

## Checked Out! Episode 9 Transcript

Todd Felts: Hello, it's Todd Felts. As a teaching associate professor of Strategic Communication at the Reynolds School of Journalism and having just taught a hybrid class during the second summer term, I realize that to be an impactful instructor in these rapidly changing times communication, creativity, curiosity, and a will to always keep learning are key! That's where Teaching and Learning Technologies, or as we like to call it 'TLT', comes in. It is my pleasure to introduce this episode of 'Checked Out!' The official podcast of University Libraries and TLT at the University of Nevada, Reno. Since the pandemic began, the Libraries and small but nimble TLT team had been working to get faculty and students positioned for a successful start to both the second summer session as well as Fall Semester.

As a professor, I appreciate their very important work. I also appreciate that TLT has given us some very important 'TLC'. The TLT team has worked to outfit classrooms across campus with the latest technology to support learning during these uncertain times... and have developed a series of informational and educational videos to help faculty and students to properly prepare for the start of this semester. TLT's one week intensive "Going Online Fall 2020" course helped get instructors up to speed on online course design in preparation for the Fall 2020 semester. Can you believe? TLT looks to graduate approximately 300 participants from this course before this semester starts. This week on 'Checked out', Sasha and Sean interview Greg Gardella and Kathy Hanselman from the TLT and Instructional Design team. You will hear what their work has been like leading up to the start of the semester and what other programs and services are available to faculty and students. Thank you for listening and enjoy the show!

Sasha Soleta: As always, I'm Sasha!

Sean Busey: and I'm Sean! Welcome to 'Checked Out', the official podcast of the University of Nevada, Reno Libraries ... and TLT! I feel like we don't say that most of the time! We really should say that most the time and now that we're talking to TLT again, I feel we need to pretend that we've been saying it the whole time so... TLT.

Sasha: Umm... I'm not gonna start saying it until their bribery check to me clears

Sean: Yeah

Sasha: Because I'm not on for this sponsorship deal until I go get that money

Sean: See... you say this is sponsorship... I say it's a backroom deal with a clandestine amounts of cash, you know, suspiciously changing hands. That or they're just really good at being good at what they do.

Sasha: I was wondering what you and Ed were doing in the back parking lot the other day, but now it all makes sense! You were just exchanging money... cool!

Sean: I don't have permission to be on campus! Don't rat me out!! I haven't gone back to work yet!

Sasha: Well if you're at the train tracks... it's technically not on campus!

Sean: That's true... okay, alright. I'll text him and let him know we gotta move our deals to there.

Sasha: So our first repeat guest! Guys, this is groundbreaking for us. Somebody doesn't hate us after they've had us interview them! They've decided to come back on!

Sean: Right!

Together: One person

Sasha: at least

Sean: So we have Kathy Hanselman back. She is also joined by her colleague Greg Gardella, from TLT and IDT, and they're still working really hard to get the campus functional with the pandemic.

Sasha: Yeah it kind of sounds like Greg, unlike the rest of us, never left campus because he had a lot to do in a short amount of time. His whole team, not just him! It takes a team!

Sean: I feel like if it were just him doing all this work he wouldn't have had time to talk to us.

Sasha: Yeah, and I mean it probably still wouldn't be done. Not that I don't think Greg's amazing but I just feel like... that's a lot of work!

Sean: That's a lot of work for one person even over an entire summer!

Sasha: Unless he's secretly sponsored by 5-hour Energy... then maybe!

Sean: Or Coca-Cola from the early 20th Century. I guess without further ado, we should throw it to past selves for an interview with Kathy and Greg!

Sasha: Yeah! I think that's a great idea! Past selves... take it away!

Past Sean: All right! Thank you for joining us today! We have Greg Gardella with us. What is your actual title in TLT and IDT?

Greg Gardella: I'm the Assistant Director of Classroom Technology within TLT. TLT is broken up into two primary units, the Classroom Technology part and the IDT part. I'm in charge of the classroom technology part. Our responsibilities are for literally classroom technology. So we provide support for technology in the room - that would be just in-time support. It would be installation of the equipment. It would be the design of systems. It would be training of faculty members in use of the systems. This is the primary functions of what we do.

