

# IACEE Pulse

A Newsfeed for Members

6/2/2020

www.iacee.org

## Message from the IACEE President

My dear IACEE Colleagues:

The world is in one of the most difficult times it has ever been. It feels like there is war with an invisible enemy and we are fighting with it in all possible ways and yet haven't won. We are gradually getting there, but not yet. And we cannot give up our hope, our dreams, because one day the war will end, and we will be back to a new normal.



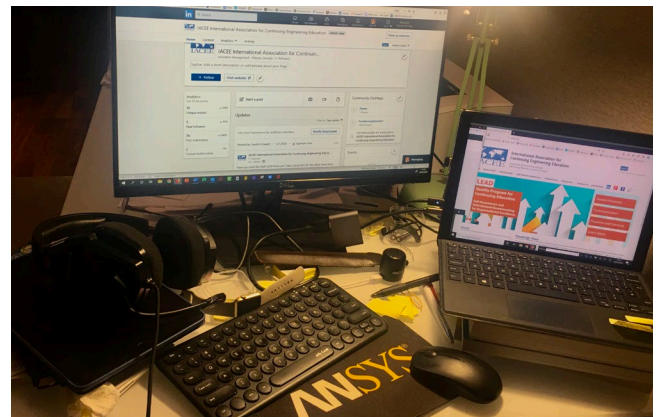
Image from Pixabay; by Manufactura82.

We were supposed to be in Trondheim this week (image, above) for the 17th World Conference which got postponed due to the COVID-19 imposed situation. Needless to say, I am very saddened to think about it. This was supposed to be a time to meet my IACEE colleagues who would have arrived in Trondheim from so many different parts of the world. There would have been hugs, chatter and laughter, arguments and debates, and above all the feeling of being together, the feeling of being with our IACEE family.

This Pulse has a few stories from experience and thoughts during the lockdown due to COVID-19 days. Please read those and share yours with us so that we can publish.

Like most of you, I am working from home as our Cambridge, UK facility of Ansys (the Granta Design office) is closed at this time. It has not been easy to work from home. Like many others, I experience video-conference fatigue, miss the social interaction, and somehow end up in working for more hours, which I'm not sure why. But I am thankful because I'm able to do what I love to do and interact (albeit, virtually) with the greatest group of people – my IACEE colleagues, whom I will meet again in Trondheim next year.

And here I wanted to share a picture of my makeshift office desk (a.k.a. one-third of the dining table) where I am doing my video conferences.



In the meantime, let's not lose hope, let's not give up on our dream, and let's dream together. Stay safe, stay well, and stay strong. As always, please keep in touch. Also, stay tuned for an upcoming web event on continuing engineering education.

Warm Regards,  
Soma Chakrabarti, PhD  
President, IACEE

# Perspectives on COVID-19 from Around the Globe

## Half a Shade Braver – Greetings from Lockdown Downunder

*ERROLLA GRANGE, IACEE Vice President, Global Sustainability; Co-Founder & Chairman, Cahoot Learning & The Cahoot Academy*



First up, best of wishes from Australia to you, our members and readers, and to your families. It sure has been comforting over the past few months to be able to connect with some of my IACEE colleagues and friends and to see their smiling faces on screen. Thank goodness for technology and each other. Thank you!

Whilst it has been both a pleasure and privilege over the years to meet up in person around the world on IACEE business of Life Long Learning, in the absence of travel, it seems that technology certainly has not detracted from the opportunity of experiencing the same heartfelt human connection which attracted me to the IACEE in the first place.

As I reflect on the remarkable times that we are going through, without taking away from the tremendous suffering and hardships, I tend to search out the positives. For example, I think of the many video meetings that I have had with existing, prospective and new clients. I have met so many new people from around the country and world that I would not otherwise have had the chance to but for these restrictive times. Yet it is not the quantity that has been so touching and impactful for me. To borrow words from my favourite author, speaker and poet, David Whyte, the “conversational nature of reality” seems to have shifted in those meetings. The narrative has changed from what was otherwise considered normal and proper to what has become “half a shade braver”. With the blurring of home and work environments, so too have I witnessed a softening of the work persona in favour of greater acceptance and understanding of the commonality of each other’s human and domestic nature, quirks and frailties, regardless of work role or title.

