2013
OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

David B. Allen | Associate Director

SERVING THE SGU COMMUNITY

Under the leadership of Executive Director and Chief Information Officer Anthony Schmidt, JD, the Office of Information Technology provides computing and telecommunications services and support for the University community's academic, administrative, operations, and research activities. Services include:

- Technology Help Desk: Providing assistance to our community of students, faculty, and staff
- System Support: Implementing and maintaining the University's central information systems
- Application Development: Developing internal solutions and integrating vendor solutions
- Network and Data Center: Implementing and supporting the University's technology infrastructure
- Educational Computing: Developing and delivering software and hardware training and support
- Technology Research: Evaluating new technologies and recommending solutions to the University
- Business Intelligence: Providing information and analysis to support operational and strategic decision making
- Project Management Office: Facilitating prioritization of technology initiatives and managing technology projects

WiFi: Reaching for Ubiquitous Coverage on Campus

The Office of Information Technology, working closely with the Committee for Technology-based Teaching and Learning (CTTL), is committed to continuous improvements of WiFi coverage on campus. Initial goals to provide coverage to all lecture halls, conference rooms, and select office space across campus were reached as part of Phase 1. During this phase the University Club was also upgraded to provide for coverage in each room, as well as the dining areas, pool, and beachfront and the surrounding grounds

Recent focus has been on providing coverage in dormitories across the campus, overcoming several challenges in the process. The design of our facilities drove the need to develop complex coverage maps and use creative layouts to ensure good signal strength. Network infrastructure, including wiring, switching, and bandwidth, needed to be upgraded. The move to WiFi and associated increases in voice, video and data traffic also required evaluating and evolving the network architecture. This mandated moving the network from a relatively flat structure to a more distributed and layered architecture.

Like other universities, SGU has found widespread WiFi deployment a daunting task. We are pleased to report that through great support and patience from our students, faculty and staff, dedication from our technical teams, and strong executive support, coverage in the dormitories is becoming a reality. The staged implementation is underway and, barring unforeseen issues, Phase 2 should be complete soon.

Identity Management: Driving Toward Single Sign-on and Improved Password Management

The Office of Information Technology is committed to improving the user experience in accessing our systems. One initiative has focused on enhancing the University's Identity Management infrastructure. While single sign-on is an elusive goal, the University has made great strides toward reaching this objective. By consolidating authentication to a single Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) system, there is now a single point of authentication for systems.

The central LDAP has enabled several key architectural improvements. With the implementation of an enterprise

portal targeted for 2014, these improvements have enabled single sign-on to the portal with pass-through authentication to key applications, including course management, student self-service, email, and incident reporting. During the pilot project we anticipate that we will enable several more applications, including course evaluations and on-line examinations, for single sign-on.

These improvements have also allowed for standardizing University credentials (IDs and passwords) and enabling the use of complex passwords. An associated initiative simplified password management by implementing a new self-service solution that will allow students, faculty and staff to reset and manage their passwords real-time without having to reach out for support.

Photo Integration: Making Student and Faculty Photos Available to Administrative Systems

The Office of Information Technology is focused on meeting the growing need to provide student and faculty photos to a variety of administrative systems. Developing software services that make photos available through a standard process will reduce the time and effort required to support requests for photo integration. This service will support a multitude of needs. For example, it will allow:

- Faculty to see photos of the students in their class, and students to see photos of the faculty in the course management system
- Advisors to view photos of their advisees in the advising system
- Security, housekeeping, RAs, and others to validate students' identities based on their photos in the housing management system

Recent Accomplishments and the Future: A Look at 2013 and 2014 Initiatives

In addition to the initiatives highlighted above, during 2013 the Office of Information Technology has supported the successful deployment of numerous technologies prioritized by the governance committees, including:

- Expansion of the clinical skills patent examination simulation platform
- A new client management platform to allow for centralized and effective management of workstations
- Tools that help to prevent the loss of personal identification information and improve information security
- Migration of the VoIP platform to leading edge technology
- Upgrades to the document imaging and retention management system
- Integration of the University's and vendor's systems to automate student insurance processing
- Streamlined collection and management of student health information

In 2014 the Office of Information Technology will be focused on supporting many technology initiatives, some of which are:

- A new housing system with an integrated student portal that enables personalized room selection options
- Enhancements to provide the ability to take international tuition payments on-line
- A new platform to support student advising, performance tracking, and other student services
- Improved tools to help us stay in touch with our Alumni
- Disaster Recovery improvements providing geographically diverse redundancy of the ERP platform
- Migration and platform redundancy for the course management system
- Improved tools for curriculum mapping
- Enhanced capabilities to support clerkship evaluations

IT Based Training: Supporting the University Needs

In keeping with the goal of delivering the highest possible quality of education at St. George's University, the

Educational Computing Team (ECT) continues to provide technology training and support to faculty, staff and students, fulfilling its mission to improve methods of teaching and learning.

The ECT provides both group and individual training sessions for many standard applications. During 2013, group sessions were offered in:

- MyCourses: Course and Learning management system
- ExamSoft: On-line exam management system for creating, scoring and delivering high-stakes exams
- Excel: Advanced spreadsheet use
- 25Live: Classroom reservation and capacity planning system
- LanSchool: Small group and lab teaching management system
- TimeClock Plus: Biometric time clock management system
- TurningPoint: Clicker-based data collection and polling system
- Quickr: Social team collaboration system

Additionally, in Spring 2013, the ECT introduced a new series called Teaching with Technology Tuesdays (TwTT). These workshop-style educational sessions are geared toward allowing faculty to collaborate and learn from each other, with focus on the integration of new technologies into their teaching and learning environments. The series is concentrated on driving innovation, with particular emphasis on mobile technologies. The inspiration for this workshop came from information gathered at the Academic Impressions conference on Bringing Mobile Learning to Your Institution. The series has been very well received and participation continues to grow.

The ECT stays focused on the latest teaching methods and actively shares this knowledge by providing online sites for self-paced learning and through team presentations. In 2013 this included a series of training on Video Production and another on Best Practices for Developing and Presenting Webinars. Another dimension of ECT's role in advancing technology at the University includes chairing and strong participation in technology-related committees for the evaluation and eventual training of new technologies.

ECT training is also extended to the administrative offices and Northumbria campus. The ECT employs student Technical Assistants each semester to support our computer labs and to provide assistance with various academic technology projects. It also offers presentations on the use of campus technologies to students during orientation, introduces new faculty to the teaching technologies used at SGU, and makes presentations to visiting academic advisors on the technology resources and support provided to SGU students.

LOOKING FORWARD

As innovative approaches to teaching and learning dominate the future landscape, the Office of Information Technology stays dedicated to preparing for quick adoption of these emerging technologies. From the emphasis on social media, to the explosion of mobile devices, to real-time predictive analytics of student success, we attempt to proactively prepare our infrastructure, as well as our academic and administrative platforms, to provide the best learning environment possible for our students.

The Office of Information Technology continues to identify and evaluate tools that enhance customer service. We strive constantly to provide faculty, students, and staff with the best available connections to the information, training, and technical resources they need to achieve their objectives.

Editors

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