Sean: Okay, so every time I was in class as an undergrad and a projector didn't work and my professor panicked and called people, it was your department that sent the gurus over

Greg: It was! It was, we have a goal of 6 minute service goal to get to a room. So our plan is that if we can get to a room within 6 minutes and typically it's more like 4, but if we can get into a room in that span of time it's having trouble, you can get that room up and moving so the faculty member can proceed with their class. If it's much more than that then they actually will want to cancel class and let everybody go home.

Sean: Sure

Greg: Yeah, we're responsible for over 300 spaces on campus with technology installed and that goes across about 50 buildings. We also have off-campus responsibilities as well!

Sean: Sure

Sasha: So can you describe over the past several months how you guys have been taking the social distancing standards and applying them to classrooms and what sort of technology you guys have been installing in the classrooms for "HyFlex learning" is what we're gonna call it?

Greg: The start of our process here was to sort of figure out what needed to take place with the Zoom call in conjunction with a face-to-face instructional mode and Ed did a lot of the early groundwork of that in laying out the system design... Ed Huffman, my manager. He's the director of our department. And we were faced with a couple of constraints that we needed to work through. One was that we needed to not jeopardize the face-to-face instructional opportunities and we needed to make the online Zoom opportunities as good as they could be within the limitations those present and we needed to them in ways that people had come to expect the work that we do. So we work off three guiding principles. We need to make sure that technology's easy to use and we apply a standard of intuitive use, so if you could walk in a room and receive no training, you are more than likely able to actually use the room.

Sean: Ok

Greg: And so we try to design the ease of use into the space but it also has to be functional. That's one of our other guiding principles. It has to be able to do the things that our faculty members need the room to do and then it has to be reliable. It has to do it every single time that they expect it to be done and so with those guiding principles we came up with the system that utilizes the existing room technologies so we have smart classrooms and we have about 165 centrally scheduled classrooms on campus. Then we have about 165 or 170 other rooms that we support that have technology in them that we need to apply HyFlex technology to. The other constraint that we faced is that we had to be able to do it in a budget friendly way because we knew that everybody was going to be struggling with money and obviously that has come to pass. We had to do it in an affordable way and to do that we had to be able to get the technology, any content that would go to the projector or the large flat screen monitor in a room, also had to be able to go out to Zoom concurrently and to do that we also ran into the problem of having white boards in rooms. And so when we applied a webcam, basically the webcam isn't a good device for doing white board use so we had done testing on this quite a bit in the past so we already knew that to be the case but we did some other testing as well.

Sean: Right.

Greg: and when you align a webcam on a whiteboard at a distance, people simply cannot read what's on that whiteboard.

Sean: yeah

Greg: and we knew weren't gonna have faculty members walking around behind themselves or putting in the standing moving it up the whiteboard.

Sasha: Like "Go-Pro'ing" the whiteboard or anything

Greg: Yeah! While they're writing you know? And we take some consideration into the faculty members' use of the technology, that guiding principle of ease of use was critical because they have to be able to teach and also utilize the technology that is being applied to the room. And so we worked out a way to utilize the existing document cameras. There's some kinds like ELMO's in classrooms.

Sean & Sasha: Yeah

Greg: We haven't used those technology before, this part of that technology. There's a USB port on that document camera and that allows for us not only to send video out to the projector system, but by using the USB port we were able to connect it to the computer and concurrently send the signal both directions. So by having the document camera, a faculty member can place a piece of paper on the document camera and treat it just like a whiteboard.

Sean: Just write out their notes and then everybody can see it easily

Greg: Literally, yeah and then the document camera would send those notes that they would normally put on a whiteboard out to the projector, it would also go to the Zoom and that was, in this case, a pretty easy, inexpensive approach. It took a little bit of work to make it all happen and a whole bunch of wiring we've installed. We've installed a crazy amount... something like 17-18 hundred individual wires just to get this HyFlex technology running.

Sean: sure!

Sasha: So I have a question for like in the classroom, so if I'm in a class, will I be able to talk and have the people watching at home and have the people watching at home hear me? Or have you guys installed speaker and mics within the classroom and stuff like that?

