## **ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE**

# MARYLAND DISTANCE LEARNING ASSOCIATION



## **Maritime Conference Center**

692 Maritime Boulevard | North Academic Building #3 Linthicum, Maryland 21090

Friday, April 4, 2025



# **MDLA Annual Spring Conference**

## **General Information**

#### Wireless Internet Information

No password is necessary to connect to Maritime Conference Center Wi-Fi.

#### **Cell Phone Usage**

Please show respect for the presenters and your fellow conference participants by practicing cell phone etiquette. Set your cell phones and other electronic devices to off or silent mode. Please stand well away from presentation rooms should you find it necessary to speak on your cell phone while presentations are in progress.

#### **Post-Conference Survey**

The MDLA Board welcomes your feedback on the 2025 Annual Spring Conference, as well as your suggestions for MDLA's future activities. To provide your feedback and suggestions, please complete a survey.

### **MDLA Executive Board of Directors Elections**

Voting closes tonight (April 4) at 11:59 p.m.

Please scan the QR code to vote:





At D2L, AI and machine learning are at the core of Brightspace. We're powering intelligent workflows and content creation like no one else can, to transform teaching and learning in an AI-enabled world.

#### There's Al. And then there's D2L Lumi

With over 25 years of EdTech expertise and specialization, we've been investing in AI to push the boundaries of learning. While doing so, we prioritize security and privacy, both in the development and use of AI systems and in providing customers complete control over their data. No customer data is used to train the LLM, so you will always be in charge of when, where and how AI systems are used.



#### **BETTER ACHIEVEMENT**

Help learners succeed and reach their goals even faster.



#### **SMARTER CONTENT CREATION**

Create engaging, effective and efficient learning experiences easier.



#### **INSIGHTFUL ANALYTICS**

Make informed decisions and deliver impactful learning experiences.



98%

of interactions with D2L Lumi Chat resolved in under 3 minutes.

"[D2L Lumi Quiz] fills the gaps between our instructional designers and academic experts. I love it; it is easy to use and has a straightforward learning curve... Given that this capability is integrated within D2L and questions are based on content created in Brightspace it is convenient to use."

Dr. Elizabeth Pearsall, Assistant Provost of Teaching & Learning, The American College of Financial Services

#### **D2L LUMI FOR EDUCATORS**

Boosting efficiency to keep the focus on delivering high-quality learning experiences.

- Faster Content Creation
- Easier Collaboration
- Proactive Intervention

#### **D2L LUMI FOR LEARNERS**

Improving achievement, driving outcomes and streamlining learning.

- Increase Efficiency
- Individual Feedback
- Dedicated Al Coaching
- Increased Learning Confidence

#### **D2L LUMI FOR COURSE AUTHORS**

Streamlining the time-consuming process of building impactful learning experiences.

- Instant Practice and Quiz Questions
- No-Code Interactive Elements
- Immediate Support and Documentation

#### **D2L LUMI FOR LEADERSHIP**

Supporting faster data collection, interpretation and informed decision-making that drives outcomes.

- Attract Learners with Stand Out Content
- Optimize Your Programs with Streamlined ROI Analytics
- Make Better Decisions with Powerful Insights

Ready to experience the power of D2L Lumi?

#### **Try Now for Free >**



"We discovered that we could take a document that already had questions in it, put it in an HTML page within the LMS, and have D2L Lumi's AI question generator essentially build the same questions with the correct formatting for Brightspace. That saves a ton of time. Overall, having Lumi has just been so convenient and has helped make course design so much easier."

Jordan O'Connell, Instructional Designer at Northeast Iowa Community College



#### Maryland Online Leadership Institute (MOLLI) Residential Program

Are you or a colleague interested in elevating your leadership skills, specifically in the online education space? Look no further! The MarylandOnline Leadership Institute (MOLLI) Residential Program (RP) may be the answer.

III Join us in Annapolis, MD from July 21-24, 2025

Apply now: https://www.molleadership.org/residential-program

Applications will be received through June 30, 2025.

