*A quarterly review of what UW Information Technology is delivering to the UW community*

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## Special Focus: Innovative tools to improve the student experience

►**Canvas, a next-generation eLearning system,** offers a rich array of integrated features for online teaching, learning, and collaboration. According to independent assessments of eLearning systems, Canvas enriches the student experience and helps faculty better manage courses with its significantly faster tools for grading, an intuitive interface with drag-and-drop functionality, easy tools for posting video, and a secure connection to innovative cloud services. UW-IT is piloting Canvas 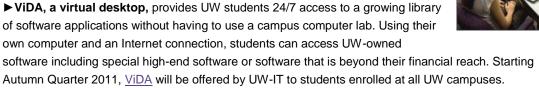with 20 faculty volunteers and their students on UW's three campuses during Autumn and Winter Quarters. Moodle, Blackboard, and Catalyst users will assess the potential of Canvas against the other eLearning systems with the goal of establishing a consistent, modern learning platform for UW students.

►**Tegrity, a cloud-based lecture capture solution**, will be offered by UW-IT on all three campuses starting Autumn Quarter 2011. Tegrity records everything presented in a classroom, letting students review any moment from a lecture, any time, on almost any device. It allows instructors and students to record and publish video, audio, and presentations from most computers without using expensive hardware or software. Students can search, bookmark, and highlight content; make notes; collaborate with each other and their instructor; and use built-in tools to personalize study time. Additional functionality will be released Winter Quarter 2012.

►**ViDA, a virtual desktop,** provides UW students 24/7 access to a growing library of software applications without having to use a campus computer lab. Using their own computer and an Internet connection, students can access UW-owned software including special high-end software or software that is beyond their financial reach. Starting Autumn Quarter 2011, ViDA will be offered by UW-IT to students enrolled at all UW campuses.

►**MyPlan, a Web-based academic planning tool,** enables students to develop a multi-year academic plan, assess progress against degree requirements, prepare for registration, and have more productive discussions with their advisors. The scope of the initial rollout—projected for Autumn Quarter 2012—will be guided by information gathered through interviews and focus groups with students and advisors this past summer. MyPlan is being developed by UW-IT in partnership with the Student Technology Fee Committees on all three campuses, the Provost, and the advising community.

►**eText, online text delivery**, has the potential to improve learning and enhance student engagement, all at a lower cost than traditional textbooks. A project is underway to deliver texts online, enabling students and faculty to search, highlight, and annotate text and offering social-networking tools to further involve students. It also could provide an electronic text for approximately 35 percent of the textbook's list price. UW-IT will conduct eText pilot tests throughout 2012.

## Licensing agreements provide fast access to latest software and save money

UW-IT and its partners have renewed and expanded UW's licensing agreement with Microsoft and have negotiated a new agreement with Apple.These agreements will provide access to Microsoft and Apple products for use on UW-owned computers in all departments on all campuses, including UW Medical Center and Harborview Medical Center, at no additional cost to users and at significant savings to the UW. They relieve staff from buying and managing individual software licenses and ensure that the most commonly used software is available to keep UW-owned computers up-to-date and compliant with licensing requirements. This new agreement moves us to a five-year Enrollment for Education Solutions (EES) agreement at a substantial savings compared to last year's agreement. See details on UWare.

►**Apple software:** Faculty and staff now have access to select Apple software for use on UW-owned computers. This includes the Macintosh operating systems OS X 10.7 (Lion) and X 10.6 (Snow Leopard), iWork 09 (for documents, spreadsheets, and presentations), and iLife 11 (for photos, movies, and music). UW Purchasing, the iSchool, and UW-IT negotiated this licensing agreement with Apple Corporation at a significant savings; the cost is covered by the basic services bundle. Get details.

►**Microsoft software:** Faculty and staff have access to an expanded set of Microsoft desktop and server products: The renewed Microsoft licensing agreement adds Visual Studio 2010 Professional, Visio 2010 Premium, Project 2010 Professional, Expression Studio 4 Ultimate, and RDS CALs at no additional cost for use on UW-owned computers. Staff and faculty also can download Microsoft Office for home computers for a small fee. Get details.

►**Students** will continue to get Microsoft software through their technology fee, including the current versions of Office and Windows 7 Ultimate Upgrade while they are in school, and a permanent license for the version available when they graduate. Get details.

## Microsoft IT Academy at the UW: Free training for UW students, faculty, and staff

Students, faculty, and staff can access extensive, free Microsoft IT Academy online courses and learning resources. Hundreds of video-based courses are available through October 2012. Completion of the training could enhance student employability as well as increase staff efficiency on applications such as Microsoft Office, SharePoint, and Windows 7. Microsoft IT Academy at the UW provides courses in digital literacy (for basic computer skills) and e-learning (for advanced

learning including certifications).

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## UW joins Gig.U coalition to provide faster computer networks

UW has joined over 30 research universities across the country in Gig.U, a project to accelerate deployment of next-generation ultra-high-speed networks and applications to their surrounding communities. The goal is to bring the same high-speed networking available on campus to surrounding businesses and households by lowering deployment costs for commercial providers. For this first round, the UW and the City of Seattle have targeted the South Lake Union district, with its concentration of technology, biomedical research, and the UW Medicine's Research Campus. Kelli Trosvig, UW-IT Interim Vice President and Vice Provost, has been working with city officials to reach out to local communities to garner interest in this project. The aim is to attract startup companies, bolster the local economy, and stimulate next-generation innovation. See *The New York Times*.

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## New UW Seattle project reduces carbon, improves security

A new project will reduce computer power usage and improve system security at UW Seattle by providing software that automatically checks and adjusts individual workstation power management settings and keeps the system's software up-to-date. The PC Power and Patch Management project will support UW's Climate Action Plan for carbon reduction and help achieve long-term energy savings. A pilot involving 3,000 managed desktop computers launches in October, with the goal of eventually making the commercial system (IBM's Tivoli Endpoint Manager) available to all UW Seattle units on a voluntary basis. This effort is funded through Facilities Services and rebates from Seattle City Light Energy Smart Services, in partnership with the UW Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability Office, UW Facilities Services, and UW-IT, which selected the system and will operate it for three years. To participate, email oess@uw.edu.

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## Powerful eScience software platform has potential for teaching and learning

Enhancements to a new software platform that facilitates data-intensive science make it easier for researchers to manage large datasets and could enable students to more directly interact with complex research data. SQLShare (pronounced "sequel share"), designed by the eScience Institute and co-developed with UW-IT, facilitates data-intensive science in fields such as oceanography, astronomy, and human health. Recent additions let users share datasets, add tags, search by keyword, and browse popular datasets. This academic year, UW-IT is conducting pilot tests in advanced courses to assess the viability of SQLShare as a teaching tool and identify the practices and resources needed for effective implementation in classes.