Greg: Yeah, the challenges that you have with audio are literally the hardest ones that we face. So what we're using is for the instructor is a very high quality speakerphone microphone system and it's called a Chat 150. It lives on the podium with the webcam and the faculty member can just speak and within about 10-12 feet they are able to be heard. Any questions on the part of students in the room would need to be repeated by the faculty member.

Sean: Right, that seems the easiest way around that issue is to just have the faculty member rephrase the in-person question for any distance learners. Yeah, that seems simple, elegant, sometimes you even need to do it in a normal classroom anyways if it's a really big room. So yeah \*chuckles\* So I guess... what is different about training faculty for this new setup, versus training faculty in a normal, non-pandemic ravaged world?

Greg: We provide training in a couple different ways primarily and this part hasn't shifted much since the pandemic started. We provide just in-time training. So we will have faculty members that will call and say "I don't know how to make this work!" or "I'm having trouble!" and we run out to the room

and in that moment we'll let the faculty members save face but we'll walk in the room and know that it's "Oh I have to turn it on!" or "Oh I have to push play!" or that kind of thing. So we'll sort of-

Sean: yeah

Sean and Sasha laugh

Greg: treat it like it was technical error

Sean: right haha

Greg: and we'll do a quick training on the side so now understand what the problem was and know how to avoid it in the future and then we'll hand them a card and say "lets talk later and do a little more further training." But we also do scheduled, planned trainings. So we'll go out to a room, schedule it and go out to a room and meet a faculty member and just walk them through the whole technology and honestly most folks understand it intuitively which is again our goal from that guiding principle. But we can provide a little bit more nuanced understanding of how the systems work and we also train for self-sufficiency so if somebody is experiencing a problem that we can predict for them that they may experience. We train them about that problem and show them how they can avoid that issue so they can be preemptive.

Sasha: So I have like a non-COVID related question! So I know the engineering building is nearing completion, correct?

Greg: Yes!

Sasha: You guys are in there doing the classrooms?

Greg: Yes, we are.

Sasha: Is there any, some like cool tech in there that we won't see in any other classrooms on campus? Do you have any inside scoop for the tech in those classrooms?

Greg: I do... so when we started out this year, this build cycle. We have a build cycle where we start in the summers and Winter breaks and our summers are our busiest times. So we'll prepare during the semesters for those break times to build up classrooms that we can't get into during the semesters and the engineering building was one we've been in the design process and the construction planning process on that building. I think Ed started with three or four years ago even.

Sean: Wow...

Greg: And so we knew that that room, that building was gonna need to be built and we have 70 individual systems that need to get built this summer. About 50 of them are going into the engineering building and so before we even knew anything related to COVID, we already had about 70 systems to install this summer that would've made this summer one of the busiest summers we've had ever. So we knew that we were gonna have a very hectic, busy time and we prepared greatly for that. So all the way back into the end of last summer we started preparing for the installations that we gonna need to do this summer.

Sean: Sure

Greg: And I can't say enough about the ability of our folks to take on the challenges that have been placed before us. The ability to... I think we're on track to do all the work we were set to do, so about 70 system installations before the pandemic hit and then do installations in HyFlex rooms of about 220-230 rooms and that could never have happened without the adaptability and the good hard work, diligence on the part of our staff. They've been great. We've already seen some of that, so when we shifted off and part of that transition started happening back in the spring term so, you know, right when we hit the spring break time and it was announced that everybody was going online, we actually ended up having to jump into the mix and help people with Zoom because literally the IDT folks which would normally be dealing with the software and the 0's and 1's stuff online, they were swamped so we-

Sasha: yeah haha

Greg: So some of our staff started taking on that responsibility. We had someone who started taking phone calls directly and triaging every call coming in for support for Zoom. We had other people that were handling scheduling and training people on how to use Zoom and troubleshoot the Zoom stuff itself. Well, all that early experience that we had last spring is now beginning to translate into what we've had to face in the summer 2 session. We dipped our toe in the ice cold water, actually last spring we jumped into the ice cold water and then this summer we were able to dip our toe in again and in the fall we are going to jump into the ice cold water again. But we will slather ourselves up before we jump into the ice cold water or we got a wetsuit on now or something like that. So our folks have been adaptable and they've learned about how to support Zoom. Some of those roles are gonna have to change because we're gonna have less of the issues that we've faced with the direct support in classrooms that it not related to Zoom. So it's been a learning curve for all of our in-room technicians to actually figure out Zoom elements as well and us doing the installation work and troubleshooting of the things this summer 2 has helped us become prepare for this, those challenges.

