



CONNECT IECC 2026 WORKSHOP

BUILDING CONNECTIONS.
ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE.
POWERING **OUR FUTURE.**

Welcome to the 2026 Connect IECC Workshop.

Every meaningful achievement begins with a connection.

Before students connect with careers, they first connect with a faculty member who believes in them. Before colleges strengthen communities, they connect with employers, schools, businesses, and civic leaders. Before organizations accomplish extraordinary things, people connect with one another around a shared purpose.

That is why this year's theme – CONNECT – is so meaningful.

For me, this workshop carries special meaning as well. It marks my first official day as Chancellor of Illinois Eastern Community Colleges, but in many ways, it also feels like a homecoming. Nearly two decades ago, IECC gave me an opportunity to grow as a leader. Returning today is not simply the beginning of a new position – it is the privilege of rejoining a community that helped shape both my career and my understanding of what community colleges can mean to the people they serve.

Over the past several weeks, I've had the opportunity to reconnect with former colleagues, meet many new members of the IECC family, and begin listening and learning. One thing has already become abundantly clear: IECC's greatest strength is not found in its buildings, technology, or even its programs. Our greatest strength has always been (and will continue to be) our people.

Every day, faculty and staff across our colleges, make a difference in ways that often go unseen. A conversation that builds confidence. An encouraging word offered at just the right moment. Extra time spent helping a struggling student. A partnership that opens a new career pathway. These moments may seem small, but together they transform lives.

At its heart, our mission is about hope – helping people discover possibilities they may not yet see in themselves and providing the knowledge, skills, confidence, and encouragement to pursue those possibilities.

As we begin this academic year together, I encourage you to embrace the spirit of this workshop. Connect with someone you haven't met. Share an idea. Learn from one another. Strengthen old relationships and build new ones. Every connection we make strengthens our ability to serve our students and our communities.

Thank you for the warm welcome you have already extended to Missy and me. We are honored to become part of the IECC family once again and excited for the journey ahead.

I look forward to connecting with each of you as we continue creating hope, expanding opportunity, and transforming lives – together.

Tim Taylor, Ph.D.
Chancellor

ONLINE MAP OF OLNEY CENTRAL COLLEGE

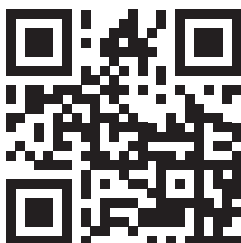


SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

7:45 – 8:15	Registration, Snacks, & Coffee
8:15 – 8:20	Welcome & Housekeeping
8:20 – 8:45	Welcome Address from Chancellor Taylor
8:45 – 9:00	Employee Recognition & Ice Breaker
9:00 – 10:00	Keynote Speaker – Cheryl Mitchell
10:00 – 10:05	ADA Compliance – Dr. Mike Conn
10:05 – 10:15	Transition
10:15 – 11:00	Concurrent Sessions 1
11:00 – 11:10	Transition
11:10 – 11:55	Concurrent Sessions 2
11:55 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 1:45	Concurrent Sessions 3
1:45 – 1:55	Transition
1:55 – 2:40	Concurrent Sessions 4
2:40 – 2:50	Transition
2:50 – 3:35	Concurrent Sessions 5
3:35	Dismiss

MY BREAKOUTS

10:15	ROOM: _____	SESSION 1: _____
11:10	ROOM: _____	SESSION 2: _____
1:00	ROOM: _____	SESSION 3: _____
1:55	ROOM: _____	SESSION 4: _____
2:50	ROOM: _____	SESSION 5: _____



Alternatively, you can also view session times online and sort by time.

URL: <https://iecc.edu/node/3475>

CONCURRENT SESSION 1 - 10:15 - 11:00

Meet the Faces of IECC: Ambassadors & Recruitment Insights

KW ROOM 102 – IECC STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Get to know the IECC Student Ambassadors and discover how they support recruitment through campus tours, school visits, and events. Learn how you can partner with them and the enrollment management team to promote your program and connect with future students.

