UW-IT Insights

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

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

CSS joins UW-IT as Classroom Technology & Events

To position UW Seattle to better respond to rapid changes in classroom technology and to improve coordination of best practices in teaching and learning technologies with classroom infrastructure, Classroom Support Services has moved to UW-IT, effective July 1. The Provost announced the move last month as part of the UW's organizational effectiveness efforts. CSS also has been renamed Classroom Technology & Events (CTE) to better reflect its scope of work.

The move underscores the Provost's ongoing commitment to providing the best learning environment possible for students. It enables UW Seattle to plan more strategically and to provide faculty with one-stop shopping for their classroom needs. Roberta Hopkins continues as Director, reporting to UW-IT Associate Vice Provost Philip J. Reid.

CTE continues to support more than 300 general-use classrooms, provide event services for several spaces, and manage the student digital equipment lending program. Recent significant initiatives include:

- Creating the **Odegaard Undergraduate Library Active Learning Classrooms** (ALCs) with UW Libraries. ALCs are interactive, interdisciplinary spaces where modern audiovisual technology facilitates scholarship and student learning. Faculty participating in teaching with technology workshops this summer used these in-demand classrooms with positive results.

- **Expanding and upgrading media equipment** that UW Seattle students can borrow. The Student Technology Fee–funded equipment includes digital and video cameras, laptops, iPads, speaker systems, and more.

- **Technology upgrades for many general-use and departmental classrooms,** including multimedia cabling for laptops and tablets, new audio systems, and new technology-enabled teaching podiums.

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Up next: This fall, CTE will refurbish Kane Hall's Walker-Ames Room. Over the next two years, CTE will complete technology renovations for the five Kane Hall auditoriums and Gowen 301; many more general-use classrooms will get modern projectors, audio systems, flat-panel monitors, DVD players, and centralized equipment-control systems.

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Microsoft Office 365: UW SkyDrive Pro and UW Lync coming in October

Two Microsoft Office 365 services, UW SkyDrive Pro and UW Lync, will be available in October to further support collaboration for students, faculty, and staff. UW SkyDrive Pro provides 25GB of cloud-based file storage and sharing. UW Lync offers online meetings that can include voice, video, screen-sharing, virtual whiteboards, presence indication, instant messaging, and more. Both services are HIPAA and FERPA compliant.

These services have been tested with early adopters, and UW-IT is working closely with IT staff in departments and academic units to ensure a smooth rollout. As these optional services are released, UW-IT will communicate about how to get started and get help. *Up next:* A Microsoft cloud-based email and calendaring service will be included as part of the basic bundle of services funded by the Technology Recharge Fee. It offers a cost-saving alternative for units paying monthly fees for their locally hosted UW Exchange, and a per-user mailbox storage increase from 2GB to 50GB.

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New EDW resources, better access to institutional data

New resources are now available to provide better access to institutional data from the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW). These resources, developed by UW-IT in partnership with the Office of Planning and Budgeting, data custodians, and subject matter experts, include:

- New **UW Business Intelligence Portal:** An intuitive, flexible Web portal now connects anyone with a UW NetID to a catalog of central reports and analytics from the EDW. It provides quick, reliable access to data reporting, and analysis tools for research, academics, HR, finance, advancement, and facilities subject areas. Users can view queries, see how others use reports, offer input, see recommended reports, and more.

- **Tableau data visualization software:** The nine-month Tableau pilot concluded, with plans underway to offer this data visualization tool University-wide through a phased rollout starting in October. Twenty UW academic and administrative units evaluated Tableau for creating interactive graphics and dashboards, and found it made data more accessible and understandable. This spring, Tableau became available at no charge to students and instructors through UWare. Find out more about using Tableau.

- **More data is available** primarily in research administration for analyzing research awards, and in academics for analyzing student credit hours. This data also supports reporting and analysis for activity-based budgeting. Standardized data definitions also are now available for all new data added to the EDW.

New support for researchers; national effort underway

To help UW researchers better understand and use the UW's advanced cyberinfrastructure capabilities—including high-performance CPU, storage, networking, and data center resources—UW-IT is creating a new research and education facilitator position. The goal of the position is to help researchers identify and use technology resources that best support their work, particularly in those disciplines that do not traditionally have access to advanced cyberinfrastructure (ACI), but could benefit from these capabilities. UW-IT is planning outreach to UW researchers to raise awareness of this assistance.

UW also has joined Condo of Condos, a new national consortium of 13 higher education and research institutions—including Stanford, Harvard, the Ohio Supercomputer Center, and University of Southern California—working together to promote more effective use of ACI. The consortium is collaborating on a National Science Foundation proposal, which, if successful, would fund up to two research and education facilitators at each institution who would form a national community to exchange best practices, develop course material, and more.

New MyPlan features aid better long-term academic planning

MyPlan, the UW's academic planning tool, offers new features to help students with long-term planning and to extend students' engagement with their advisers. Features recently released or coming this fall include:

- **Placeholders and notes:** To help with long-term planning, students can now add placeholders—including course categories and ranges such as CHEM 1XX—to remind them of classes they need to take to meet their academic goals.

- **Plan audits:** This fall, students will be able to run an audit of their entire plan—not just courses taken or registered for—to better determine if the plan will help them meet program requirements.

- **Adviser input:** This fall, advisers will be able to run degree and plan audits on behalf of students and recommend courses and placeholders.