The MOLLI RP is a unique, small-group, on-site experience in historic Annapolis, Maryland designed for higher ed professionals across all areas—Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Instructional Design, Educational Technology, Research and Data, OER, Professional Development, Libraries, Learning Centers, Academic Coaching, and more.

In its 8th year, the RP has been reimagined to meet a growing need for effective leaders and to keep up with the evolving landscape of online education and quality assurance. The program, which admits only 30 participants, is for the first time ever open to applicants outside of Maryland. Its new holistic design serves educators anywhere who seek a leadership role in this dynamic field.

#### What makes the MOLLI RP different from other leadership development programs?

- ✓ Low tuition, high-quality curriculum with national experts
- ✓ Team project on high-impact topics in online education
- ✓ Lifelong networking & community of practice

#### What is new and transformational this year in the reimagined MOLLI RP?

- Connected learning journey with Quality Matters focused on online quality assurance leadership
- Digital credentials through Credly
- ✓ Use of Pressbooks as an open-source publishing platform
- ✓ Personal, individualized action plan to guide the next steps
- Mentoring component for leadership growth
- Numerous sponsors to help expand professional networks and enhance leadership impact



The Instructure Learning Platform

Supports 30 Million+

Educators and Students Worldwide





## **Schedule at a Glance**

Time	Activity
	Registration
8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
	Centralized Break Area
	Opening Remarks
8:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.	Barbara Zirkin Award
	Room A-300
9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Session 1
10:10 to 11:00 a.m.	Session 2
11:10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Session 3
12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
	Chesapeake Dining Room
1:10 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Session 4
2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Session 5
3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Session 6

Session 1 9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL 9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Office 365 Accessibility Tools & Features for Inclusive and Equitable Learning	Gloria Barron Montgomery Community College	A-302
Course Design 9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	HyFlex for All!	Dr. Kari Everett Jessie Thompson Harford Community College	A-303
AI 9:10 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	How I use Generative AI in a Business Ethics Course Assignment	Amy Cedrone Harford Community College	A-306

Session 2 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Choose Your Path: A UDL Challenge for Inclusive Learning	Mrs. Wendy Torres Coppin State University	A-302
Course Design 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Soaring with the Cs: Canvas, Catalog and Credentials	Melissa Thomas Salisbury University	A-303
AI 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Use ChatGPT to Create Course Materials	Michele Clements  Melissa Stitt  Community College of  Baltimore County	A-306
Quality Assurance 10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Collaborative Quality Assurance: Enhancing the Course Design Process while Facilitating Instructor Autonomy	Chasteney Pope Tamasa Nelson Alejandro Otero RoseMary Duran Dr. Morris Thomas Howard University	A-300

Session 3 11:10 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL	Understanding the DOJ's New Digital Accessibility Rule: Implications for Higher Education	Kim Monti TobyLarue Haynes Community College of Baltimore County	A-302
Course Design	5 Years Later: Where are we now?	Teresa Valais Towson University	A-303
LMS	D2L and Harford Community College eLearning Joint Session	Harford eLearning Greg Sixt Alec Thomas D2L	A-306
Quality Assurance	The Quality Assurance Microcredential at Montgomery College	Tia Roebuck Montgomery College	A-300

Session 4 1:10 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL 1:10 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Aligning UDL and Andragogy: Inclusive Strategies for Adult Learners	Dr. Paul Miller Montgomery College	A-302
Course Design 1:10 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Humanizing the Student Experience: Making Feedback Matter	Julie Wenz Kelly Stetka Janice Horoschak Community College of Baltimore County	A-303
AI 1:10 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Syllabi 2.0: Unlocking Generative AI to Promote Alignment and Engagement within Course Design	Tamasa Nelson RoseMary Durún Alejandro Otero Chasteney Pope Dr. Morris Thomas Howard University	A-306

Session 5 2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL 2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Empowering Learners: Practical Strategies for Accessible Course Design	Hannah Katzen-Cramer Mount St. Mary's University	A-302
Course Design 2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	A Comprehensive and Integrated Approach to Foster DEI Principles in Online Courses and Programs	Christina Sax Maryland University of Integrative Health	A-303
AI 2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Leveraging AI to Streamline Course Development	Karen Silverstrim Salisbury University	A-306
Innovation 2:10 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Design Cases as Scholarship: Capturing and Sharing Innovations in Online Learning	Valerie Hartman Johns Hopkins University Towson University	A-300

