

# iterations

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES • UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - ST. LOUIS

MAY • 2010

## Welcome to our May issue of iterations!

I must begin by thanking all the many people across UMSL who have so warmly welcomed me to the position of Chief Information Officer. I appreciate all you have done to help me to get on board a University that is moving rapidly into the future. While I joined UMSL at a particularly dark time of budget cuts and lay-offs, there is clearly light at the end of that tunnel. ITS will emerge stronger and more prepared to provide the community with vital IT services. Yet some would say these recent events are only a harbinger of tough times ahead. I would respond that times have always been tough in Information Technology as demand normally outstrips available resources. It's a national phenomena. Moreover, IT has been under pressure to be more efficient for years and funding IT has been the leading issue on the EDUCAUSE top 10 list of IT issues for those same years. However, because nearly everything a university does depends on IT these days, it almost goes without saying that IT will have what it needs to support the institution.

While I have confidence that is the case, it begs the question of exactly what does IT need? Over the next several months ITS will work on sorting out its services and activities with the end goal of having



a rational way to hold a conversation with the various interested constituencies and IT related committees. It is important that everyone understand what ITS does, what ITS doesn't do, what ITS would like to do and what the community wants ITS to do. It is important that ITS be aligned with the goals and directions of the University as it moves forward. This is all in the larger context of what the University of Missouri System sees as its role. Shared Services at the System level and new initiatives in ITS may enable ITS to begin to move from the increasingly mundane tasks of the past to greater support for the academic enterprise. Moving student email to MS Live was a good start but much more remains to be done.

As ITS races into an unknown future, I welcome your comments and input. If you are in the area of 409CCB, please stop in or contact me at [frederickl@umsl.edu](mailto:frederickl@umsl.edu). I am prepared to discuss today's services and future directions at any time. I am also available to attend unit meetings or any other functions that may be mutually beneficial. I look forward to hearing from you.

Lawrence Frederick  
CIO and Associate Vice Chancellor  
[frederickl@umsl.edu](mailto:frederickl@umsl.edu)

## New Equipment Checkout Location

David Bowie sang about "Changes" and now the Faculty Resource Center is bringing "ch-ch-ch-changes" to our equipment inventory! The FRC will no longer be your supplier of laptops and data projectors – but fret not, because the Help Desk (Technology Support Center) is taking over. All of our laptops (Dell Latitude C610, D610, D620, and D800; Macbooks) and our five projectors can be checked out from Lucas 211 beginning this summer. All other equipment, including digital still and video cameras, slide projectors, headsets, web cams, boomboxes, and digital voice recorders will still be available at the FRC. Long story short, your larger equipment will be available from the Help Desk (Lucas 211) while smaller items can still be found at the Faculty Resource Center (CCB 105). Any questions or concerns may be addressed to the FRC at (314) 516-6704 or [frc@umsl.edu](mailto:frc@umsl.edu). Please stay tuned as events unfold...

Tom Roedel  
Office Support Staff I  
[roedelt@umsl.edu](mailto:roedelt@umsl.edu)

## SAVE THE DATE: Focus on Teaching and Technology Conference November 11-12, 2010

The annual teaching and technology conference provides an opportunity for faculty, staff and graduate students to showcase "best practices" in teaching and learning with technology. This year's conference is again located in the J. C. Penney Conference Center and is being co-sponsored by seven institutions in the region: Maryville University, Missouri University of Science and Technology, MOREnet, Saint Louis University, St. Louis Community College, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and UMSL. Watch for the Call for Proposals in the coming months.

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# Changes to Blackboard (MyGateway)

As you know MyGateway has been upgraded to version 9 with new tools to enhance teaching and learning. If you would like more information, to schedule a departmental workshop or individualized consultation, please contact the Faculty Resource Center at 314-516-6704, email: [frc@umsl.edu](mailto:frc@umsl.edu), or stop by 105 Computer Center Building (CCB).

