

DR. SUE LEBEAU '76/'82G: "TECHNOLOGY IS NOT THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE—IT'S NOW."

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Dr. Sue Lebeau '76/'82G

Dr. Sue LeBeau's passion for technology in teaching began over 20 years ago, with two Apple computers and a third-grade class. "I taught students how to program a turtle to move on the computer screen using Logo. There were lots of higher-level thinking skills they needed to make it work," she says. After that, her interest snowballed.

Today, LeBeau is an advocate for online learning and classroom technology. In addition to working full-time as Instructional Designer at Northcentral University, she teaches teachers how to incorporate technology into their classrooms effectively. She presents classes and workshops for schools around the country, often without leaving her home in New Jersey. "Technology is not the wave of the future—it's now," she says. "Even the youngest students are familiar with technology."

This semester at Rivier, LeBeau is teaching an online course in curriculum development and technology. She says that while getting teachers to embrace new technology can be a challenge, it excites her to see new teachers come on board and see veteran teachers incorporate it into their classrooms. She points out that the internet can enhance curriculum at all levels by providing real-time news and data.

"You can learn about an earthquake happening now, or you can find out what happened in the stock market 15 minutes ago," she says.

LeBeau says that while she loved her 30 years in an elementary school classroom and enjoyed teaching face-to-face at the college level, she doesn't miss the traditional classroom setting. She finds that there's more interaction and closeness between students and faculty members online. "Students may be willing to reveal things in an e-mail that they wouldn't say in class," she says, and quiet students don't get lost online as easily as they may in other settings."

LeBeau earned her doctoral degree online, so she's seen online learning from both perspectives. She believes anyone who wants to teach online should be an online student first. "It's important that teachers understand what students go through on the other end," she says. For many, being an online student can dispel the myth that online learning is taking the easy way out. "A lot of times, it's more rigorous—students have to take more responsibility," she says.

For now, LeBeau's taking responsibility for showing teachers the countless ways technology can work for them—and their students. ■

* **JENNIFER LISKOW** works as a Public Relations and Web Writer in the Office of Marketing and Communications and teaches in Rivier's Professional Communications program. Jenn earned her bachelor's in English and communications from Notre Dame College in Manchester, N.H. in 1996. In 2002, she completed her master's in writing and literature at Rivier. She began writing in junior high school; since then, she has had poems, short stories, features, and essays published. In her free time, Jenn enjoys practicing yoga, ten-pin bowling, and listening to live music with her husband, Tim.