I have loved so much about these video meetings beyond their primary purpose... the exuberance of children whose needs have much greater priority than Mum or Dad being on a work call; the vocal dogs letting their human counterparts know that the start of a Zoom meet is cue for meal time or a call of nature; our self-righteous feline friends who demand centre stage and take hostage of the keyboard (not always with the most flattering of webcam poses) and one of my personal favourites so far... “oh expletive, just hang on for a moment, the cows have broken out of the paddock”

And on more personal notes, in those meetings at times there has been so much more willingness of the folks to open up and share with each other some of the highs and lows of what they are going through in lockdown, often without necessarily knowing or having met all in the meeting before.

When life returns to normal, as normal may be, hopefully the new normal encourages us to become half a shade braver so as to embrace our vulnerabilities, celebrate our differences, and drop the fear that separates us from our humanity. These are the values that I see in the IACEE and that it in turn challenges me to find in myself, and to have the courage to be half a shade braver. Whether virtual or otherwise, travel well my friends, I look forward to connecting with you all again soon.

## The COVID-19 Experience, March 16 – May 27, 2020

*RAGNA ANN BERGE, IACEE World Conference Chair; Head of Section, Centre for Continuing Education & Professional Development - Norwegian University of Science & Technology*

March 11-12<sup>th</sup> most of my colleagues and me (26 persons) at the Centre for Continuing Education and Professional Development Centre at NTNU in Trondheim went to Oslo to see our new office for CE, to work on a working environment survey and the developing plans for 2020-21. The first day went as planned, but the second day, Tuesday, we changed the schedule completely and it became a day discussing and planning on how to deal with the rapidly growing COVID-19 situation, both for conferences and the continuing education audience we are serving.



We took the train home that Tuesday and the following Monday we were all set up with home offices; most of us took our computers, screens, etc. home with us to set up as good a working environment at home as we could (my home office setup pictured left). Since then, all our work has been done digitally.

We have become experts in digital meetings, we started a project on how to get the best out of the workspace *Teams*. Our Conference Team has taken a giant leap and arranged the first digital conference from our Centre. The Course Team has been serving the faculty and students at the CE courses from their home offices just as well as if we were at work. The Marketing Team for the CE courses has done great job and our accountants have been busy returning fees to participants to postponed or cancelled conferences.

Our faculty have done an amazing job and overnight turned the CE courses this spring online, only having to postpone a very small number of courses. Many of the conferences we are serving (including IACEE 2020, turned into [IACEE2021](#)) have been postponed. Some have become/will be (partly) digital events. Some have been cancelled. This will have an economic impact for us this year and we are looking into new business models for the conference services.

We have discovered that we are able to deliver almost all of our services from home and as good as before. The thing is, we are doing our job well, but we, and I, truly miss the social contact and all the things you get sorted out by the coffee machine or by just walking to your colleagues office. We miss the contact with others, the smiles and laughs at the lunch table.

Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the university is opening up with COVID-19 restrictions and regulations. Some of us that are able to will return to work full or part time, while some still have to/want to work from home. The window of opportunity to change the way we do education is now wide open, and we will do what we can to make it happen.

## COVID-19 Forcing Changes in Personal Interactions

CLARA PILOTO, IACEE Council Member; Director of Global Programs, Director of Digital Plus Programs, MIT Professional Education - Massachusetts Institute of Technology

I, along with countless others, am concerned personally and professionally about COVID-19. As someone in an at-risk health category, I'm outraged that many people here in the US and in at-risk global areas are neither wearing masks nor practicing social distancing. This blatant disregard for the health of others indicates to me an accelerating erosion of our societal compact and an alarming increase in the dismissal of proven science and engineering facts.

The erosion of the societal compact should alarm us all. From my recollection studying Aristotle at UC Berkeley, the *polis* was set up to allow political participation by the average citizen. While conceding the average citizen is not a saint, Aristotle said he "will note the interests of others and of the communities to which he belongs and strive to exercise his virtues in balancing these interests". When society confronts an existential threat (which COVID-19 is), Aristotle would posit that the societal compact demands that the average citizen "note the interests of others and exercise his virtues" by protecting himself and others—in this case, wearing a mask and maintaining social distancing.

