Lenovo
Education

How IT aces
the faculty factor

New training, time-saving strategies, and research opportunities make it easier for faculty to inspire extraordinary experiences.

Faculty are the linchpin of any successful higher ed environment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many rose to the challenge and pivoted at lightning speed to deliver quality education in a borderless campus, despite the enormous burden it placed on these educators.

The situation only proved what Lenovo has learned through our decades focused on education technology.

Faculty care about advancing their disciplines and advancing their students. And great IT leaders care about advancing *them*.

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67%
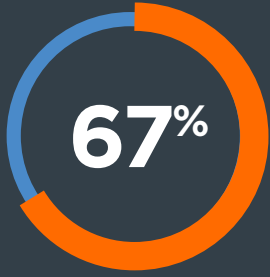
67% of university students indicated they would like to see an increase in the use of digital materials and resources after the pandemic.[1]

Changes are certain to continue. Transformative technology empowers faculty to take their teaching to the next level while amplifying their own interests and achievements.

With the following strategies, you can help faculty — even those still hesitant about evolving how they teach — master modern academic techniques.

Choose solutions that include training and support

The future is bright for immersive technologies like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), as well as AI-enabled tools. Through VR, students enter and interact with a completely virtual environment. Solutions like Lenovo's VR Classroom are untethered and contained entirely with a headset. Other solutions leverage glasses or a VR-ready PC powered by Intel® Core™ processors and Windows 10 Pro.

These technology advancements make a real difference in attaining mastery of any material and encourage an organic kind of creative discovery between professor and student.

"One of the most interesting things we've seen is how students applied VR learning in ways we hadn't thought of," said Dr. Becky Lane, Associate Director of Learning and Innovative Technologies at Ithaca College.[2]

But as advancements in mixed reality and AI become available, they're only exciting if faculty, staff, and students actually use them. Technology goes untouched when it seems intimidating or inefficient to users.

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Getting a little help from Lenovo's VR Classroom

VR Classroom equips higher ed institutions with the ideal solution for VR learning, online or in person — right out of the box. VR Classroom combines innovative hardware and intuitive device management. Faculty, students, and staff can create custom content, experiences, labs, and explorations for every academic discipline and degree path.

Our online or onsite training and responsive support further enable faculty to deliver VR lessons with confidence. Your community will be equipped to learn and create their own education techniques and breakthroughs.

FOR EXAMPLE

Higher ed collaboration powered by Lenovo VR and AI

- Building trade students used VR headsets to tour job sites in their refrigerant safety courses, including a CO_2 refrigeration plant and an ice factory's ammonia plant. This allowed them to practice responding to dangerous situations as if at a live site. (TAFE SA Tonsley Campus, South Australia)

- Agronomists predicted the best time for farmers to irrigate crops on AI-optimized technologies, helping minimize water waste without lowering yields. (North Carolina State University, US)

- Medical researchers conducted projects to improve the human body's reaction to artificial organs using cloud-based artificial intelligence and machine learning with Lenovo ThinkSystem solutions powered by 2nd Gen Intel® Xeon® Scalable processors. (University of Victoria, Canada)

- Education students created immersive STEM lesson plans to deliver in K-12 classrooms, including an experiential lesson on photosynthesis and a 360-degree video of a small-town courthouse to discuss the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. (Ithaca College, US)

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Help them save time with blended delivery methods

Idea sharing and collaboration are easier for everyone with technology that's primed to provide the best possible hybrid learning experience. When equipping co-creative spaces with both remote and in-person connections, pick solutions that:

Meet the demands of the curriculum. The diversity of capabilities and the power of Lenovo's workstations give faculty and students the tools they need for their daily practice.

Empower everyone to come to class prepared. A 1:1 device program can help ensure students have secure, fast, equitable equipment and don't eat into a professor's time trying to log on or stay connected. Absolute software-based endpoint management and classroom management software allow for control of these devices remotely from a single source.

Make it easier to collaborate. Videoconferencing technology brings a professor's coursework and lectures to life online. To support learning comprehension, Lenovo's ThinkSmart Hub and audio and video accessories enable a better connection with crystal-clear visuals and sound.

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Keep them engaged with new research opportunities and the best talent

Colleges and universities have reached a turning point in how they use technology.

"Not all courses will include digital learning, but the pandemic has led to many more using those tools," says Executive Director Russ Poulin of WCET, a US nonprofit that drives policy and advocacy of digital learning in higher education.[3]

"Now the challenge is scaling faculty development and student support systems to make best use of the technologies."

This line of thinking can and should extend to technical opportunities beyond your classrooms and traditional coursework. Faculty are often engaged in their own research and are attracted to working on new challenges — meanwhile, prospective students, visiting global scholars, and expert practitioners are attracted to collaborating with these faculty.

At a time when the value of investing in and pursing an advanced degree is in the spotlight, creating a firm foundation of technology that can evolve and attract faculty helps ensure they stay at your institution and entices students to do the same.

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FOR EXAMPLE

University objectives powered by Lenovo high-performance computing

- Crop geneticists **secured tomorrow's food supply** by breeding mustard oil seeds to resist a fungus that was decimating India's source of edible oil and livestock feed seed meal. (University of Delhi, India)

- Scientific researchers conducted a wide range of demanding workloads from a cluster based on Lenovo ThinkSystem SD530 servers, chosen with the specific goal of **attracting top academics from around the world.** (East China Normal University, China)

- Five major universities joined forces to procure and operate bigger supercomputers than they could individually, and are now supporting more than 300 research projects covering everything **from astrophysics and bioinformatics to molecular dynamics and linguistics.** (Vienna Scientific Cluster, Austria)

- A cluster based on Lenovo ThinkSystem servers created new possibilities for producing **internationally recognized research.** (Sultan Qaboos University, Oman)

Collaboration is key to better hybrid instruction

Lenovo technology, particularly the hybrid classroom model, is designed for new teaching and learning styles — empowering faculty to enrich every academic experience. Our modern solutions, powered by Windows 10 Pro and the Intel vPro® platform, bring business-class performance to the classroom. We prioritize simple, seamless, layered security solutions that keep everyone connected, whether on or off campus. And we make it easy to expand the campus, opening up teaching and learning worldwide.

Learn more about our smart campus solutions at **www.lenovo.com/Education.**

Sources

1 Inside Higher Ed, "Survey reveals positive outlook on online instruction post-pandemic," Digital Learning Pulse Survey, April 2021

2 Lenovo StoryHub, "Immersive Connections — Teaching, Learning and Creating in VR at Ithaca College," June 2021

3 Global EdTech, "Digital Learning Pulse Survey," spring 2021

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