Sean: That's great, super! Well thank you for taking time out of your day!

Greg: Sure!

Sean: We really appreciate it, thanks for all the work! There's been a lot there, I feel like you didn't so much jump in in the spring into that ice water as much as you were pushed in.

Greg: Yeah! hahaha

Sean: but you've handled it well and now the campus is ready to go!

Greg: Yeah, we're in good shape I think! We'll see when it gets to the fall because I think that the sheer volume of it will create some issues for us that we haven't been able to anticipate. But I think we're in good shape right now. I appreciate you communicating out some of the things that we've been working on. I think anything we can do to communicate out the things that we're doing to help people, I think that reassurance is something that everyone needs right now.

Sean: Definitely. We are here today with history being made Sasha! Our first-

Sasha: I know! Our first repeat guest! I'm so excited!

Sean: The first ever two-time guest on the show! Once again, Kathy Hanselman, thank you for joining us! Talking to us today about TLT and all the crazy amount of work going on up there.

Sasha: Just in case people don't remember who you are Kathy, cause' you know you should memorize every episode, but a lot of people don't! So could you give us a quick rundown of what do you do in TLT and instructional design?

Kathy Hanselman: Alright, well I'm an Instructional Designer with the Instructional Design Team focuses on helping instructors use technology, technology in teaching in things like WebCampus and, you know, this big move of Zoom and, you know, remote teaching and things like that. But also things like clickers and student response systems and basically, just any way that you can use technology to enhance your teaching.

Sean: We last talked to you sort of in the aftermath of suddenly getting campus ready after Spring Break. So what has been different and what has been specific for faculty and for students have you been prepping for a full semester with appropriate amount of time to prep.

Kathy: Well I guess, looking at spring, that was a lot just like emergency reaction.

Sean: Yeah

Kathy: Teaching and helping people get on board with things, they've never used Zoom before. A lot of instructors hadn't even used different tools within WebCampus before. So just kind of rapidly getting people on board with the technology that we have. Coming into, we actually started with helping a lot of instructors getting ready for the second summer session because that also in kind of the same format it could be either completely online or HyFlex, different modalities for teaching. So we kinda were just trying to get as much done as possible before the start of the second summer term so those instructors would have some help. And then also getting instructors ready for fall. So a lot of that has just been trying to get instructors instead of emergency major getting their classes ready to go... actually doing thoughtful planning about how they'll use the technology, how they'll organize their classes with these different modalities and just, you know, it's very different from what most instructors are used to with having a face-to-face class, so just kind of re-envisioning how they might approach a class either being online or you know, the HyFlex, mixed delivery courses that a lot of classes are going to be doing. So just kind of helping instructors prepare and then also of course giving them the tips and tricks and the tutorials on how to actually use the technologies. Continue this entire time

Sean: Right

Kathy: I think that's something that's really important to keep in mind for instructors coming into this is every class is different, every instructor is different, the students in your class are different, so there's not always a one size fits all. So we've given this information in our resource course that's kind of like the basics and some tips and tricks but it's also like you need this information and then talk with people in your own department. Contact us at IDT. We can help you brainstorm ways to make these ideas and these tools work with what you want from your class, they may be very individualized. You

might be the only instructor that's doing this, this way, specifically. So I just think that it's really important that instructors know that it's not weird to you know, ask for individualized help, because classes are individualized.

Sasha: So we've been talking a lot about instructors and faculty and how they're dealing with the transition. What have you guys have in store for students coming back in fall? Did you guys do any prep work for them? How's that gonna happen?

