - a BU-developed WordPress plugin - at the WPCampus 2021 conference in September 2021.

DL&I to launch new website early 2022

DL&I will launch a new website early in 2022. The project, developed in partnership with BU Marketing & Communications, will have a fresh and innovative look, with emphasis on BU educator support services and user experience. Explore the collection of new teaching guides and educational technology-driven tools; peruse the newly designed project pages; and view an impressive inventory of Faculty Voice testimonials and videos.



New DL&I Appointments

Marvin Brow, Instructional Production Coordinator
Instructional Production Services

Kimberly Cahill, Administrative Coordinator
Center for Teaching & Learning

Joanna Chang, Platform Administrator
Educational Platform Administration

Jaclyn Eichenberger, Digital Learning Designer
Instructional Production Services

Caroline Holley, Senior Digital Learning Designer
Instructional Production Services

Ben Keating, Assistant Director
Center for Teaching & Learning

Denise Kreiger, Senior Digital Learning Designer
Instructional Production Services



CONNECT: digital@bu.edu | 141 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215 | 617-358-8605 | [in](#) [t](#)

HAIRPIN: DESIGN | MAUREEN MCCARTHY: EDITOR, DIGITAL LEARNING & INNOVATION
ALEXIS WILLIAMS: GRAPHIC DESIGNER, DIGITAL LEARNING & INNOVATION