

## News from IT – 04/30/04



**Users Should Prep for Blackboard Updates:** The Keystone University Network has verified that they plan to upgrade Blackboard from Version 5.0 to version 6.0 or possibly 6.1 sometime in August. While they are responsible for transferring data to the new release of Blackboard, IT strongly recommends that individuals insure the integrity of course content by creating a local archive copy. If using the Blackboard Assessment or Pool Manager components, we recommend importing quizzes, exams, and pools to your local hard disk by use of Respondus.

Tamela Bastion has notified current Blackboard users and has scheduled several training sessions specifically for archiving course content. If you did not receive her Email, or plan to use Blackboard in the future and would like to understand the archiving process, contact her at x-4857.

**Ready Your Office for Summer:** With the end of the semester just around the corner, IT reminds everyone that a little preparation prior to leaving for the summer can save time and alleviate frustration (or disaster!) at the other end of the season.

- **Back it up!** – As reliable as computers are these days, there remain a multitude of things that can happen to cause the data you left behind on your hard drive to be AWOL upon your return! Long periods of disuse can render hard drives unreadable, and summer lightning storms can fry electronic components. Archiving critical data to diskette or CD insures you have backup copies of important files, and requires far less time and effort than recovering or recreating lost information – and who has time for THAT at the start of a new semester? Take a few minutes and back up those files you simply can't live without! Take the copies with you when you leave, and stash them in a safe place, away from your office.
- **Create an Email “vacation message”** – If you're going to be away from your campus Email for long periods of time, a vacation message tells correspondents not to expect an immediate reply. The vacation message is an automated response to the first Email received from any source, delivering a text message you supply. Your vacation message can advise someone when you expect to return, provide information on an alternative way to contact you, or supply another

name or Email address for critical issues that may come up while you're away.

- **Update your voicemail greeting** – As with an Email vacation message, an updated personal voicemail greeting will convey that you care enough to inform callers not to expect an immediate response. It also cuts down on the number of nuisance calls you must listen to when you check in. Remember, too, that voicemail only holds calls for 30 days: Any calls older than that are erased, with only a time stamp remaining to tell you a call was received.

All these issues have been covered in previous issues of *News from IT*, available in the archives at: <http://it.mnsfld.edu/policies/itnews.cfm>  
The December 2003 issue reviewed both voicemail greetings and vacation message creation. If you need assistance creating backups of your critical files, call the HELP desk or contact Tamela at x-4857.

**Updated Viruses Cause Additional Attachment Bans** – John Maslar advises that, due to the continuing threat from “new and improved” viruses, we’ve banned two additional file attachment types known to carry virus payloads. These are “.hta”, which are HTML applications files, and “.cpl”, Windows control panel files. Any mail received containing attached files with these extension names will be automatically deleted, as we believe neither should be sent as attachments.

These file types join “.scr”, “.pif”, and “.lnk” as banned file extensions. Other file types may be quarantined by IT, depending on the severity of virus traffic on our Email systems. Quarantined documents are kept in your Webmail quarantine folder for 30 days, after which they are deleted. You will not receive any indication of quarantined documents in your Eudora mail, or via any other desktop Email package; Webmail must be checked to view quarantined documents. Call the HELP desk if you need additional information on any aspect of how IT handles suspicious Email or Email attachments.

This is a good time to remind everyone to make certain their home computers have current virus protection. We detect multiple new virus types every day, and the chances of an unprotected PC surviving for more than a few online minutes without acquiring a virus, Trojan horse, key logger, or spyware is slim. Past issues of the *News*, located in the IT archives, provide additional information on antivirus and anti-spyware products for home use.

*That's it from here. We hope you all have a safe and relaxing summer. Remember the sun screen! See you in August.*