## Specific enhancements include:

### Interface

- Blackboard 9 offers support for content reordering and style sheets, significantly increasing Blackboard's accessibility.
- Home Tab—Blackboard 9 uses a web 2.0 interface that allows users to drag-and-drop items that appear on the screen, select drop-down menus, and even access contextual help.

### Improved Course Management Workflow

- Blackboard's course content creation and editing tools [e.g., upload a file, create an assignment, post a link to an external website] are now embedded throughout the course and no longer require instructors to access the Control Panel. Instead, instructors can click on the Edit Mode switch in the top right corner of any Blackboard course page.
- All options in the Control Panel are now available from the main Course Menu.
- Instructors have direct access to "edit" and "organize" their course menu and can, in Edit Mode, even drag-and-drop the menu's items to change their order.
- Course Menu items (e.g. assignments, course documents) that do not contain any content are automatically hidden from the students' view but are always visible to instructors in "Edit Mode." Once content is added to a course menu item [e.g. once a syllabus is uploaded to the Syllabus area], Blackboard automatically

makes that menu item visible to students.

- Course Tools and Communications Tools have been combined into a single "Tools" area that appears within the default Course Menu. This provides instructors easier control over the tools that they want to enable and disable.

### Inline confirmations

- Instead of displaying a separate receipt page every time a user successfully updates their course site, Blackboard 9's confirmations display on the same page in which the user was working.

### Easier group creation

- Instructors can now create any number of groups at once.
- Students can randomly be assigned to groups, manually assigned by the instructor, or asked to sign-up for a group themselves.
- Students can create their own self-enrollment groups, although instructors have the option of modifying or restricting access to these student-created groups.

### Announcements

- Instructors can now add announcements without going through the control panel and change the display order of their announcements.

### Contacts

- Formerly known as Staff Information now labeled Contacts.

### Assignments

- Instructors can now choose to deploy Assignments to all students individually or to groups of students. This allows instructors to assign a single grade to all of the students in a group and also to override that group grade and assign a student a different grade.
- Instructors can allow students to submit multiple attempts for the same assignment.

Each attempt can be graded and commented on individually.

- Instructors have the ability to give specific students an additional attempt at an assignment in order to accommodate extenuating circumstances.

### Calendar

- Instructors can now add a start time and stop time for each Calendar event.

### Assessments, Surveys, and Questions

- Instructors can reorder questions in a test or survey using the new drag- and-drop feature.

### Tools

- Blackboard's Student Homepages tool has been replaced by the new Blog tool that lets students better express their thoughts and reflect on learning within a course.

### Home Page

- Home Page contains modules such as "My Announcements," "What's New" and "To Do." This automatically-updated home page provides students with information on what has changed in the course since the student last visited, what items require the students' attention, and what items are past due or are due in the near future.
- Instructors can modify the home page, add/remove/reposition the home page modules, or even select a different course entry point [the first page students see when entering the course.] Users can add the Home Page by creating a course module (top left hand corner) and selecting the modules (e.g. calculator, My Announcements) to appear on the Home Page.

Jennifer Simms  
Technical Trainer  
[jsimms@umsl.edu](mailto:jsimms@umsl.edu)

## Transitioning Away from VHS Technology in the Classroom

We've never been very good at giving up on old technology; holding on to those audio cassettes well into the CD era, refusing to give up on the battle to keep our 3.5" floppy diskettes. And it's no secret that I still have two VCRs at home. However, the consumer world is dictating to us that it is time to move on, as it has become nearly impossible for Instructional Computing to even locate new VCRs for purchase. And so, the day we all knew would be here finally has a date. As of June 1st, 2011, Instructional Computing will no longer support VHS in

any of the technology classrooms. We plan to systematically remove VHS players from specific areas over the course of the next 12 months.