Session 6 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Track	Title	Presenters	Room
Accessibility UDL 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	"In Search of"Striving for Digital Excellence in a Local University	Dr. Denyce Watties- Daniels Coppin State University	A-302
Course Design (6-minute Panel) 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Empowering Every Learner: Elevating Digital Literacy with UDL What's the big idea? Transform Online Course Development with an Inclusive Design Approach Using Iterative Feedback in Discussion Boards for Substantive Interaction	Dr. Christine Crefton Montgomery College  Natalie Johnson Community College of Baltimore County  Jamie Batts Harford Community College	A-300
AI 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Artificial Intelligence in the Composition Classroom	Mr. Jeff Owens Harford Community College	A-306
Retention and Completion 3:10 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Improving Completion.  How the Seat Bank  Keeps Students on Track  to Complete	Wendy Gilbert MarylandOnline  Stephen Kabrhel Community College of Baltimore County	A-303

#### **Session Descriptions**

#### Office 365 Accessibility Tools & Features for Inclusive and Equitable Learning

Bring Your Own Device Session Utilize Office 365's built-in accessibility features to create ADA-compliant, inclusive, and visually appealing documents. This workshop will provide practical strategies to improve digital accessibility and enhance document design, making content easier to read, navigate, and understand. Participants will explore tools that simplify formatting, improve organization, and enhance clarity, ensuring that accessibility and good design work together.

#### **HyFlex for All!**

The HyFlex model is designed to meet the adult learner's needs to enroll, progress, and complete classes for student success. Many students learn best face to face but working multiple jobs and raising children sometimes does not allow students to attend in person. In alignment with the strategic plan, the HyFlex model offers students in the Adult Literacy Program (ADL) the option of course offerings in different modalities to improve student success. The empowered student selects which learning modality works best for them while the instructor utilizes the different modalities, making the design of instruction applicable to the student's needs. Join us to talk about how the instructors implemented the HyFlex model, what feedback has been received from students, and what training took place for the instructors.

#### How I use Generative AI in a Business Ethics Course Assignment

For two consecutive semesters, I have required students in Business Ethics to complete an assignment using generative AI (i.e. ChatGPT and comparable). The purpose of the assignment is to give them practical experience using AI, and an opportunity to assess its effectiveness and usefulness. This has allowed me opportunity to see how generative AI compares with human creation, and to discuss the use of AI with students. In this session, I will share details of the assignment and pursuant discussion. I hope to discuss ideas for other assignments using generative AI with the audience.

#### Understanding the DOJ's New Digital Accessibility Rule: Implications for Higher Education

This session will be an overview and discussion of the Department of Justice's new rule under Title II subset H concerning digital accessibility in higher education. We will review the background of the new rule, key provisions of the rule, and compliance deadlines and

strategies. We will discuss what the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) is currently implementing to meet requirements. Presenters will then engage in a discussion with the audience asking them to share feedback on their institutional strategies for implementation.

#### 5 Years Later: Where are we now?

Five years after COVID, how well are you prepared for instructional continuity in the event of an unexpected campus closure? Since COVID, faculty and faculty support roles have had ongoing work-related disruptions from advent of Gen AI to the recent DOJ Title II accessibility ruling. Folks working in faculty support, especially front-line instructional designers, have had little time to pump the brakes. This presentation will consider lessons learned from COVID and will discuss ways to apply Resilient Pedagogy to flexible course design and delivery and offer front-end actions steps to encourage faculty to design their courses resiliently, with elements that are resistant, and adaptable, to potential disruptions in the learning environment.

#### **D2L and Harford Community College eLearning Joint Session**

Harford, a recent adopter of the D2L platform, will provide their first-hand experiences and insights regarding the transition and offer valuable guidance alongside D2L's expertise. This meetup provides a space to ask questions, discuss best practices, and explore solutions for optimizing your online learning environment.

