

Dear campus community,

Congratulations to everyone for a successful spring semester!

While we look toward a future in which we know COVID-19 will remain a reality, we reflect on the lessons we've learned during the transition to online learning while we plan our safe return to campus in the fall.

Since the university moved to a temporary virtual learning and working model, we have collectively faced and conquered each potential issue to successfully complete the spring semester.

For instance, as we approached the end of the semester while operating remotely, many graduating seniors needed access to on-campus resources to complete senior projects. In one case, Professor Antunes had an Astronautical Engineering (AE) student who needed access to software and hardware only available in the SFOTC lab to finish a senior design project. Through collaboration and innovation, Marcel Mabson, an SFOTC instructor, enabled the student to remotely access the SFOTC lab to complete and ace their senior design project.

Professor Antunes also found surprising success in the switch from physical engineering builds to simulated builds of engineering projects, such as real-time rocket nozzle simulations, using Computer Aided Drawing (CAD) software for AE Capstone II projects. Students enjoyed using this software immensely and suggested that CAD was included as a requirement in Capstone I/AE-457.

Other courses that began in-person and transitioned to online were able to turn the potential difficulties from online learning into valuable real-world experience, such as CS-452 Agile Methods taught by Dr. Robert Steele, Chair and Professor of Computer Science. Students in this course learned agile software development using Scrum methodology which required daily in-person meetings. These meetings were parlayed into virtual meetings using video-conferencing tools such as Zoom and other collaborative tools used by real-world software teams distributed around the country allowing work on software code to be completed in tandem. This provided invaluable experience on working collaboratively and demonstrated that Computer Science teams and jobs can continue despite changes in the use of physical workspaces.

Outside of the classroom, our faculty and staff continued supporting students in the transition and all our offices quickly moved to operate successfully in 100% virtual modality to support incoming new students and continuing students. Please reach out to any office as needed as they are there to help you. Due to the postponement of a traditional in-person commencement, Capitol Tech staff created [a celebratory video to honor the graduating class of 2020](#). The video premiered on May 2 on Facebook to create a communal celebration of the graduating students' accomplishments and is hosted on Capitol's YouTube page in perpetuity. Our staff also organized and hosted the first ever virtual Honors Induction Ceremony to celebrate outstanding academic excellence using Zoom on April 9. Connie Harrington, Capitol Tech's Associate Director of Career Development and Employer Relations, expanded her role assisting students seeking employment opportunities by creating [a four-part series of blog posts](#) focused on providing guidance for college students interested in employment during COVID-19.

We are confident that we have the historical and situational knowledge to ensure and attain applied learning outcomes during this unusual time. In combination with our institution's motto we are confident we will continue to "find a way or make one," no matter the circumstances.

As we plan for a safe return to campus, more information will be sent when decisions are made and safety information becomes available.

Stay safe,

Brad Sims, PhD  
*President*  
*Capitol Technology University*