To help make the transition easier, Instructional Computing will be working with the Faculty Resource Center to provide the means to digitize your media and help ensure you are comfortable with the change in technology. We will assist you with the transfer of your old VHS media to DVD or online streaming format (linkable directly

from your MyGateway site), as well as instruction on how to use the new media formats. To help keep you informed as to the logistics of the changeover, notifications to faculty will take place via email and on our website at [www.umsl.edu/~iclabs](http://www.umsl.edu/~iclabs). If you have any suggestions or comments for us, please feel free to contact Instructional Computing by calling us at 516-6852 or emailing [ic@umsl.edu](mailto:ic@umsl.edu).

Christopher Boyce  
Site Supervisor - Instructional Computing  
[boycech@umsl.edu](mailto:boycech@umsl.edu)

# Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007

Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007 is an integrated suite of capabilities that can help improve effectiveness by providing content management, enterprise search, and facilitating information-sharing. Now that UMSL has completed the migration to MOSS 2007 and it is available to faculty and staff, I would like to highlight some of the key enhancements that have been implemented here at UMSL.

## Collaboration

**E-mail and calendar integration** - Outlook 2007 users can view calendars and contact lists stored on a site. They can create and manage tasks for editing documents and organizing meetings. Document libraries, calendars, and announcements can be enabled to receive new postings via e-mail. The functionality is similar to that provided public folders in Microsoft Exchange Server.

**Task coordination** - There is a new list view option that provides a Gantt chart view of tasks. Also Outlook 2007 users have the ability to have a unified view of personal and MOSS 2007 tasks.

**Integration with Microsoft Office 2007** - Users of MS Office 2007 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Outlook) can directly interact with information stored in MOSS 2007 without having to manually download the content. They can create workspaces, post and edit documents, and assign tasks, all while working on documents stored on MOSS 2007.

## Content Management

**Business document workflow support with notification service** - Automate document review, approval, signature collection, and issue tracking using workflow. Users participating in a workflow automatically receive e-mail alerts without subscribing in advance. Improved filtering conditions now trigger more relevant alerts to users.

**Automatic breadcrumb bar** - Provides immediate navigational feedback for the users within a site.

**Recycle bin** - Enables a user to easily restore an item that was accidentally deleted.

**Document libraries with major and minor versioning history** - Checking out documents locally, major and minor version numbering and tracking, support for multiple content type, policy, auditing, and workflow.

There are a number of enhancements with MOSS2007 and we only touched on a few of them. Training will be made available around the mid-May timeframe. If you are interested in requesting a MOSS 2007 site for your department, workgroup or team, contact the helpdesk.

Chris Guzdial  
Project Specialist  
[guzdialc@umsl.edu](mailto:guzdialc@umsl.edu)

# NASA Workshop Comes to UMSL

UMSL's Physics & Astronomy department took part in an international distance learning workshop entitled "Workshop Without Walls" that was hosted by NASA's Astrobiology Institute (NAI) on March 11th-12th. This NAI experimental distance learning event, using one of UMSL's ITV rooms, along with a Webinar hookup, was seen in 21 US States and 16 other countries, including Canada, Mexico, six western European nations, Ukraine, India, South Korea, Japan, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay.

Erika Gibb, assistant professor in the Physics & Astronomy department, along with several colleagues & students, took part in the 2 day event here at UMSL. A total of 170 registrants presented a total of 33 scientific talks during the 2 days. Participants experienced real-time presentations along with several Q&A sessions. The event was tried as an experiment and according to one of the event's organizers, "Most participants categorized their experience level with remote collaborative technologies as beginner or intermediate, and a few had no prior experience at all." Despite this, participants reported the experiment to be a great success. Said one, "I was not expecting to have the same intellectual experience as I normally do at conferences... but after this conference, I do have that same sense of having been to a "real" conference," adding, "this was very fulfilling for me professionally."

Across the city or around the world, video conferencing gets you where you want to be without the expense and hassle associated with travel. To book your video conferencing event contact 516-6174 or email [itv@umsl.edu](mailto:itv@umsl.edu).