#### The Quality Assurance Microcredential at Montgomery College

The Quality Assurance Microcredential at Montgomery College, developed by the office of E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence (ELITE), is comprised of three progressive badges designed to enhance online course design and delivery. This initiative aims to address challenges in quality assurance for online courses, with each badge focused on competencies related to online course quality. In this presentation attendees will get an in-depth overview of each badge while incorporating audience participation via interactive tools (such as Padlet and Mentimeter), to engage them in discussions surrounding quality assurance. Montgomery College is excited to share our approach to high-quality online education.

#### Aligning UDL and Andragogy: Inclusive Strategies for Adult Learners

As adult learners continue to reshape the landscape of higher education, institutions must evolve to meet their unique needs. This session explores the powerful intersection of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and andragogy to create inclusive, accessible, and relevant learning experiences for adult learners. UDL's emphasis on flexibility and removing barriers aligns

seamlessly with andragogy's focus on self-direction, prior experience, and real-world application.

#### **Humanizing the Student Experience: Making Feedback Matter**

As an important component of Regular and Substantive Interaction, feedback in online courses engages and involves learners with their growth. We'll delve into how feedback fosters a positive student experience, discuss the challenges of providing meaningful feedback, and how to easily personalize written, audio, or video feedback. Attendees will also get real-world practice in giving feedback.

# Syllabi 2.0: Unlocking Generative AI to Promote Alignment and Engagement within Course Design

Alignment is paramount in course design. Imagine transforming a syllabus into a fully structured, aligned, and engaging course map in minutes. This session explores how Generative AI tools can revolutionize course design by automating course mapping, ensuring alignment among learning objectives, assessments, instructional materials, and competencies. We will also demonstrate how GenAI can address Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) an essential component of online course design.

Traditional course mapping strategies can be tedious and time-consuming, but GenAI offers a more efficient and scalable approach. Participants will experience firsthand how AI can extract key components from a syllabus, generate structured course maps, and simplify course development. By reducing the time and effort required for planning, GenAI empowers educators to focus on what truly matters—creating dynamic, student-centered learning experiences.

This session is ideal for educators, instructional designers, and administrators seeking to integrate GenAI into course development for greater efficiency, enhanced quality, and improved student engagement.

#### **Choose Your Path: A UDL Challenge for Inclusive Learning**

Join us for an interactive problem-solving experience where participants will navigate real-world accessibility and inclusivity challenges through a "choose your own adventure" UDL game. Each scenario presents a common learning barrier, and participants will explore different tools and strategies to address it. By engaging in the game, attendees will analyze accessibility challenges, evaluate multiple solutions, and collaborate on ways to implement UDL strategies in their own teaching or training environments. At the end of the session,

participants will receive a fully customizable UDL game template to modify with their own scenarios, tools, and strategies—allowing them to tailor it to their specific learning contexts.

#### Soaring with the Cs: Canvas, Catalog and Credentials

Join us as we showcase the redesigned Soaring with Online Learning program, tailored for flexibility to meet the needs of all university faculty, including those teaching in-person. In 2024, Salisbury University revamped the program to accommodate online, hybrid, and remote course designers. Previously a 4–6-week hybrid course, it now offers flexible start and end dates, allowing completion within a year. Participants take three self-paced courses (Backward Design, Engaging Students, and Universal Design for Learning), plus one-on-one support with an Instructional Designer in the final course. This new format expands access to in-person instructors and staff, broadening the program's impact.

#### **Use ChatGPT to Create Course Materials**

Bring Your Own Device Session Come to this session to explore academic uses of ChatGPT. We will discuss prompt writing and review specific ideas on how to generate course materials. A free ChatGPT account is required to participate in the hands-on portion.

