UNCG Student Laptop Requirement Underway
More Than 1000 Laptops Sold From May to Mid-August 2007

This academic year marks the implementation of the requirement phase of the Student Laptop Initiative (SLI). All full-time freshmen are required to have a laptop that meets university requirements. This year, laptop models offered through the initiative were expanded to seven options—four ThinkPads and three MacBooks.

From May through mid-August, 1026 laptops—876 ThinkPads and 150 MacBooks—have been sold to students. These numbers will likely match or exceed sales for a similar period during the pilot year (2006-07) of the initiative.

Also new this year is the opening of the Assisted Help Center (AHC) located in 105 McIver Building. The AHC provides consulting, education, and trouble-shooting assistance to faculty, staff, and students on laptop or wireless issues regardless of whether their laptop was purchased through the initiative. Hardware repairs or software imaging services are provided through the Laptop Support Center (354 McIver Building), but only for laptops purchased through the SLI. Clients may go to http://its.uncg.edu/Laptop/ for more information about the SLI.

Color Printing Service Available in Superlab

Beginning fall semester, ITS is offering students the ability to print to a color printer, conveniently located in the Superlab. The implementation of the new color printing service is in response to inquiries from students and Library staff and offers students a convenient and economical way to print in color.

The Superlab, located in the Library, is a suitable location for color printing because it has the largest concentration of student-accessible computers on campus and is open to students during evening and weekend hours. Printouts may be submitted to the Superlab color printer from any ITS computing lab.

Students currently have $3.00 per semester available to use for printing on their UNCG FirstCard. If a student exceeds the quota, the cost for printing in color is $0.20 per single-sided sheet or $0.38 for a double-sided sheet. Black and white printing continues at $0.04 (single-sided sheet) and $0.06 (double-sided sheet).

In the near future, ITS also expects to offer a wireless printing solution, including the installation of two new print kiosks in the Bryan Food Court and the EUC.

Data Center Move Delayed

The campus data center move, originally scheduled for early August, has been delayed. The data center, located in the McNutt building, did not pass tests that ensure the safety of UNCG’s investment in critical servers and networking equipment. ITS is working with Facilities Design and Construction, the electrical and general contractors, and the architect to remedy the points of concern revealed by testing. Provided that subsequent data center testing goes smoothly, the data center move is scheduled to occur over Labor Day weekend.

Information Technology Services provides services for the University to meet its instructional and research missions, and business process needs, in the most cost-effective way possible. This requires that we keep driving down service costs per transaction or per client, at the same time we expand our service offerings. We approach every current service with the questions: Is it still needed? If so, is this the most cost-effective way to provide it?

In some cases, it might prove to be more cost-effective to outsource a service. In other cases, a service that had been outsourced might be more effectively “in-sourced.” Currently, we’re exploring the possibility of outsourcing student email, if the 2007-08 tests show that students would get equivalent or better service, while the University’s costs are held constant or reduced. At the same time, we’re developing collaborative programs with other campuses.

Collaborative efforts are likely to be an increasingly important part of our efforts to provide excellent service at the lowest cost possible.
Internet Service Change for Student Rooms

Time Warner Cable Selected As Broadband Service Provider

When students moved into residence halls this semester, two major changes regarding Internet service and support awaited them. First, student rooms are no longer part of the University wired network managed by ITS. Housing and Residence Life (HRL) negotiated a contract with Time Warner Cable to provide broadband Internet service for all student rooms at UNCG. Staff offices will continue to be connected to the UNCG network. Secondly, the primary focus of HRL’s Residential Networking, Education, and Technology (ResNet) department will shift from technical support to functioning as an educational entity.

These changes significantly affect the way students receive technical support in residence halls. Time Warner Cable is responsible for providing all support related to Internet service, such as support for cable modems and Internet connectivity. Students may contact Time Warner Cable via a toll free number or by calling 6-TECH and selecting the appropriate option on the automated call routing system. ResNet no longer takes direct support calls from students, but offers technical-based educational workshops on an as-needed basis. Services provided by ITS include assistance with password resets, access issues to enterprise services such as Blackboard and UNCGenie, and wireless connectivity issues in residential common areas.

Information Security

This is the first in a series of articles presenting items of interest about information security. In future columns, the ITS Security Office will provide answers to security questions submitted by members of the UNCG client community. If you would like to submit a security-related question for consideration, send it to security@uncg.edu.

Many things get better with age. A computer is not typically one of them. More often than not, hardware is not the problem. It is the software, specifically the operating system, that can degrade over time. Hard drives run low on space; program X conflicts with program Y; old applications sit unused while the operating system has to track an ever increasing collection of preferences, options and components.

After a year or so of heavy use, a once robust system can become noticeably less responsive. Is it spyware? Is it file corruption? Has a hacker turned your computer into a spam mailer? Slow performance may mean many things and can be hard to troubleshoot.

Often the best solution is to wipe your hard drive and reload a fresh copy of the operating system and standard UNCG software, such as Microsoft Office. ITS offers this service—just contact 6-TECH at 256-TECH (8324) and request that your computer be “reimaged.” You’ll need to have all your important data stored elsewhere, but you are already storing all that on your network drive, right?

After reimagining the software, you’ll have the confidence that your computer is free from any malicious software, has the latest patches and virus definitions, and may get a few application upgrades to boot.

And, if you are trying to be more careful online, you definitely want to start with a computer you know is in a pristine state.

Campus Technology Updates

Windows Vista Support on Campus

The Windows Vista operating system is not currently supported on campus. The deployment of Vista on campus has been delayed due to compatibility issues with the Novell environment. A project is pending to investigate a solution that allows the Novell environment and Vista to work together properly. The project timeline has not been established.

Windows Vista on Faculty and Staff Laptops

UNCG faculty and staff now have the option to purchase a new Lenovo ThinkPad laptop with the Windows Vista operating system for home use. However, faculty and staff who wish to receive ITS support for a laptop should choose the Windows XP operating system when ordering a laptop. For more information about the ThinkPad laptop options for faculty and staff, visit http://its.uncg.edu/Technology_Purchases/Faculty_Staff/.

Microsoft Work at Home Program Has Limited Number of Office 2003 CDs Available

ITS has a limited number of Office 2003 CDs available for purchase through the “Microsoft Work at Home” program. Because the Work at Home media supplier now only offers Office 2007, Office 2003 CDs will not be offered through the program after the existing supply is depleted. Faculty and staff interested in purchasing Office 2003 for installation on a computer used for University work must complete the form located at https://6-tech.uncg.edu/ra/Forms/Microsoft_Work_at_Home.pdf.

The next IT Professionals Round Table will be held on October 10, 2007 (3-5:00 pm) in 160 Bryan Building. For details, go to http://its.uncg.edu/Round_Table/.