David Maczynski  
Site Supervisor - Instructional Computing  
[maczynskid@umsl.edu](mailto:maczynskid@umsl.edu)

## Instructional Computing upgrading to Windows 7

You may have noticed the earlier announcement, but for those who missed it, Instructional Computing is excited about the planned upgrade to Windows 7 Enterprise for the Fall 2010 semester. For those who have upgraded to a new computer with a new operating system at home or in your office, you know this can be a big undertaking. We are currently reviewing the software that is available on the Windows stations, and would appreciate hearing from you if there is software that was once used for a course, but is no longer needed.

Software requests for the Fall 2010 semester are now being accepted and must be received by May 14, 2010. Requests can be submitted via the Instructional Computing website: [www.umsl.edu/~iclabs](http://www.umsl.edu/~iclabs)

Instructional Computing will have two classrooms running Windows 7 this summer; CCB 005 and Villa 155. In addition to these two classrooms, a Windows 7 station will be available in the Faculty Resource Center and at select stations in Thomas Jefferson & Ward E. Barnes Library Research Commons.

If you're interested in using Windows 7 and haven't had a chance to do so yet, Instructional Computing rolled out Windows 7 to the Kiosk stations in the Millennium Student Center, CCB, and Seton lobby.

If you have any questions feel free to reach us at 516-6852 or [ic@umsl.edu](mailto:ic@umsl.edu).

Chris Scheetz  
Supervisor - Instructional Computing  
[scheetz@umsl.edu](mailto:scheetz@umsl.edu)

# Disk Quotas and Storage Management

With spring in the air, we are asking for your help by taking a look at the files you store on your personal and departmental shares and consider performing some housekeeping by removing any files that you don't need or that might not comply with the University's Acceptable Use Policy. See: [www.umsl.edu/technology/policy/acceptable.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/policy/acceptable.html) to review the policy. Files stored on university owned equipment should be files required for conducting the business of the university.

If you receive one of those informational emails advising that your quota has been exceeded, ITS encourages you to perform some housekeeping and then if you still require additional storage, contact the Technology Support Center so ITS may work with you in assessing both your current and future needs.

Why do we need storage quotas? Storage quotas are not meant to prohibit any personal or departmental business needs. They merely assist ITS in understanding and planning for current and future storage needs. By implementing quotas on network file storage, we can work cooperatively with you to make informed decisions regarding existing storage capacity and to plan for future growth needs and requirements of our stakeholders.

You may find it interesting that we have seen an approximate 42% growth rate in the amount of data being stored on personal and departmental shares over the past year.

Nearly 40% of data being stored on UMSL's network is made up of music, video, and picture files. In fact, there are over 8 million files of these types being stored today. Due to the fact that we are replicating that data to an alternate data center for failover and redundancy, that number doubles from 8 million files to 16 million and consumes 8TB of storage to house. While this service is provided for the benefit of all faculty, staff, and students, this storage, maintenance, and backup come at a significant cost to the campus.

Paula Smith  
Systems Administrator  
[Paula\\_Smith@umsl.edu](mailto:Paula_Smith@umsl.edu)

# Mid-semester and Senate Bill 389 feedback

Mid-semester feedback can improve communication between students and their instructors and increase student motivation and learning. It can also assist instructors in tailoring the course to meet student needs and has the potential, according to the research literature, to improve year-end course evaluations.

March 29, 2010 was the final day students could login to the online system and offer feedback to their instructors. Faculty members who registered for this semester's feedback can review the final results for each course at [https://apps.umsl.edu/webapps/ITS/Early\\_feedback/login.cfm](https://apps.umsl.edu/webapps/ITS/Early_feedback/login.cfm). Students appreciate hearing a brief report about how faculty members plan to use their feedback now and in future semesters.