If Aristotle's political science argument doesn't convince you, well, fortunately we have science and engineering. As early as 1776, George Washington, as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, ordered mandatory inoculation against smallpox for any soldier who had not gained prior immunity against the disease through infection. For the British Army in the North American colonies, inoculation was voluntary. As a result of Washington's orders, the Continental Army was the first in the world with an organized program to prevent smallpox.

Approximately 100 years ago, during the Great Influenza Pandemic, scientists engaged in the nascent field of virology proved the efficacy of virus mitigation through social distancing, limiting the sizes of public gatherings, wearing masks, and basic personal hygiene. (Source: <https://www.historyofvaccines.org/content/articles/us-military-and-vaccine-history>.) So why are we still struggling about the value of science and currently arguing about wearing masks and social distancing?

Americans aren't the only people who have politicized the proven science of virus mitigation and personal protection. From hydroxychloroquine to injecting or ingesting bleach, the transformation of science fact into science fiction should ring alarm bells in higher educational institutions worldwide.

Perhaps a reason why universities haven't coordinated a strong response to the attack on science is that they're too busy trying to adapt to the cataclysmic changes in the provision of education thrust upon them by Coronavirus. Colleges and universities that traditionally change at a glacial pace have had limited time to transition courses remotely. The current distance learning landscape is, as we sometimes say at MIT, "building the plane while flying it." And while higher education and professional and executive education has benefitted by the evolution in high tech that enables online education, the timing of this shift has perhaps been quicker than many institutions planned.

Everything seems to be happening more rapidly than we expected—or didn't expect. Regardless of the pace and the current circumstances, I remain very confident, optimistic, and undaunted. Just as engineers have in the past solved many of humanities' challenges, let's neither lose hope nor give up on our dream (as Soma writes above) that we will continue to do so in the future.



Clara Piloto wearing a mask in times of COVID-19

# 17<sup>th</sup> World Conference on CEE – May 2021



The IACEE 17th World Conference on Continuing Engineering Education

# IACEE 2021

The Future of Work and Learning

Innovation Sustainability Inclusion

Trondheim, Norway  
25 - 28 May 2021

30 YEARS IACEE

NTNU  
Norwegian University of  
Science and Technology

The banner features a purple background with a white outline of Norway. A 3D cube displays 'I 20', 'A 21', and 'C E E'. Below the main text is a row of six small images: a crane, modern buildings, a historic building, a colorful town, a white tower, and a blue landscape. Logos for '30 YEARS IACEE' and 'NTNU Norwegian University of Science and Technology' are on the right.

Have you marked your calendar with the new dates for IACEE’s 17th World Conference on Continuing Engineering Education? Hosted by The Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim, Norway, the conference is now scheduled to take place on **25-28 May 2021**.

If you had previously registered for the 2020 conference, your registration has been automatically transferred to the new dates. If you are unable to attend during the new 2021 dates, you have the option to cancel and receive a full refund of the participation fee. Please email [iacee2020@videre.ntnu.no](mailto:iacee2020@videre.ntnu.no) for more details about an existing registration.

Our sponsors and exhibitors have been notified of the new conference dates, and we are thankful to all for choosing to continue their contribution and support to the 2021 conference; we could not do this without them!

The original prepared program (based on the submitted and accepted papers) will still be adhered to where possible. All accepted papers will be transferred to the new conference dates. Speakers who are not able to participate next year will have to withdraw their paper. We will be re-opening for submission of papers in the fall of 2020.