Faculty New Hire Orientation (Sessions 1 & 2- new faculty)

KW ROOM 103 – AMY TARR

This comprehensive faculty orientation session equips new IECC instructors with the foundational tools, expectations, and resources needed for a successful start. Participants will be introduced to key practices in course design, syllabus development, and effective use of Canvas, while also gaining clarity on academic standards, assessment practices, and institutional policies. The session highlights student support strategies, compliance requirements, and practical approaches to classroom management and engagement. Faculty will leave with a clear roadmap for the first week of classes, an understanding of available support systems, and connections to colleagues and leadership that will support their ongoing success.

IECC HVAC Automation (O&M staff)

KW ROOM 104 – WESLEY AITKEN, IFS

Gain a hands-on look at IECC's building automation system and discover how it can help you better monitor, troubleshoot, and manage campus HVAC operations. Using Olney Central College as a real-world example, this session will explore the web-based graphics interface, demonstrate how air handlers and variable air volume (VAV) systems work together, and explain how to interpret sensor data and adjust system setpoints. Participants will learn practical strategies for improving occupant comfort, indoor air quality, equipment performance, and energy efficiency while gaining confidence in using the automation system to achieve desired building outcomes.

FYE Launch Party: Designing a First-Year Experience That Connects, Engages, and Inspires (faculty)

KW ROOM 109 - CASSANDRA GOLDMAN

This interactive "FYE Launch Party" session is designed for faculty teaching the First-Year Experience (FYE 1198) course. Rather than a traditional presentation, participants will engage in a hands-on, experiential session that models the type of learning environment we aim to create for our students. Faculty will step into the student perspective by participating in sample FYE activities focused on goal setting, time management, and building a sense of belonging. Through structured networking and small-group discussions, participants will share effective practices, identify common student challenges, and collaborate on strategies to enhance engagement. Grounded in the FYE course design, which emphasizes communication, critical thinking, personal development, and real-world application, this session highlights how intentional instructional strategies can foster connection, accountability, and student success. Participants will leave with practical, ready-to-implement ideas and a renewed sense of connection to both their colleagues and the shared mission of supporting first-year students.

Back to the Future: Analog Strategies for AI-Resilient Teaching in Higher Education (faculty)

KW ROOM 110 – MIKE CONN

As AI-generated content continues to challenge the integrity of student work, a growing conversation in educational technology points toward an unexpected solution: a return to the basics. This session explores a “Back to the Future” approach that embraces analog and time-tested pedagogical strategies to restore authentic learning and genuine student engagement. Drawing on proven models such as handwritten assessments, oral arguments, read-and-report assignments, flipped classroom structures, and structured in-class work time, participants will examine how these methods reintroduce the productive friction necessary for deep learning. Greater emphasis on formative assessment and linear learning progressions further ensures that students engage meaningfully with course materials. This session will review these enduring instructional strategies through the lens of modern higher education, making the case that the human element in learning remains irreplaceable.

Stress Relief 101 (all)

KW ROOM 111 – ANGELIQUE MAGUIRE

This session is designed to empower you to relax, focus on what is best for you, and stay healthy in all aspects of your life! As we embark on a primarily digital world, this adventure can seem frightening and overwhelming. The unknown always is. So, let's find out how to rein those thoughts in, how to make our minds and our bodies work for us, and how to conquer this new technologically focused world! In this session, you will gain an understanding of great methods, apps, tools, and mindsets to help you along the way. One great example of this session is the opportunity to learn how to use the power of your senses to relieve stress on the spot and stay calm, productive, and focused – no matter what life throws at you!

Effective Roster Management: Why attendance matters! (faculty)

KW ROOM 112 – AMBER MALONE & STEVE PATBERG

Great session for new or seasoned faculty to better understand the need for correct and timely attendance checks. This allows us to identify student issues early to provide resources and correct any registration errors.

Listening Earlier, Supporting Students Together with TimelyCare (all)

KW ROOM 114 – KATHY DAVIS, TIMELYCARE

Today's students often face challenges that aren't immediately visible in the classroom. This session explores current trends affecting student wellbeing, common barriers to seeking help, and practical ways faculty and staff can recognize and support students in need. Participants will learn about the TimelyCare resources available to both students and employees, including consultation services for faculty and staff, and discover how increasing awareness of these resources can strengthen student wellbeing, engagement, and retention across all IECC campuses. Together, we can create a proactive culture of care that helps students access support before challenges become crises.

