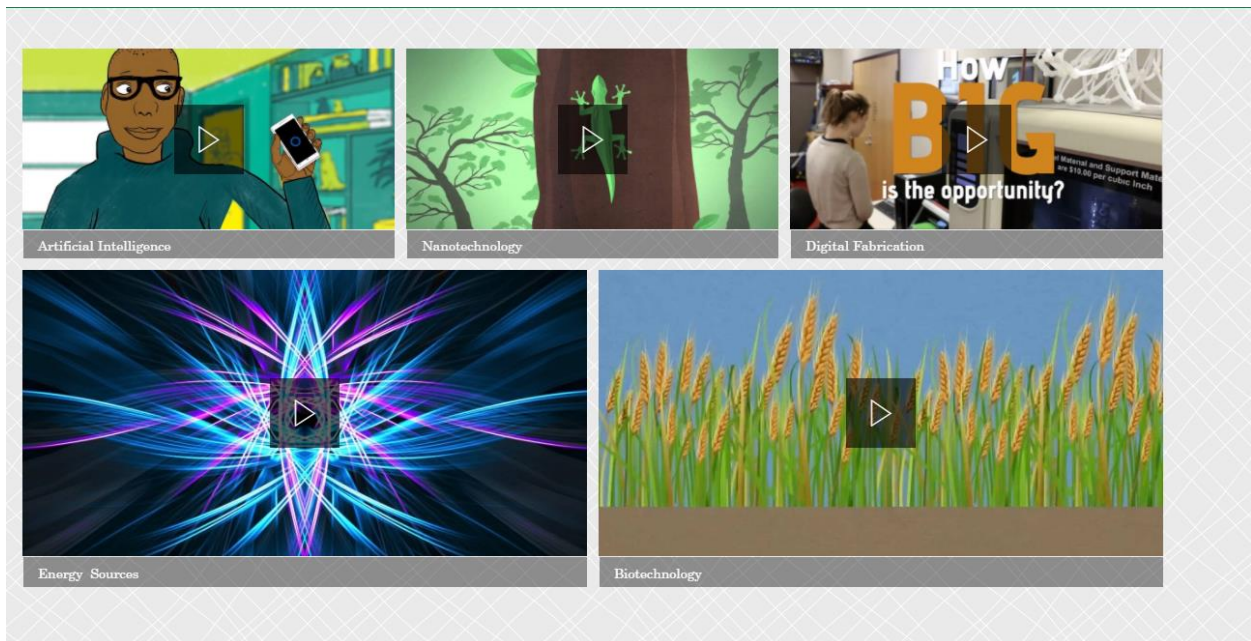# It's Alive

My current role as a eLearning Developer & Support Technologist, I have worked with many faculty members over time converting their course content from a Microsoft Word document or complicated .html to more interactive, engaging online material that is easily updated and edited without the need to be a technical wizard.

A lot of the faculty that I work with are SME (Subject Matter Experts) they are not wanting to waste time worrying about the building the technical aspects of their online material/course! They want to work with someone like myself in the creation phase, and on an ongoing basis, where we work as a team in creating online course material that once created can be edited on the fly easily.

As we know, course content can/is constantly changing, links become broken, content becomes outdate, etc. This is one of the main "issues" the faculty to come to be about. They don't want to wait days and sometime weeks for a simply change to be made to their online content. If they have a change that needs to happen, they want it done now! They really rely on someone like me to be their "go-to" or if someone like myself if not available, they can go make the change, move on, and not need to worry about it anymore.

When sitting back and analyzing the current tools we had available, listening to the needs of the faculty and of the students, Microsoft SWAY seemed to be able to fulfill a lot of the faculty needs. SWAY has the ability to convert material to visually compelling and interactive content, with videos, pictures, weblinks, etc. that is easily adaptable to Blackboard, and other tools we offer.

As well as offers the ability to review the analytics of SWAYs which gives the faculty member the ability to see behind the scenes information on the course content. Are the students spending enough time on the subject matter, is there too much content, should we chunk it down more to smaller modules, etc.

One of my latest projects was I worked one on one with the program Coordinator of our fully online Early Childhood Education program. She was struggling with her current course content being in complicated .html. It was slowing her down, and she found it really did not provide her with the means and need to fulfill her vision she seen her fully online course was going. She wanted to convert her course content from the current complicated .html to material we could update fast and easy.

We met and went through the current material as a team! When going through the material she would state what she wanted to keep, what she wanted to change and how she wanted the final outcome to hopefully look. We as a team, shared ideas on how we could improve the course for herself, as well as keeping the needs of her diverse students. Always keeping in mind that the course content needed to be uniformed throughout the course, (sometimes, throughout many different courses). We wanted to ensure we had the ability to embed into the LMS (Learning Management System) either by a static link or a dynamic view of the content. Accessibility was extremely important as well, we needed to ensure student with different needs such as screen readers was taken into consideration, as well as the need for the material
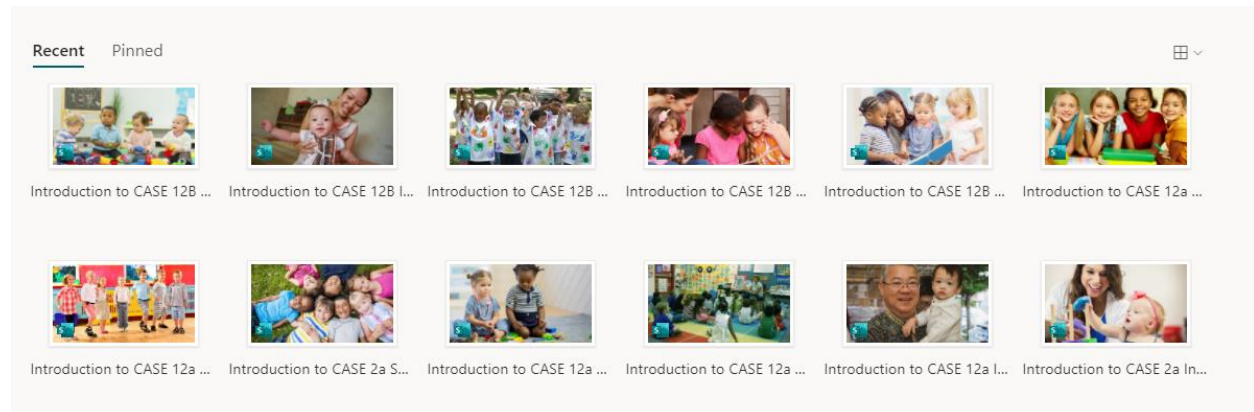

Blackboard

to be customizable on any type of device the students might be accessing the content on.

We had a plan and we went to work; we constantly were in contact reviewing the content, making sure I was on the right path with the building, and now she is extremely happy with her current courses. She has stated that her students love the new layout and find it so much easier when navigating throughout the course content. She was happy with the look and feel as well as the new abilities she had once we met and went over the "how too".

We have replicated our work throughout many courses within the program, and it has alleviated a lot of unneeded stress off the faculty and was able to obtain all the needed aspect she was hoping for.

Just like any tool there are always pros and cons, but when doing a need analyses on what the faculty and I are trying to obtain, with less stress, what is cost effective, and ease of access, I found that in situations like the one I am referring to above, Microsoft SWAY was the best technology-based solution for my learning challenge.

Angie Covey