

iterations

INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
SERVICES

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES • UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

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Welcome to a new academic year and our Fall issue!

As you no doubt know, UMSL will be entering the process of re-accreditation (see www.umsl.edu/services/academic/assessment/umsl-accreditation.html) by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association later this fall. The process is important to demonstrate the quality of an UMSL education and to retain the availability of federal aid for our students. The UMSL Steering Committee has been hard at work for well over a year, developing the Self-Study and a plethora of supporting documentation. The Self-Study has been an open and shared process, aided by ITS support of the editing that included a Sharepoint site, two wiki versions as well as email and web input.

The above link leads to much more information about the process, but a key question for all units is how we contribute to student learning. This also applies to ITS – we must implement technology that supports the missions of the university.

One of the results of the re-accreditation process has been an updated Strategic Plan for UMSL (www.umsl.edu/services/academic/assets/PDFs/gateway2greatness-033008.pdf). This has reinforced the need for clearer statements of mission for each unit in UMSL and the inclusion of the statement on each unit's webpage. The ITS page has been updated with:

We Help You Succeed with Technology

UMSL's technology environment is a key component of the University's ability to meet its mission. The availability of technological tools and services is only the starting point; a more important result of familiarity with

technology is the ability for UMSL constituents: students, faculty, staff and the community, to think critically about information technology, its role and its appropriate uses. Information Technology Services will continue to strive to bring innovations to UMSL while making sure that our community participates fully in the information technology revolution that is changing the way we work, learn and grow.

In addition, all the main webpages for UMSL Colleges and departments were revised in a major effort by the Web Office working with Academic Affairs to make the sites more consistent.

The two Learning Studios (SSB 449 and Clark 400) have been enthusiastically embraced by faculty and students. We have given tours to visitors from organizations including AASCU and the new University of Minnesota at Rochester, who left with a strong sense of UMSL's commitment to learning and to innovation. We are planning a third Studio, this one to be on South Campus. Situated in the Villa building, which is primarily a graduate residence, the new Studio will be centrally located for access from the Honors College and the Colleges of Nursing, Optometry and Education. The location also begins to convey the sense of an integrated approach to student learning and residence life.

ITS recently renovated the common areas in CCB to create comfortable spaces for students to study and socialize. The areas include full wireless network access as well as fixed kiosk computers. Stop by sometime! The spaces have the look of a welcoming bistro instead of a cold institution.

This Fall marks the first full usage of the new Peoplesoft Student Information System, called "MyView." The system was implemented on time and on budget because of the team effort among staff from Student Services, ITS, consultants and UM System. We will continue to address issues that only come to the fore with intense usage, but this is a very satisfying beginning. We also have further ideas about how to leverage the system capabilities to deliver better services to students, faculty and staff.

We upgraded the Blackboard software behind MyGateway in time for the start of the Fall Semester. Features include a module called SafeAssign designed to check papers for plagiarism. These are described later in this issue.

ITS will again be co-sponsoring the Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference to be held November 13 and 14 (Thursday and Friday) this year. More information can be found at: www.umsl.edu/services/ctl/fac_programs/teach_with_tech/index.html. Please plan to attend! We hope to make this event even more exciting and interesting this year.

We have already sent out a request for proposals for another round of Innovation Grants. Please be thinking about that extra boost in funding or time that you might need to make your idea for teaching with technology a reality.

"We help you succeed with technology"

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What's New in MyGateway v.8

The MyGateway course management system was upgraded from version 7.1 to 8 and several new features were added to provide instructors with additional tools to facilitate student learning. New enhancements include the revamped grade book, now called Grade Center, a plagiarism-tracking program called SafeAssign and Self and Peer Assessments. We've summarized the enhancements to each of the new features below. If you need more information or assistance please contact the Faculty Resource Center.

Grade Center

The Grade Center, formerly known as the grade book, gives instructors a greater variety of options for organizing grade information, generating progress reports on students and communicating with users. As a result, instructors can now give students more individual attention. New features and functions include:

- A redesigned tool bar, titled the Action Bar, through which multiple functions are possible.
- The ability to create and print Reports, such as final grades.
- The ability to enter grades directly through the Grade Center spreadsheet.
- New grade calculations, Average grade and Minimum/Maximum grade, and improvements to the creation of weighted grades and total points grade.
- Smart Views – the ability to categorize students into groupings based on selected criteria. These views can be displayed in the Grade Center.
- The ability to create Grading Schema: multiple grading scales that match Assessment grades to chosen grade displays, such as text or percent grades.
- Email users directly through the Grade Center.

