

News from IT, October 29, 2004



IT Brown Bag set for 11/18: The IT Division will host a brown bag forum on November 18 from 12:30 – 1:30. Coffee and dessert will be provided. The subject will be *Choosing a digital camera and photo storage options for Christmas*. We'll also answer your questions about products we support at Mansfield. Stop by Memorial 107 and say 'hi!'. The IT department will also be soliciting comments and suggestions for future sessions.

New product boosts network performance: The Networking Group recently installed a "Packeteer PacketShaper 6500" network appliance to improve network performance to and from the Internet. The device is currently operating in the "discovery" mode of operation. During this phase the device will identify and categorize all network traffic as it flows on- and off-campus. The next phase will be the "shaping" phase. During this phase, IT will set parameters to better manage critical data flows like SAP, Blackboard, e-mail, and other critical Web traffic. The device will also enable IT to avoid Denial-of-Service attacks. The software included with this system will allow IT to have access to a large number of graphs and reports that will provide traffic performance statistics, potential network problem indicators, and assistance to ensure optimal network efficiency.

New Graphics Stations for North Hall Library:

Two new graphics stations are located on the 2nd floor of the North Hall Library near the Information Desk. These stations have HP scanners, the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, GoLive, InDesign, Acrobat Professional), Web development software, MS Office Suite, etc. Students can print color copies. This computing graphics area was funded by Student Technology Fees.

Both new workstations are equipped with CD burners. You can bring your own CDs, floppies or JumpDrives (USB storage devices), and temporarily use the hard drive to store work. Also, these stations can produce color transparencies for assignments. Special transparencies are required and can be purchased at the Circulation Desk.

Library staff, faculty and lab assistants will help with basic scanning, printing color copies, creating PDF documents, cropping, resizing, & improving images for use in PowerPoint presentations, Word documents, web pages, LiveText, or other applications.

Students will be given first priority, but staff and faculty are welcome. Faculty and staff will continue to have the resources currently available in Allen Hall and Memorial Hall during regular hours, by appointment.

Other new equipment including desktops and more laptops for the Library are also funded by the Student Technology Fee.

Media Services assists with printing needs: Did you know that Media Services can assist you with your printing projects? Tamela Bastion, Phil Ogden and Mark Polonia want you to know they are available to assist you with special projects. See one of the Media Services staff if you need to convert an existing document to Adobe PDF format. Students should be directed to the new graphics stations in North Hall which include this software.

Media Services can also schedule printing large scale posters for students or faculty. The large format printer located in Memorial Hall can print on paper up to 42" wide. Printing costs \$6 per linear foot. If interested, contact Phil Ogden or bring your document file to Memorial 104. A printing form will be filled out with the cost calculated. The project can then be paid for in the Student Accounts office, 101 South Hall. When you return with the paid receipt, your file will be printed. If you have any questions please call Phil at 662-4608.

Blackboard News and Status Availability: Tamela Bastion wants to remind everyone that BlackBoard status, hints and tips are available online here:

<http://acs.mansfield.edu/Blackboard.htm>

http://acs.mansfield.edu/Bb_Update_Sept2004.htm

We will update these pages as Blackboard status changes.

Changes in Student Labs: IT continues to make enhancements to our student lab areas. The following projects are in-process:

Print Cost-Recovery updates: As you know, our students are expected to pay for the printing they do in our open lab areas. IT is in the process of updating print cost-recovery software to the latest product version.

The new print cost-recovery system adds an additional level of security for your output by asking the user to supply their Email ID and Email password. Students can then go to the print release station located in the lab, select their printout by their Email name, supply their email password and have their document printed. This is an improvement over the previous system in that printouts are stored by user name and password, rather than simply by the ID of the computer used to create the material. As with the previous system, print jobs will be held for two hours and if not picked up in that time, they will be deleted.

Security changes: “Centurion Guard”, a combination of hardware and software, is being phased-in as budget allows to replace ‘Fortres’, a software-only security product used in most public computing areas of the university. Fortres locks down hard drives and systems settings, limiting what the user of the work station can do. Centurion Guard is more flexible, allowing the use of that elusive right-mouse button.

Centurion Guard is currently installed in the Psychology, CIS, Foreign Language and Writing Labs, and is in the process of being installed in the Education Lab. Eventually, most labs on campus will be equipped with this newer technology. Non-instructional labs like the Doane Center 24-hour lab and dorm labs will remain on the Fortres system to prevent corruption. Centurion Guards were funded by the Student Technology Fee.

Lab Remodeling at Math/CIS: Funded by a Grant from State Farm Insurance and the Student Technology Fee funding, the Math/CIS department is receiving a new lab for Networking course work. The new lab will utilize the space allocated to the existing Math Lab, 216 Elliot. The Math Lab is being relocated to room 113 over the semester break. The new lab will be isolated from the university's network, and consist of four "pods" of networking equipment, configurable for teaching a variety of networking skills.

Elliot to host mobile wireless initiative: Equipment is on order to provide two 20-station wireless cart systems for use in Elliot Hall. The carts themselves will house wireless networking equipment, allowing the laptops to connect to needed software products and the Internet. The plan is to house the carts in a common area and make them available to existing classrooms "as-needed" by the Professor. The Elliot Mobile Classroom is being funded by the Student technology Fee.

Technology Fee funds new Wireless Electronics Lab: The Electronics Lab in Grant Science benefited from Student Technology Fee funds this semester with the arrival of eight new Dell computers. These systems replaced a variety of obsolete and surplus equipment previously used for electronics course work.

Remember, up-to-date information on all our labs may be found on the IT web pages here:

<http://it.mnsfld.edu/students/2004/campuslabs/>

New Software scheduled for spring term:

Two new software products are scheduled for Spring release. We hope to have these products available to you when you return from Christmas break:

Microsoft Office 2003: An updated flavor of the venerable software application you all know.

McAfee Antivirus, version 8: This significant upgrade to the University's antivirus protection includes blocking of trojans and spyware.

Other software is scheduled for limited release for specific applications or coursework.