Class and International Trip Opportunity Summer 2027: Communication During the Holocaust (all)

KW ROOM 115 - JESSICA MCDONALD

Why should a college employee spend eight weeks studying the Holocaust and then travel to Germany and Poland? This session will introduce a new Summer 2027 class that is open to students, community members, and IECC faculty and staff. The session will explain what we'll study, where we'll go, and explore why the Holocaust still matters – not just as history, but as a way of better understanding people, institutions, leadership, communication, and the choices we make every day.

It's Never too Early to Think about Your Retirement (all)

KW ROOM 116 – BRYAN SOADY, SUAA

A discussion of Illinois Tier I vs. Tier II retirement plans, Health Insurance, how long to work, what to expect for your retirement and how SUAA fits into your retirement plan. A question-and-answer period will follow.

Working Better Together (all)

HP ROOM 1003 – CHERYL MITCHELL

An extension of the keynote, this interactive breakout session moves beyond the idea of "networking" and into the practical reality of collaboration across departments, campuses, and roles. Through facilitated discussion, real-world scenarios, and shared problem-solving, participants will explore how stronger workplace connections improve communication, increase effectiveness, and create a more cohesive culture across the district. Rather than a lecture, this session is designed as a working conversation, helping employees better understand the people around them, leverage institutional knowledge, and identify practical ways to work better together in the situations they are already navigating every day.

The REAL Power Behind the Campus (custodians)

HP ROOM 1004 – BRIAN COWLING, DUTCH HOLLOW JANITORIAL SUPPLY

Student success doesn't begin when a lecture starts or a test is taken – it begins the moment someone walks onto a campus that is safe, clean, welcoming, and ready for learning. That doesn't happen by accident. It happens because of the dedication of custodians and maintenance professionals whose work creates the environment where education can flourish. This engaging session celebrates the often-unseen impact of these essential team members, helping attendees recognize the profound influence they have on every student, every employee, and every visitor. Participants will leave reminded that they don't just care for buildings – they help create the place where lives are changed.

Canvas Updates from InstructureCon 2026 (faculty)

KW ROOM 204 – TOSHA BAKER & CARRIE BROWN

Join us for an overview of highlights from the InstructureCon 2026 Canvas Conference. The best Canvas tips, tricks, and innovative practices will be shared from the conference. Discover time-saving features, course design strategies, and student engagement tools that can enhance your teaching and improve the student experience. Whether you are fairly new to Canvas or a seasoned user, you'll leave with practical ideas and actionable tips to make your courses more efficient, interactive, and impactful.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2 - 11:10 - 11:55

Faculty New Hire Orientation (Sessions 1 & 2- new faculty)

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Level Up Belonging (all)

KW ROOM 109 – RACHEL DOLLAHAN

Creating a classroom where every student feels seen, valued, and connected is central to learning, yet building a true sense of belonging can be challenging. This interactive session explores how the principles of tabletop role-playing games, specifically Dungeons & Dragons (D&D), can illuminate practical strategies for fostering inclusive, collaborative, and supportive learning communities. Participants will examine key strategies for building classroom belonging — establishing tone and vision, co-creating community agreements, encouraging collaboration, spotlighting individual contributions, and connecting students to the broader campus community—through the lens of D&D gameplay. Using analogies from player collaboration, storytelling, and world-building, attendees will leave with concrete tools to create shared norms, encourage empathy, and strengthen engagement in their own classrooms or learning environments. This session is designed for instructors and staff at all experience levels. It will include interactive examples and discussion to illustrate how the lessons from the game table can translate directly into real-world classroom practice.

ADA Compliance (all)

KW ROOM 110 – MIKE CONN

IECC recently worked to update digital content to meet WCAG for ADA accessibility requirements. This presentation will provide data and current level of accessibility for Canvas courses and provide tools and tips to ensure continued compliance and implementation. Tools such as Canvas design, ALLY, and other software will be explored.

The Power of One Space: Transforming Student Support Through the Learning Commons (all)

KW ROOM 111 – LORI NOE

The Learning Commons serves as a support center that advances student success through four interconnected pillars: Testing, Tutoring, ADA Accommodations, and Library Services. Together, these services provide students with academic support, accessible resources, and equitable opportunities they need to persist and achieve their goals. This presentation offers an overview of each area, highlights how they work together to support the student experience, and explores opportunities for collaboration across the college to strengthen student success initiatives.