Safe Assign

SafeAssign is a plagiarism prevention service designed to help students learn about what constitutes plagiarism and how to properly attribute any content they quote, paraphrase or borrow. It also helps educators to detect unoriginal content in student papers.

SafeAssign can be used in two ways:

Instructors can set up SafeAssignments in their Blackboard (MyGateway) courses and let students submit papers to these assignments, in a way very similar to the one provided currently by Assignment Manager. As students submit papers, they are checked against SafeAssign's comprehensive databases of source material. The papers will then be delivered to instructors through the Blackboard Learning System together with the originality reports. The results of the matching process will be attached to the paper. Instructors may upload

papers directly with the Direct Submit feature, without student involvement. Students can also submit their work for a SafeAssign check independent of the course. By enrolling in the Writing Lab website through their MyGateway Home tab, they can have their work checked prior to the assignment deadline. This check will give them time to correct any errors before the paper's final due date. Students will click the link on the "MyGateway Home" tab labeled "The Writing Lab site" and hit "Submit". A success receipt page will appear on which the student will select "OK". The paper will be automatically submitted to SafeAssign where an automated check compares the work to those in SafeAssign's existing database. Students can log back into the Writing Lab site within 24 hours of submission to review the results. SafeAssign helps students and instructors ensure proper citation and avoid unnecessary problems with students' work.

Self and Peer Assessment

The new Self and Peer Assessment is a comprehensive and flexible tool for the self- and peer assessment of text, images, and digital-based resources within Blackboard. It allows an instructor to create an exercise with a list of questions for the assessor. These questions can have a variety of grading or marking criteria, created or selected by the instructor, to be used in the assessment. The instructor then distributes the exercise with the questions and criteria to the students. The instructor can choose to have the student assess his or her own work or the works of other students. In turn, the students submit the work, to be viewed by the instructor. The instructor can monitor the progress of the assessment, download the assessment submission and results, and add the assessment marking to the Grade Center.

To utilize Self and Peer Assessment, go to a Content Area and choose "Self and Peer Assessment" under the "Select" drop down menu in the Edit View. The "Add Self and Peer Assessment" page provides instructions for setting up assessments.

By evaluating the work of their peers, students learn more about their own working methods and results. Instructors utilizing self and peer assessments must be clear on what is expected of the students both in the production of their own work and the evaluation of others' work. Instructors who want to involve students in all steps of the learning process are encouraged to set up Self and Peer Assessments.

We help you succeed with technology so give us a call if you have questions.

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Network Access Control with Bradford Networks

Network Access Control has been implemented across campus as a security measure to protect both the individual users of the UMSL network, as well as to minimize the constant threats that exist by being connected to the Internet. UMSL has chosen a product from Bradford Networks called Campus Manager. This product has been designed specifically to support large campus environments. It is used by many universities, including local universities such as Washington University and St. Louis University. The overall goal is to only allow known machines on the network that have been updated with the latest security updates.

One misconception is that this is registering a user. It is not registering you as user, but is registering your machine. It does require a user to be associated with the machine. That is why you register on

Bradford using an SSO id.

The first step in the process is for the user to register their machine on the network. This machine is identified uniquely and has access to the network. The other major function is for monitoring of updates of both the operating system and anti-virus programs. The operating system updates in the Windows environment are those that provide critical security updates and are released periodically. Most users are not aware these updates are occurring as they happen automatically and in the background. You may see a request that your system needs to restart due to these Microsoft updates. Anti-virus also occurs in the background. Bradford installs a small program on your machine that monitors for these updates and compares them against what is currently required to safely operate your system.

So what does this do to help you as an individual user? It ensures that your settings on your machine are getting the proper updates that protect you from any malicious exploits of your machine or virus infections. In turn, this protects other users from being infected with viruses that could be spread within our internal network. It also prevents unauthorized devices from connecting to the network that could possibly do harm.

This brief introduction provides a general overview of what this product does. For those that are looking for more in-depth information, please go the link: www.umsl.edu/technology/itsecurity/nac.html

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What is Instructional Computing?

Instructional Computing is a division of Information Technology Services that provides support to all open classrooms and computing labs. We manage the 16 open student computing labs (7 of which are staffed), over 100 technology enabled classrooms, as well as provide audiovisual resources to open classrooms for instructional use. Instructional Computing staff is responsible for the access management of these rooms, providing real-time technical and software support in the classrooms and labs, delivering requested AV equipment, and handling ad-hoc room requests.