Kathy: We did, we actually created what we ended up calling a student learning toolkit and it's also a resource course that's on web campus so all students and all faculty, teaching faculty have been automatically enrolled in this class. So all of them the next time they log into web campus it should show up on their dashboard as well and it's just called 'Student Learning Toolkit'. And with this it's a lot of, we kind of rolled what we had done really quickly in the spring semester as far as like tutorials on how to post a discussion in web campus, how to join a Zoom meeting. We had some very basic information in Spring and we added to that, just like we did for our instructor materials. A little more in-depth on maybe how to give a presentation in Zoom. How to record your Zoom meeting and send it to your instructor. Just more in-depth things that we know instructors are going to be asking students to do in the Fall. So those tutorials and then we also included a little bit more of tenets of students of success. How to use web campus to plan out your time to get your assignments done in time. How to look for your grades and instructor feedback in Webcampus and then, you know, take that information to hand. There's information on how to contact your instructor and how important communication is. Kind of best practices even for time management and, you know, motivation and, you know, things like that where it's maybe a little outside of our wheelhouse as far as technology and teaching but I think it's important to know just some basic ideas on how to like make sure you actually put into your calendar that you have a Zoom meeting on Tuesday and how to use things like that. So we created that, we are automatically are enrolling all students and we are also putting all faculty into that course as well so faculty can see what students are seeing. So if you are an instructor who had say, assigned students to do a presentation via Zoom. The instructor knows that they can tell the student "go look in the Student Learning Toolkit and there's step by steps on how to do this." So the instructor knows that the students have been given this information and they can direct students towards those steps instead of trying to lead it themselves. Some instructors may even go into the toolkit and copy some of that information out and put it into their own classes so that it's, you know, it's already written for them the directions so that they don't have to try to do it themselves. So we're hoping to make students more comfortable and also remove some of the work that faculty might have to do in trying to get to try these new things with new tech with their students.

Sean: That's good, that's great!

Sasha: Yeah, I feel like as a student I never really fully understood WebCampus and like now... Now we can as students!

Sean: I remember those moments of going "I hope what I'm looking for is in here! Nope! I hope it's in here! Nope! I give up!"

Sasha: I mean sure that was like a million iterations of WebCampus ago but, you know?

Sean: Yeah, yeah

Sean: So...

Sasha: You go ahead Sean! You go ahead

Sean: Go ahead Sasha!

Sasha: It's all you! No it's you!

Sean: No, it's all you!

Sasha: yeah

Sean: This is how polite we are, just falling down all over each other.

\*all laugh\*

Sean: So you've mentioned, you know, obviously people need to get in touch with TLT for help. In case they don't know how to do that by now, where do they contact you? How do they get in touch with TLT for help?

Kathy: Well I think a good start for anybody is to check out our webpage which is [unr.edu/tlt](http://unr.edu/tlt) - we have a ton of new resources that have been built up over the summer. A lot of things that are pulled from these resources that we're making available on trainings in classes... just if we get a question from an instructor then we think "well probably other instructors have the same question, we should probably build out some information on our webpage for it. So we definitely suggest going there and kind of seeing what resources you can find there. There's links to workshops and sessions and Q&A's and things like that. Specific questions can always come to our group email which is [idt@unr.edu](mailto:idt@unr.edu). That one goes to our entire team of seven and we all kind of keep an eye on it all day and whoever has either the time or specific know-how will pick up any email that comes through. Like we have Don in our office is the accessibility guru. So if there's an accessibility question, he'll snatch that one up. If it's about student response systems then it's Wenzhen. If it's different things like that, the expert will kind of pick up the email. We try to get them answered within the business day if possible. If it requires a little more research it might take another day or two but we usually get in contact with the person who's asking the question as soon as possible to let them kind of know what's going on. So that's the best way to contact our group. We're still not back in the office yet so, the email's the best way. We do have our phones are being checked, our voicemails being checked but it's also just kind of coming to that same [IDT@unr.edu](mailto:IDT@unr.edu) email address so come directly to the source. With that we still may say "okay let's get on a quick Zoom call and do this one on one where you can kind of talk through the problem." I'm a big fan of that because with Zoom I can pull up my screen and actually show you what I'm talking about in your Webcampus course and kind of walk you through the steps, so I think it's really helpful in that way.

Kathy: Almost more helpful than when we were taking phone calls in the office. I'm kind of thinking if we ever do go back to the office, I kind of like the Zoom situation better than the phone anyway.

