



After the morning keynote address, teachers and administrators moved out to join in forum sessions on a wide variety of topics. Borden addressed smaller groups on using Web 2.0 tools, and in being Creative in the Online World. Other sessions were delivered by Northwest Iowa Community College Faculty on various types of technology and strategies for using new tools in instruction.

Over the past three years NCC has been working to integrate active learning techniques into the curriculum as part of a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant from the Department of Education. This conference was an opportunity for faculty to disseminate what has been learned through the grant with other area educators.

Active Learning is a major topic of conversation and training at NCC as a result of the grant. In short this means that teachers lecture less, and students do more. According to Gretchen Bartelson, NCC Dean of Extended Learning Services, "The research on active learning is very, very clear. Students who "do" remember 90% of what they are taught, while students who only "listen" remember only 10%."

How does this happen? Well it is more than old fashioned group work. Students today have access to the information of the world at their fingertips. However, the internet is more than a giant library, it is a place to collaborate, communicate and invent new ideas and artifacts. Students expect to have lecture notes, PowerPoint's and other instructional resources available whenever they want it. They also want to be able to review lectures through podcasts, and to give instructors feedback on demand.

In addition to changing the way that students learn in the campus classroom, the option of online classes is growing every day. Within the next few years it is anticipated that 75% of all colleges' courses will be available over the internet, and 50% of high school classes. Clearly teachers need to learn to teach differently.

The plan is to try and host a shared professional development conference every year at NCC, building on the success of this week's event. In the next few weeks area schools will be asked for their input on what is needed in the fall of 2012.