Feedback on the five Senate Bill 389 questions is now complete and available for viewing for Fall Semester 2009 courses. To find

students' evaluations of these key questions regarding the syllabus, course, and instructor availability, log into MyGateway. Click on the Faculty/Staff tab; then, look in the Faculty Toolbox for a link to SB 389 Student Responses. This application enables you to view the results from the Senate Bill 389 Educational Outcomes Survey that students are encouraged to complete each semester. Students who are eligible to enroll see these same results through the course schedule in MyView.

You are welcome to consult with Center for Teaching and Learning staff if you want to discuss in a confidential setting questions raised by either system of evaluation. Call 516-4508 or email [ctl@umsl.edu](mailto:ctl@umsl.edu) to make an appointment.

Cheryl Bielema, Ph.D.  
Instructional Development Specialist  
Center for Teaching and Learning  
[bielemac@umsl.edu](mailto:bielemac@umsl.edu)

## Systems Maintenance Periods

Early in March, Information Technology Services updated the System Maintenance timeframe for UMSL's computing services. This policy sets forth predefined maintenance periods for computing resources that are owned and operated by UMSL for its own use for academic, administrative and networking purposes. These maintenance periods will only be utilized when a need for maintenance or system updates is identified. The maintenance periods are:

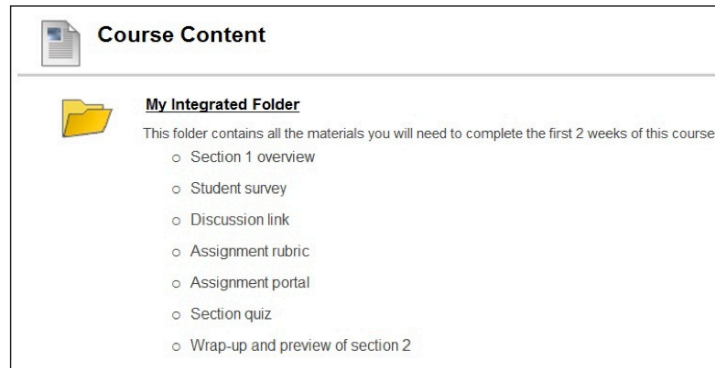
Date(s)	Timeframe(s)	Service(s)
<b>Periodic</b>		
1st and 3rd Wednesday	4:00a.m. thru 7:00a.m.	Academic , Administrative and Networking
2nd and 4th Friday	Friday 5:30p.m. thru Saturday 6:00a.m.	Academic , Administrative and Networking
Every Sunday	12:01am thru noon	Academic , Administrative and Networking
<b>Notification for Periodic maintenance will be given a minimum of 2 business days in advance.</b>		
<b>Annual</b>		
Last week of December	Daily as announced	Academic , Administrative and Networking
Sunday before Spring Break	Sunday 12:01a.m. thru Monday 8:00a.m.	Academic , Administrative and Networking
The first Thursday and Friday following the end of the Summer semester	Thursday 8:00a.m. thru Friday 5:30p.m.	Academic
<b>Notification for Annual maintenance will be given a minimum of 30 days in advance.</b>		

The Policy has been approved by the University Assembly IT Committee and can be viewed in its entirety at: [www.umsl.edu/technology/policy/index.html](http://www.umsl.edu/technology/policy/index.html).

Chris Guzdial  
Project Specialist  
[guzdialc@umsl.edu](mailto:guzdialc@umsl.edu)

# Use MyGateway to empower your students – Put them in the driver’s seat!

MyGateway (UMSL’s branded version of Blackboard) now contains a rich variety of tools and building blocks to support student learning. Bb9 offers instructors a smoother and more intuitive platform for developing and managing their online content. A separate control panel is now a thing of the past; instead, editing options are available as drop-down menus or drag-and-drop functions that can be easily accessed without leaving the page. But the real value of this integrated platform is that instructors can now organize and sequence course content, collaboration activities and assessments in one place (a single folder) so that students can easily navigate from one step/activity to the next as they complete their learning tasks. This is a great way to empower your students; it places them in the driver’s seat.