Support Students Beyond the Classroom (all)

KW ROOM 112 – KRYSTLE JAHN

Student success extends far beyond academics. Many students face significant life challenges such as homelessness, food insecurity, financial hardship, or uncertainty about where to turn for help. This session will introduce IECC's HOUSE Liaison and Benefit Navigator services and explain how the Financial Aid Office supports students through resource navigation, advocacy, and community connections. Participants will learn how the HOUSE Liaison program (Housing and Opportunities that are Useful for Students' Excellence) helps students overcome barriers by connecting them with housing resources, public benefits, emergency assistance, and local support services. Attendees will leave with a better understanding of how to identify students in need, where to refer them for confidential assistance, and how IECC is working to ensure no student must choose between meeting basic needs and completing their education.

Executive Functioning: Helping students plan to plan (all)

KW ROOM 113 – DR. PHIL THORSEN

This session will cover the basics of executive functioning among an increasing number of students complaining of ADHD or autism conditions. Tools and strategies will be shared that could help students adjust to the college workload and increase their ability to complete coursework.

Faculty Learning Community (faculty)

KW ROOM 114 - DANIELLE TRAPP

This classroom and student-related session focuses on collaborative problem-solving to address current teaching issues. Participants will network with other faculty to discuss and exchange ideas and solutions to enhance teaching. The session will allow participants to engage in ongoing discussions throughout the academic year.

Custodial Best Practices: Tools, Techniques & Tips (custodian)

KW ROOM 115 – ART BORRES, LORENZ SUPPLIES

A clean campus is essential to creating a safe, welcoming environment for students, employees, and visitors. This session will highlight custodial best practices, efficient cleaning techniques, and practical tips for maintaining high standards while improving daily routines. Leave with ideas you can apply immediately to help keep IECC's campuses looking their best.

It's Never too Early to Think about Your Retirement (all)

KW ROOM 116 – BRYAN SOADY, SUAA

A discussion of Illinois Tier I vs. Tier II retirement plans, Health Insurance, how long to work, what to expect for your retirement and how SUAA fits into your retirement plan. A question-and-answer period will follow.

Leveling Up: The Journey to Academic Rank (faculty)

HP ROOM 1003 – AMIE MAYHALL

Ready to level up your academic career? Join me for a fun and interactive journey through the academic rank process. This session transforms advancement into a clear game plan, complete with power-ups, bonus coins, and a little help from Luigi along the way. Faculty will unlock the requirements for each rank, collect achievements by documenting accomplishments, and discover the tools that strengthen an academic portfolio. Whether you're just entering the game or preparing for the next level, you'll leave with a personalized quest map, actionable next steps, and the confidence to move forward. No warp pipes or secret shortcuts required, just a solid strategy and the courage to hit "Start".

When in Doubt, Dial it Out: Demystifying Rural 911 (all)

HP ROOM 1004 - CHAD WEAVER

Many of us hesitate before calling 911, worried our situation "isn't a real emergency" or unsure what happens once we dial. This session pulls back the curtain on how 911 dispatch actually works in our rural service area, from call routing to the questions a dispatcher will ask, so you know exactly what to expect. You'll leave with the confidence to use 911 quickly and without hesitation, and the reassurance that calling when you're unsure is always the right call.

It's Time Syllabus Publishing Got Simple (faculty)

KW ROOM 205 - CATHY ROBB & CARRIE HALLAM

Still spending hours updating your syllabus each semester? Tired of formatting the same syllabus information semester after semester? Ready to spend less time on your syllabus and more time on your teaching? Simple Syllabus is designed for just that...to save you time on syllabus prep while enhancing the student experience. Simple Syllabus is a centralized, template-driven platform that enables instructors to quickly personalize and publish their class syllabi directly within our Canvas LMS. Simple Syllabus saves instructors time through a single-page publishing experience. Simple Syllabus auto-populates essential information (such as class title, prefix, number, credit hours, CRN, description, etc.) directly from our SIS Banner system to reduce workload. Simple Syllabus ensures accessibility compliance for screen readers and is mobile friendly. Simple Syllabus is always up to date as the live web is updated automatically without the need to re-upload a document.