# Collaborative Quality Assurance: Enhancing the Course Design Process while Facilitating Instructor Autonomy

Creating high-quality online courses requires time, organization, planning, and continuous improvement, with quality assurance ensuring compliance with accreditation standards and best practices. However, instructors often see quality assurance frameworks as restrictive. At Howard University, we use Learning Design and Quality Assurance (LDQA)—a flexible, collaborative process that enhances course quality while preserving instructional autonomy. This presentation will demystify quality assurance, presenting it as a supportive framework, not a rigid checklist. Participants will learn how LDQA fosters excellence in course design, aligns with standards, and allows for creative teaching. Through real-world examples, we'll show how LDQA empowers faculty to create engaging online courses while ensuring compliance and maintaining their unique teaching styles.

#### **Empowering Learners: Practical Strategies for Accessible Course Design**

Together let's explore new strategies for empowering learners. In this interactive session, we will discuss available tools, easy-to-implement strategies, and holistic approaches that are beneficial to increasing accessibility in online courses. Grounded in Universal Design for

Learning, participants will guide the discussion by selecting topics in these three areas that are most relevant to their interests, shaping the discussion to meet their needs and interests.

# A Comprehensive and Integrated Approach to Foster DEI Principles in Online Courses and Programs

This session outlines a comprehensive approach to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in online courses, using a DEI course review rubric with examples and resources. Faculty peers and individual instructors use the rubric to review and enhance courses, creating improvement plans based on findings. Aggregated results are analyzed for trends and inform faculty training and resources. The review process is assessed for its impact and used to refine the approach. Faculty DEI Champions lead the reviews and support other DEI initiatives, including a 12-week Inclusive Teaching Practices training. This framework has also led to improvements in curriculum, diversity statements, and instructional voices. Attendees will learn strategies and tools to implement and sustain this process at their institutions, with shared results and improvements.

#### **Leveraging AI to Streamline Course Development**

This hands-on presentation explores how AI, specifically Google Gemini AI, can streamline course development by aiding in content creation, lesson planning, assessment design, and personalized learning. Participants will explore AI tools for generating textbooks, courses, exams, quizzes, and interactive exercises while addressing ethical considerations like bias, privacy, and copyright. Real-world examples will highlight both the benefits and challenges of AI in education, equipping attendees with practical strategies to enhance their workflow.

#### Design Cases as Scholarship: Capturing and Sharing Innovations in Online Learning

This session empowers instructional designers and faculty to share their work through design cases, offering a structured approach to publishing insights. Design cases document the challenges, decisions, and solutions in course development, highlighting design reasoning. Attendees will explore examples, learn key writing elements, and discover publishing opportunities. Whether aiming to present at conferences or contribute to research, this session provides practical strategies to turn design experiences into valuable scholarship.

#### "In Search of".....Striving for Digital Excellence in a Local University

The rapid advancement of technology is transforming higher education, with 73% of CIOs recognizing digital transformation as critical for future success. Integrating digital tools enhances personalized learning, accessibility, and engagement. Faculty involvement is key to

successful adoption, and our Faculty Information and Technology Committee (FITC) has led these efforts for over a decade. Collaborating with leadership, FITC shapes technology policies and hosts an annual conference showcasing innovations. Now, with the hiring of a Director of eLearning, we are expanding opportunities to elevate digital learning on campus.

#### **Empowering Every Learner: Elevating Digital Literacy with UDL**

6-minute panel. Many higher education institutions struggle to integrate Universal Design for Learning (UDL), limiting digital literacy and accessibility. To bridge this gap, our team created two customizable infographics: a UDL-aligned digital literacy checklist for educators and a student guide on digital literacy expectations. Vetted by accessibility experts, these tools offer actionable strategies to remove barriers and enhance engagement. This session explores their development, impact on accessibility and learning outcomes, and future adoption. Attendees will gain practical, adaptable resources to implement immediately.

## What's the big idea? Transform Online Course Development with an Inclusive Design Approach

6-minute panel. In today's dynamic educational landscape, developing online and blended courses requires more than just individual effort; it demands a cohesive, institutional strategy. This narrative will guide you through shifting from a traditional course development approach to an inclusive institutional framework. By fostering partnerships and collaboration at the institutional, programmatic, and course levels, you can enhance the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of your offerings.