The types of classrooms that we support vary widely, from an "open room" which contains only a transparency projector, to our state of the art "Learning Studios" that include document cameras, dual mounted projectors, SMART symposiums, wireless student laptops, movable furniture, and advanced lighting and audio systems. The most common rooms are referred to as "sticks" and have a single instructor station (computer mounted on a movable stick) and a ceiling mounted LCD projector. Other rooms include media-equipped Lecture Halls, and interactive 2-way

video classrooms designed to receive and transfer audio and video to and from a variety of locations. We also manage the Online Testing Centers on north and south campus, where students can complete an instructor-scheduled online exam at their leisure in a secured, proctored environment.

To help faculty and students better utilize these resources, Instructional Computing offer trainings and workshops on a variety of topics including hardware and specialized software. Some of these sessions include classroom orientations, short courses on various computing environments and popular software, as well as informational meetings on SMART software or CPS (student response system). Please give us a call at 516-6852, or visit: www.umsl.edu/training to find out more about these resources. We are available anytime during regularly scheduled classes for questions, assistance, or support.

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Conversations about Teaching & Technology Fall 2008

These conversations are designed to explore the potential of the online learning environment. Presenters will include colleagues who have received Innovation Grants and those who completed the summer Online Development Institute.

How Can Student Projects Be Completed Successfully Online?

October 14, 2008 12:00-1:00 PM
103 South Campus Classroom Building
Learn how to plan class activities and group projects in MyGateway using Google, groups, wikis, and blogs. You can include student collaborations and presentations in an online environment.

Yikes! I'm Teaching Online: What Do I Do Now?

November 3, 2008 12:30-1:30 PM
400 Clark Hall
How can MyGateway work for the way I teach? What can I do to help students learn to use the features they need? What can I do to personalize how the MyGateway course site looks for my course? How can I stay in touch with my students? Experienced online instructors offer a variety of answers to each of these questions.

You are invited to bring lunch and join in the conversation! Beverages provided.

Co-sponsored by Information Technology Services and the Center for Teaching and Learning

Focus on Teaching & Technology Regional Conference

November 13-14, 2008 – J.C. Penney Conference Center

The seventh annual conference features workshops and concurrent sessions offered by St. Louis area colleagues. Keynote presenters are Ray Schroeder, Professor Emeritus of Communication and Director of the Office of Technology-Enhanced Learning, University of Illinois, Springfield on November 13, and Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Professor of Biology at the University of Central Florida, scheduled November 14. Each will address how emerging technologies influence and support the pedagogies of learning in the 21st century.

Conference co-sponsors: UMSL, Maryville University, MOREnet, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and St. Louis Community College. To register and view the schedule as it develops, check: www.umsl.edu/ctl.

Wimba Classroom Update

Since 2005, Wimba Live Classroom has been available in MyGateway to faculty, staff and students for collaborative online classes and meetings. Wimba Live Classroom recently updated its name to Wimba Classroom. With the new name, new features have been added just in time for the fall semester. The following features that have been added or changed in our newest version of Wimba Classroom (version 5.2):

- **Highlighter markup pen.** Highlight important points on PowerPoint slides and imported graphics.
- **Action and Show room pulse buttons have been moved to the left of the participants list.** When enabled, the Action and Show

room pulse windows now do not interfere with reading the participants list.

- **Resizing of the Chat and Participant list.** Click and drag the middle divider to resize the chat and participant list.
- **MP3 audio archives of Wimba Classroom session.** MP3 audio files can be downloaded to your mp3 player, iTunes, iPod, and iPhone. Click on archive to open it and then click on the option button and select Download Audio mp3.
- **Video Bandwidth adjustments are available to adjust to your internet connection speed.** Click on the Option button while in a Wimba Classroom session and select Video Bandwidth.

- **Door Chime feature alerts you when a new participant has entered the session.** Click on the Option button while in a Wimba Classroom session and select Door Chimes.

- **Guest to Presenter on the Fly.** A valuable feature allowing a guest speaker or any other participant the ability to present during your Wimba Classroom session. Enable by clicking on the circular (-) button in the last column of the participant or guest row in which you would like to have the presentation tools. Click again to disable.

For more information visit: www.wimba.com/products/wimbaclassroom. Feel free to contact the Faculty Resource Center for additional information.