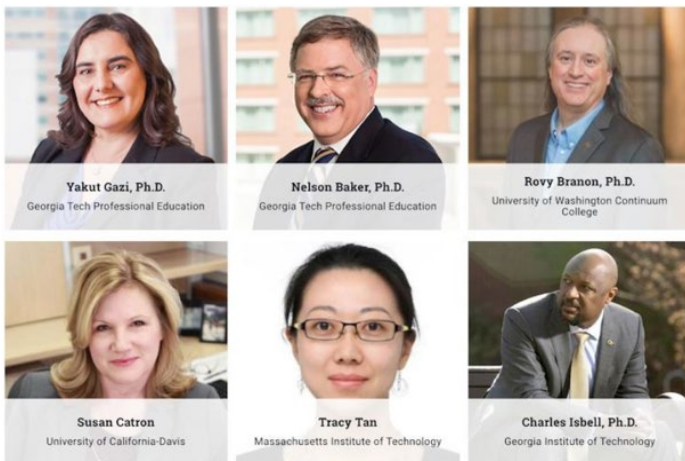
In these very unusual times, plans seem to change almost daily. Please stay tuned for further conference news on our [conference website](#) and in future editions of *The Pulse: A Newsfeed for Members*.

# Moving Horizontally: New Dimensions of At-Scale Learning

Yakut Gazi, Assoc. Dean of Learning Systems, Georgia Tech Professional Education

## Educators Around the World Gathered “Virtually” to Discuss At-Scale Learning

Georgia Institute of Technology has been hosting a symposium for institutions interested in affordable online learning at an event called Affordable Degrees at Scale Symposium since 2017. This May, the group had planned to meet in Davis, California; however, due to COVID-19, the in-person event was canceled. The organizers, instead of skipping an important opportunity to reimagine this space, decided to meet online on May 13th with a compressed program. Over 270 people from 12 countries, representing 5 continents, signed up to attend the event.



[An impressive line-up of speakers](#) discussed what learning at scale means now that we are all online, and the associated strategies with growing programs. The recording of the event is accessible through filling out [this form](#).

As part of this symposium conversation, we introduced the vertical versus horizontal at-scale learning concepts and announced a call for proposals for an edited book.

## Vertical Versus Horizontal Scale

In responding to the COVID-19 emergency, many of us in higher education found ourselves in a remarkable effort to prepare our institutions for emergency remote course delivery. Those of us who represent institutions at the forefront of at-scale and affordable learning have been leaders of what I call a “vertical” scale, where we built courses or programs that represent a one-time substantial investment of resources for building courses and programs to sustain a vertical growth of enrollments. On the other hand, responding to this crisis on our campuses entailed wide collaboration and coordination of not only technological capabilities but also human talent distributed across our institutions, to be able to quickly pivot to a “horizontal” scale of many students distributed over many courses, taught by many faculty. We needed to pivot to this different “dimension” of scale.

Operating in at-scale affordable learning space, we have impressive and complex technology infrastructures and the know-how distributed in our organizations on how to create programs that respond to a large need in the marketplace, design and produce courses and experiences for these programs, find and implement innovative technologies to deliver them, achieve program affordability and financial sustainability, and protect and promote our institutional brands. In many cases, it is these successes that caused our institutions to turn to us to lead, coordinate, or contribute to the COVID-19 emergency delivery of courses. How did we fare? Now that everyone is online, how will our at-scale approach change?

## Call for Book Chapters

I, along with Prof. Nelson Baker, Dean of Professional Education at Georgia Tech Professional Education,

are calling our colleagues operating in the at-scale learning space to contribute chapters to a book on our responses to these new dimensions (vertical and horizontal scales) of remote and online delivery of courses. Each chapter should briefly give the context of online program activities at your institution, followed by the strategy or operational tactics of your coordinated emergency response, highlighting successes, sharing lessons learned, charting future courses. You can also share your perspectives and changes in program and growth strategies in this new world created by the COVID-19 pandemic. This [call for proposals](#) will remain open until 15 June.

For inquiries, contact: Dr. Yakut Gazi, Assoc. Dean of Learning Systems, Georgia Tech Professional Education, [yakut@gatech.edu](mailto:yakut@gatech.edu)

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## Follow Us



Join [IACEE's LinkedIn page devoted to SERINA](#) – A Global Initiative in **Sustainability Education** and **Research In Action**. SERINA is aligned with the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Through our SERINA initiatives, the IACEE seeks to connect and grow a global community of individuals and organizations committed to creating a sustainable and prosperous future for everyone.



Don't forget to "like" the [IACEE Facebook Page](#) to stay informed about upcoming events & read the latest IACEE news. We would also love to have you join the [IACEE Facebook Group](#) to see what other IACEE members are doing in the continuing education world.

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