#### Using Iterative Feedback in Discussion Boards for Substantive Interaction

6-minute panel. Iterative feedback in online discussion boards promotes deeper learning, critical thinking, and engagement by encouraging continuous dialogue. Instead of a single post-and-move-on approach, students refine their ideas through feedback and reflection, fostering meaningful interactions with peers and instructors. This structured process enhances accountability, challenges assumptions, and supports mastery of concepts. For instructors, timely feedback and clear expectations ensure discussions contribute to learning outcomes. When effectively implemented, this approach transforms discussion boards into dynamic, student-centered spaces that drive collaboration and continuous improvement.

#### **Artificial Intelligence in the Composition Classroom**

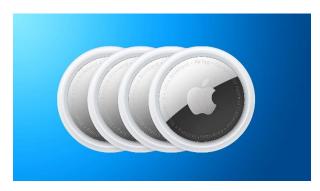
Artificial intelligence is officially everywhere, and there's no sense in trying to avoid it. So how do we deal with this reality in the composition classroom? Instructors struggle with the

knowledge that much of their student work might be composed by a machine, rather than a person. This session will delve into practical strategies regarding differentiating student writing from artificial intelligence and how to detect it. Real student writing samples with A.I. will be looked at and dissected. We will discuss paths forward when catching this form of plagiarism, preventative measures to lessen the likelihood of future plagiarism, and viable ways to incorporate A.I. into lessens so as not to stigmatize a growing, legitimate educational tool. Participants will be asked to engage if desired. I have twelve years of higher education experience in this subject that I am excited to share.

#### Improving Completion. How the Seat Bank Keeps Students on Track to Complete

Does your student need one last class to graduate, but your school isn't offering it (for many reasons)? What are the chances that the student doesn't complete? Or goes elsewhere to complete? Since the early 2000s, MarylandOnline has been helping students keep on schedule with their studies by coordinating the adoption of classes from other institutions with the Seat Bank. Colleges offer seats in their online classes to other MarylandOnline members. When there is a need, the seat is adopted and given to the student from the member institution. But why not just go through the transfer process? What's in it for the two institutions? And who benefits? We will answer all these questions and more, along with a bit of show-and-tell.

## **WIN Apple Airtags!**



We will give a set of 4 Apple Airtags to one lucky attendee. To be eligible for the drawing, you must visit all of the featured exhibitors and get your ticket punched. Your free ticket is available at the registration desk.

Bring your punched ticket to the drawing which will take place during the closing announcements.

You must be present to win.

# **MDLA Executive Board**

#### 2024 - 2025 Board of Directors

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**Debbie Dorsey** 

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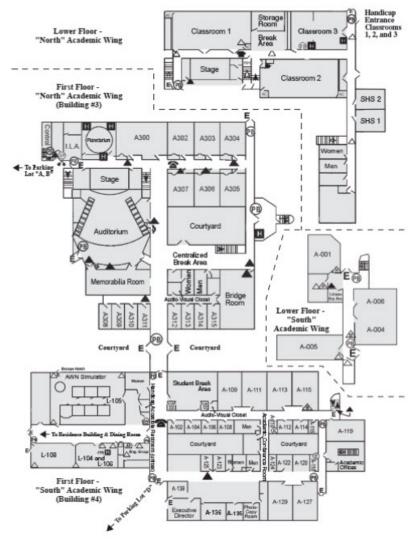
**Dionne Thorne** 

Morgan State University

Jinsong Zhang

Stevenson University

# **Building Layout**





# **About MDLA**

The Maryland Distance Learning Association (MDLA) is an association of learning professionals who advocate and promote the coordination and use of distance education in Maryland and throughout the region. MDLA members represent more than two dozen organizations, including higher education institutions and corporate partners. Our focus is to provide professional development, networking, and collaborative opportunities for educators in K-12, higher education, and business settings.

# **Connect with Us**

MDLA is a volunteer-run organization. For questions, comments, or to get involved, contact us at marylanddistancelearning@gmail.com.



# **Special Thanks**

Maritime Conference Center
Thank you for providing the venue for our MDLA Spring 2025 Conference!