CONCURRENT SESSION 3 - 1:00 - 1:45

Meet the Faces of IECC: Ambassadors & Recruitment Insights

KW ROOM 102 - IECC STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Get to know the IECC Student Ambassadors and discover how they support recruitment through campus tours, school visits, and events. Learn how you can partner with them and the enrollment management team to promote your program and connect with future students.

Grounds Equipment: Tools for Safer, Smarter Maintenance (O&M staff)

KW ROOM 103 - JOSH LONG, SLOAN EQUIPMENT

Keeping our campuses looking their best starts with having the right equipment. Join Sloan Equipment as they review IECC's current fleet, discuss opportunities to improve efficiency and safety, and introduce equipment and technology designed to make grounds maintenance easier and more effective.

Marketing Mixer - The Signature Touch (all)

KW ROOM 104 - CHRIS FORDE

Your signature is the last thing people see in your email: make it count! In this interactive workshop, we'll help you create an email signature that's professional, polished, and on brand. You'll be able to follow along and walk away with a signature that's ready to send before the session is over.

Supervisor Essentials (supervisors)

KW ROOM 109 – SONJA HOLTZ

This session equips new and experienced supervisors with the essential tools to effectively manage employee performance, time off, and the hiring process. Participants will learn how to conduct fair and constructive evaluations, implement performance improvement plans (PIPs), and handle scheduled employee leave while maintaining operational continuity. The session also provides clear guidelines on navigating the hiring process, including how to serve on or lead a search committee with equity, transparency, and compliance.

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Work Smarter, Clean Better (custodians)

KW ROOM 112 – DAVE LOWERY

Discover practical cleaning strategies that can help improve efficiency, maintain healthier facilities, and achieve better results. Representatives from Royal Janitorial Supply will highlight products currently used throughout IECC, introduce additional solutions available to support your work, and share helpful tips and techniques for tackling everyday cleaning challenges. Whether you're looking to save time, improve outcomes, or learn something new, this session offers practical ideas you can put to use right away.

Say it in 60: Connect & Collaborate in Seconds (all)

KW ROOM 114 – FAWNA FORREST

This session helps participants connect more confidently across the district by providing an example and practice environment for professional introduction.

NJCAA Updates (Coaches)

KW ROOM 116 – RON RIGGLE

Join Ron Riggle, retired Athletic Director and Hall of Fame baseball coach from Lincoln Land Community College, as he provides the latest NJCAA updates impacting community college athletics. With more than three decades of coaching and athletic leadership, Riggle brings a wealth of experience and insight through his continued service as the NJCAA Region 24 Board of Regents representative and Chair of the NJCAA Division II Baseball Committee. His session will highlight current initiatives, policy updates, and key information for coaches and athletic staff.

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AI for Staff - Learning how to use Co-pilot (all)

KW ROOM 112 – CAMERON IRELAND

Discover how Microsoft Copilot can support your daily work through IECC's institutional license, available to all employees. This training session will introduce the core features included with Copilot and show practical ways to use it across common workflows, including drafting content, summarizing information, organizing ideas, improving communication, and saving time on routine tasks. Participants will explore real workplace examples, learn how Copilot can fit into Microsoft 365 tools, and gain a better understanding of the ins and outs of using AI effectively, responsibly, and confidently. Whether you are brand new to Copilot or looking for better ways to use it, this session will provide helpful ideas, feature overviews, and practical tips you can apply right away.

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KW ROOM 205 – CATHY ROBB & CARRIE HALLAM

Still spending hours updating your syllabus each semester? Tired of formatting the same syllabus information semester after semester? Ready to spend less time on your syllabus and more time on your teaching? Simple Syllabus is designed for just that...to save you time on syllabus prep while enhancing the student experience. Simple Syllabus is a centralized, template-driven platform that enables instructors to quickly personalize and publish their class syllabi directly within our Canvas LMS. Simple Syllabus saves instructors time through a single-page publishing experience. Simple Syllabus auto-populates essential information (such as class title, prefix, number, credit hours, CRN, description, etc.) directly from our SIS Banner system to reduce workload. Simple Syllabus ensures accessibility compliance for screen readers and is mobile friendly. Simple Syllabus is always up to date as the live web is updated automatically without the need to re-upload a document.

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a guide for handwriting or typing. The paper itself is a clean, off-white color. There are no margins, text, or other markings present on the page.



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