MyPlan, funded partly by the Student Technology Fee, was developed as part of the UW's participation in the Kuali Student consortium of peer universities developing a next-generation student information system.
Up next: Adviser-published sample plans.

Canvas offers broader access; availability for non-academic uses

Canvas, the UW's learning management system, now offers access for non-matriculated students, guest lecturers, and others without a UW NetID, by supporting Google logins and integration with UW Groups Service. Other improvements include:

- The ability to request a course site, so UW instructors, staff, and students can create non-academic content such as staff training or a program site for students, develop course material ahead of course publishing, or see how Canvas works

- The ability to assign administrative roles to instructional, technology, and support staff, and more easily manage those roles through ASTRA, the UW's central authorization management service

Canvas supports the UW's 2y2d Teaching & Learning in the 21st Century Initiative. *Up next:* Integration with Turning Technologies' student response clickers and Turnitin plagiarism detection software.

Curriculum Management to simplify course and program review and assessment

Work is underway on a new Curriculum Management system that will automate and simplify the entire curriculum review process, from planning to implementation to assessment. The system will make it easier to manage curriculum data through online forms and an electronic review and approval workflow. The system is being implemented by UW-IT in partnership with the Office of the Registrar and is part of Kuali Student. *Up next:* Provide support for a committee charged by the Provost with assessing opportunities for streamlining the curriculum review process and addressing policy and process questions that arise during implementation.

New lecture capture software being explored

A group of faculty and students will help pilot cloud-based Panopto lecture capture software during the 2013–2014 academic year. While Tegrity continues as the University's enterprise lecture capture system, UW-IT will explore Panopto, which works in large lecture halls that Tegrity can't serve. If the pilot proves successful, Panopto could replace Tegrity and the Coursecasting system used in some halls, offering a single solution for all campuses. In the event of a transition, UW-IT will prioritize a smooth migration of user content to a single system.

New student recruitment and enrollment software coming

A comprehensive new recruiting and admissions software package will be launched by UW Undergraduate Admissions for all campuses this fall, making it easier for admissions staff to support the recruitment and admissions process. Ellucian Recruiter will replace end-of-life Recruitment PLUS, and a few other tools, to meet increased demand for personalized interaction and improve the UW's ability to identify prospects and track the performance of recruitment campaigns. It also features workflow to enable proactive communication to prospective undergraduate students and applicants. Implemented by Undergraduate Admissions and UW-IT, Recruiter will result in a more integrated approach to recruitment and applicant communications, and create greater efficiencies in admissions reviews.

lolo rates drop, plus lower minimums for large scale storage for researchers

lolo, the UW's scalable central storage system for research, archiving, and collaboration, now offers lower pricing and lower storage minimums.

- Pricing for lolo Archive has dropped by 46 percent, to $103 per terabyte (TB) per year.

- Pricing for lolo Collaboration has dropped by 22 percent, to $1,224 per TB per year.

- Both storage types are now available in a 1 TB minimum instead of 8 TB, further easing costs for researchers.

Offered through UW-IT since 2011, lolo was developed in partnership with the eScience Institute to provide centrally managed external storage for the Hyak computing cluster and to address the growing data storage needs of UW researchers.

MyUW Mobile popular with students; MyUW enhancements planned

Most students find MyUW Mobile a useful, convenient way to access MyUW to view courses and schedules, email instructors, locate classrooms, check financial balances, and more, according to a survey conducted by UW-IT this spring. More than 36,000 students have accessed MyUW Mobile each quarter since its fall 2012 release. *Up next:* MyUW will be redesigned for better navigation and presentation of information, and instructors also will have a mobile version of course resources. To guide future development, UW-IT plans to conduct a more in-depth needs assessment with a broader sample of MyUW users.

In brief:

- A **new UW Financial Aid tool**, "Shopping Sheet," helps prospective students understand the costs of attending UW and compare their UW financial aid package with other offers. It can be accessed through MyUW and is based on a U.S. Dept. of Education standard.

- Two finalist vendors have been selected for the University's new **HR and payroll system,** with demos held at UW Seattle in August. In addition, results of the Business Process Redesign (BPR) effort were shared at a well-attended BPR open house in September. Information on the vendor selection process and recommended vendor for the **HR/P Modernization project** will be presented this fall for approval by the Board of Regents and Washington State CIO.

- Electronic textbooks, or **eTextbooks,** do not offer significant advantages over printed textbooks at this time, according to the findings of a UW eTextbook pilot involving more than 1,800 students in 23 courses over four quarters. Read the UW-IT report.

- A new UW-IT report on **Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)** highlights the challenges, benefits, and surprises of four UW faculty who each teach a MOOC through Coursera.

- **SpaceScout**, a Web and mobile app that helps UW students find the perfect study spot, was recognized with a *Campus Technology* 2013 Innovators Award, an international competition judged by higher education technology leaders. Recent enhancements include the addition of nearly 70 UW Tacoma spaces this summer, with UW Bothell study spaces and real-time information on available computers in UW Seattle labs to be added this fall.

- A redesigned **IT Connect website** launched this summer, providing an improved user interface and better mobile experience. The new site also offers improved search and navigation and better accessibility for those using assistive technologies.

- UW-IT has **reduced power consumption** in all data centers and is in the last stage needed to receive federal ENERGY STAR certification for the UW Tower data center. Energy efficiency gains and reduced rates have attracted new co-location customers.