A single course content folder can contain links to survey questionnaires, reading materials, assignment rubrics, links to course or group wikis, blogs or discussion board forums; it can also contain assignment portals where students can submit required documents directly to the instructor’s grade center; folders can contain links to assessment tests, summaries, reviews, previews of upcoming materials

(advance organizers) and etc. Additionally, specialized course folders (called Learning Units) can be created that sequence the MyGateway tools so that students are required to progress through their learning activities in a prescribed order. Learning Unit folders are as easy to create as regular course folders.

Course activities can be placed in folders that are divided by time segments (eight 2-week folders for a 16 week course, for example) or, folders can be created based on a logical chunking of specific course material. Instructors now have many integration and sequencing options and can present their course content in

ways that they find will be most effective and efficient for their students and themselves. Creating integrated folders helps students by simplifying course site navigation and clarifying expectations; it also helps instructors because they can easily review folder content and update and enhance course materials. Finally, when course content is presented to students in ways that appear logical and intuitive to them, they can focus on their top priority: learning!

Paul Wilmarth  
Technical Trainer  
[wilmarthp@umsl.edu](mailto:wilmarthp@umsl.edu)

## Let Us Help

As you develop summer and fall courses – please remember that the Faculty Resource Center is here to help and support you in those efforts:

- Ask questions about Blackboard (MyGateway) 9
- Create streamlined, integrated and intuitive MyGateway course sites.
- Get started on creating your own web page.
- Explore the possibilities of streaming video content.
- Learn more about our survey tool, Flashlight 2.0.
- Have a free cup of coffee to get your day started.

The goal of the FRC is help you achieve your teaching and learning objectives through the effective integration of education technology –see what your colleagues are saying:

*“The FRC helps you solve problems. Even if you are not sure of the problem, Jennifer, Paul, and Tom will help you articulate it, then discover your options for solving it.”*  
– Bill Klein, English  
*“I could not have developed an online course*

*without the continual help I received from both Jennifer Simms and Paul Wilmarth in the FRC. Both of them patiently helped me conquer the learning curve to effectively use new tools like Wimba classroom. Both of them came to the launch of my new online courses so they could help students run the wimba setup software. Jennifer even came on a Saturday to help me!”*  
– Dr. Mary Lacity, College of Business

*“The Faculty Resource Center is a wealth of IT knowledge, which has made my job more effective – effectiveness that benefits my students. The center has taught me Jing for my online courses, transferred VHS to DVD and on the server so students can access at any time, and consistently resolved issues and questions. Simply, the staff in the Faculty Resource Center ROCK!”*  
– Dr. Kristy Tucciarone, Theatre, Dance, & Media Studies

*“Jennifer, Paul, and Tom never seem too tired of being asked the same question multiple times. Even more appreciated is their willingness to come early, stay late, and answer questions over the weekend. The FRC staff do us proud!”*  
– Dr. Sheilah F. Clarke-Ekong, Interim Chair, Sociology  
*“First, I would be totally lost without the sup-*

*port of the Faculty Resource Center. I have received help with The New Account Request System; My Gateway setting up Ed Psych division organizational site; setting me up as an Ed Psych builder for the Div of Ed Psych, Res. & Evaluation; Electronic Grade Submission and answering various questions from FT faculty and adjunct faculty. The FRC has helped our division adjuncts whenever they have had problems entering their grades for the semester or having problem seeing their students in MyGateway.”*

– Celeste Hazley, Educational Psychology

*“The FRC is indispensable to my research capabilities and professional requirements.”*  
– Dr. Adell Patton, History

We can be reached at 314-516-6704, email: [frc@umsl.edu](mailto:frc@umsl.edu); we are located in 105 Computer Center Building (CCB).

Jennifer Simms  
Technical Trainer  
[jsimms@umsl.edu](mailto:jsimms@umsl.edu)