Sean: Yeah

Sasha: It's harder to talk people through like "No! Click that button under the other wha- you- it doesn't look like that on your screen?! Ahh!"

\*all laugh\*

Kathy: Yeah! Exactly!

Sean: You didn't tell me you were on a mac! May as well be on the moon, for all i can help you with not knowing that! Okay! Thank you for taking the time, the second time, to talk with us. We appreciate it, hopefully if we talk to you again in four months it will be on campus with health back in order.

Sasha: and we'll be talking about how to go back into the classroom instead of going online!

Kathy: Yeah!

Sean: Yeah, yeah

Kathy: Oh no! I haven't even thought about that!!

\*all laugh\*

Kathy: That's going to be a whole nother set of trainings and workshops and courses.

Sasha: Yeah! How to transition your totally online course to in person!

Sean: Yeah, yeah sorry to ruin your day at the end of it!

Kathy: That sounds like a December problem!

Sean: So, if you aren't impressed with TLT, if you weren't impressed after the first interview we did with Kathy, the second one and the interview with Greg should really convince you, push you over that edge.

Sasha: I mean that response time alone like... I can't get from the first floor of the Knowledge Center up to the fifth floor in like what? 4-6 minutes? That's not happening!

Sean: Yeah, yeah

Sasha: Like how... how?!

Sean: I can't... I don't know! I can't get there... I assume they're holding out on a teleporter or they have some special kind of airplane. Something... they have a secret! Greg accidentally let the cat out of the bag... we just didn't see the type of cat. That's all that's happening.

Sasha: I'm going with secret tunnels because this is an old school and tunnels are things.

Sean: Yeah, there's all these stories about the school being haunted. May as well have some secret tunnels under it.

Sasha: That only TLT knows about and I'm totally jealous because I guess I never have a need to be South of campus in under 6 minutes these days but you know? A girl can dream!

Sean: If I want anything to do with the south end of campus and a response time of 4-6 minutes. It was usually me calling Jimmy Johns... and I feel like they still weren't as fast as TLT is on that classroom response time.

Sasha: Maybe Jimmy John's should outsource to them! Seems like they're faster than Jimmy John's!

Sean: They're right, oh no! Do I owe TLT tips?

Sasha: I think you do! Umm but you know you're a jerk- no haha- I was like "you're a jerk so you don't have to tip em'!"

Sean: I mean I've been locked indoors for 5 months! I've forgotten social skills!

Sasha: I'm surprised you even know how money works, Sean! It's been so long!

Sean: Yeah! From indoors, all money is a digital number in an app! That's all it is! Yeah. No, in all seriousness, TLT has done a lot of really, really impressive, super cool work over summer. It was already gonna be intense as Greg talked about and it only got worse and they've come through with flying colors and for people not on campus, you don't get to see it. But it's really good, the stuff they do behind the scenes.

Sasha: I mean, it goes for a lot of departments on campus, and in the library itself! When you guys aren't here, when students aren't here, when professors are away for the summer. Everybody's kinda nose to the grindstone to get all those little projects you just don't have the time for during the semester done. Because you can do it without as much interruption.

Sean: And even right now, things like recording for podcasts! We couldn't do this if TLT hadn't set up Zoom for this campus.

Sasha: That's true! TLT we just love you so much! Please don't ever stop doing what you guys do! Literally the campus would fall apart without you guys so....

Sean: The only thing you guys could do better is let us into those tunnels!

Sasha: We need the tunnels!

Sean: Yeah! That's it! That's all we want! That's all we want. But until we do that we should probably do our NPR voices.

Sasha: As always, your hosts today have been Sasha Soleta and Sean Busey! Our guests today were Kathy Hanselman, Instructional Designer, and Greg Gardella, instructional technology manager.

Sean: Thanks as always to the library's podcast team, highlighted this week by new member Jazmin Arevalo, Maggie Ressel, Michelle Rebaleati, Luka Starmer, Jill Stockton, and Reed Barrus.

Sasha: Episode music by "Better Days" by Luwen Wilkstrom, courtesy of Universal Production Music.

Sean: Thank you as always for listening! Until next time, this is 'Checked Out', checking out!