The Writing Lab@UMSL

ITS staff have worked with the English department to create a free online resource course site for The Writing Lab on MyGateway. Students can self-enroll in this site by logging into MyGateway and clicking on the link in "The Writing Lab@UMSL" module on the "MyGateway Home" tab.

Once enrolled in the site, users can:

- Pre-check their papers for potential problems with citing sources using SafeAssign
- Find links to Writing Guides and other online writing resources
- Learn about The Writing Lab's Tutors
- Find the location and hours for the lab
- And, more to come...

We believe that this will be an excellent way to put students and faculty in contact with the great resources of The Writing Lab. If you have questions about this site, or are in charge of a resource for students that you feel could benefit from a site like this, please email the MyGateway support team at mygateway@umsl.edu or call Kyle Collins at 314-516-6753.

Wikis & blogs—what's the big deal!?

Remember the old Community bulletin boards, some still in use today, where people put messages on 3x5 cards or scraps of paper and tacked them to a board in order to share information with the rest of the town? That's the basic idea behind wikis and blogs, except that the bulletin board has been replaced by a web site. And the only difference between a regular web site and a wiki or a blog site is that while you can access and download from a regular site, you can't add or change its content. But with a wiki or a blog site you can invite others to read your comments and add comments and content of their own.

"So what", you ask?

If you're a teacher and you want your students to work together on a project, this is an ideal tool because it allows participants to collect information and post it to a common bulletin board (web site) where they can refine, enrich and expand their project without the need to set up meeting times and locations.

What's the difference between a wiki and a blog?

A wiki site and a blog site have three basic functions in common: with easily set permissions, anyone can create a new page, edit and/or add content to a page created by anyone else and leave comments about a page for all to see. The basic difference is the way wikis and blogs appear on their web site. When users create wiki pages, links to their pages appear as a list and allow users to easily click on any page in the collection. On a blog site (sometimes called a blog journal), entries are stacked on top of each other with the most current entries always at the top. One way to think about the difference between the two is that blog content tends to be more linear and oriented to a timeline, whereas wiki sites are organized around topics or ideas.

If you're interested in learning more about wikis and blogs the Faculty Resource Center staff would be happy to show you how easily they can be set up in MyGateway. Blog and wiki sites can be private (so that only individual students (and their teacher, if desired) can view them; they can be set up so that groups can use them, or, they can be set up so that the whole class can access them.

See a short and entertaining video about wikis: www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dnL00TdmLY

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It's an Anonymous Life

"Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?"

Anyone who has watched Jimmy Stewart as George Bailey, in Frank Capra's classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, learns that simple message from the movie. In the movie, an angel named Clarence, who was trying to earn his wings, showed George Bailey his effect on others. UMSL IT professionals affect students, who may have no idea of our work as they strive towards graduation.

IT professionals influence many lives besides family relationships, friendships, and casual acquaintances. The most striking are the anonymous contributions we make. Unlike George Bailey, the less people know we exist, the greater impact we truly have. If no one knows of or gives second thought to the resources, the time, the blood, the sweat, the agonizing that goes in to what we do, the better. By silently providing them with what they need to succeed, we paradoxically make a larger impact. That is exactly how it should be.

The greatest compliment to an IT professional is to take us for granted. We know we have done our jobs when we remain anonymous—when things simply work: Printers print, software runs, computers are accessible, and networks communicate. Our triumphs often remain unknown. Our struggles remain a silent whisper in an unwritten history. When no one utters our name, when no one gives a second thought to the people behind the system they use, we know success.

So where does the satisfaction in a job well done come from? Observation! Ultimately, it is not about us. It is about how our lives can (and do) touch the lives of so many others. As we watch students logging in to the semester's fresh images, we created, we know we have made a difference. When we see throngs of students surrounding a printer watching their pages successfully arrive, we know we have made a difference. When we witness someone proficiently using software we purchased, ordered, tested, or installed, we know we have made a difference. When a student pulls information

from website we created via hardware we installed across a network we maintain, we know we have made a difference.

It does not stop there! It merely begins here! Are we facilitating a future teacher? Are we enabling a future nurse, optometrist, or politician? Perhaps we are simply aiding to build the skills for a parent to help their child grasp high school algebra some 20 years from now. We touch the lives of many, and doing so touch many of the lives, they touch.

So here we are: anonymous IT professionals. No one knows, much less can pronounce or spell our names. We make a real difference, whether they know it or not. We touch the lives of many. That is our legacy.

Every time you hear the login chime, a student stretches their wings.

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