IT Help Desk Moves to KUC

The Information Technology Help Desk has completed its relocation to Keithley University Center (KUC) 320, where it will continue its ongoing commitment to assist the MTSU community with technology-related problems by phone or in person.

The Help Desk administers the ITD equipment checkout program, special workshop requests, and test scoring. The Help Desk’s telephone number, email address, and hours will remain the same at the new location. Call (615) 898-5345 or email help@mtsu.edu.

Its hours of operation are from 2–9 p.m. Sunday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday–Thursday, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday, and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday (except for semester breaks and University holidays).
Faculty Workflow: Automation Makes it Better

Gone are the days of many manual, cumbersome processes. We live in a culture where computers are part of our day-to-day lives and help us do our jobs better. An example is the new Faculty Workflow designed by Administrative Information Systems Services (AISS) and Academic Affairs. It converts a manual process into an automated one using Banner Workflow.

Until December 2013, each faculty department followed a manual process of placing adjunct faculty, graduate assistants, and other teaching staff into the Banner system. After receiving each application and the necessary paperwork from an applicant, secretaries from each department used faxes to transmit all the paperwork to Academic Affairs. If information was incomplete, all paperwork was returned to the appropriate office.

If there were no issues with the application and accompanying paperwork, the information was entered manually in Banner by the staff in Academic Affairs. The next step for Academic Affairs was to coordinate with HR and send each applicant’s information to be processed.

That’s not all! There are different kinds of applicants. Some are new and have never taught at MTSU; some applications are for adjuncts or graduate assistant positions; and there are other categories such as post retirees and more.

Handling each type of application and the required paperwork and checking for missing information and coordinating with different departments was a complicated process. Not only did it require countless hours of work and huge costs associated with paper and fax machine maintenance but it also left room for errors and lost and sometimes delayed communication. Departments needed help!

In 2013, Academic Affairs started working with AISS to come up with an automated process. Faculty departments were trained by the end of December 2013. Faculty Workflow officially went into production in spring 2014 and is now used by all departments. The new process has given full control over the entire procedure to the department secretaries, thus reducing the number of applications processed manually. More than 80 percent of applications are now handled through the Faculty Workflow system.

Here are some of the key benefits of the new system:

- It eliminates manual work.
- It reduces costs associated with paper supply and fax machine maintenance.
- The whole process of activating an applicant’s information in the system takes less than five seconds.
- There’s no more wait time between departments to process information. The whole process happens less than a minute after the information is entered into Faculty Workflow.
- Overall, Faculty Workflow has made life easier. Departments are spending less time chasing problems and fixing the issues, which allows them to serve students and staff more efficiently.
Tired of using the same wallpaper but also tired of having to constantly change your wallpapers? Windows 7 has a solution.

The easier way is to select multiple images from any folder by holding down the CTRL key and single clicking, then right clicking and choosing “Set as Background.” Windows will automatically cycle through the chosen images.

You’re free to select as many pictures as you want. If you’re itching for a little more control, right click anywhere on the desktop, choose Personalize -> Desktop Background, and choose multiple images. You can now choose the interval between changes as well as the order in which they are shown.
As an associate professor of Geosciences, Dr. Melissa Lobegeier views education in much the same way she studies the planet.

“I’m used to looking at maps and making sense of what those maps tell me, but someone who doesn’t have geology training may not necessarily get the same information out of it,” she said. “The way I look at the world may be different than the way you look at the world.”

Lobegeier applies the same philosophy toward teaching. She realizes that not all her students learn the same way, and she is always looking for new pedagogical methods to improve the quality of the classroom experience.

When Lobegeier was offered a chance to redesign the department’s Introduction to Earth Science course, she jumped at the opportunity. She essentially found herself in a win-win situation when she joined MTSU in 2006.

“One of the reasons I came to MTSU in the first place was so that I could teach,” she said. “It’s more of a teaching-focused university, but I still get to do my research at the same time.”

The native of Australia, who earned her Ph.D. in marine geology in 2001 from Queensland’s James Cook University, joined forces with colleague Dr. Mark Abolins last fall after becoming involved in an ambitious course redesign initiative that aimed to revamp an array of undergraduate courses by experimenting with new pedagogies.

Through this initiative, Lobegeier and Abolins learned about the concept of the flipped classroom, which essentially removes the lecture component from the traditional class.

“The students watch a video before each class,” Lobegeier explained. “So during the actual class we do different types of hands-on discussions which reinforce the material they received from the videos. I had already been thinking about how to incorporate videos into my classes, so it was really a great opportunity to get me focused on accomplishing that goal.”

The videos are created using Camtasia tutorial software. Students are assigned worksheets and online questions that support the Camtasia videos to encourage classroom participation.

Lobegeier and Abolins received a grant from the Tennessee Board of Regents to create modules containing the redesigned course structure that can be used by anyone teaching Introduction to Earth Science.
Profile: Melissa Lobegeier (continued from page 4)

Using Camtasia Studio, Lobegeier and Abolins filmed videos and activities for the modules that can be incorporated into future classes.

Instructors who will use the modules in their geology classes can also create and contribute their own videos, Lobegeier said.

Lobegeier enrolled in an online workshop to help familiarize herself with the software. She has now reached a point where she is editing her class videos seamlessly and efficiently.

“It can get challenging because it takes a long time,” she said. “What I discovered through this workshop is that most people who flip their classrooms take about 10 hours to produce a 12-minute video. There’s a lot of preparation involved, and it can get overwhelming. There’s potential to do so much with it, but there’s only a finite number of hours in the day.

“But I think if you’re going to use a lot of technology in class, you need to build in the time to get students acclimated because there will be some students who will immediately take it to, but there will be also a few who will need help,” she continued. “You can’t just post a Google Earth assignment and expect all of the students to know how to use it.”

In addition to Camtasia videos, Lobegeier established a class Facebook page to hold online study sessions prior to exams. She said that these message board discussions have also helped stimulate class participation.

“We figure most students are on Facebook, so I’ve found that to be a useful tool as well,” she said. “Sometimes one student will ask a question, and other students will answer the questions for them. I really enjoy seeing them all get involved. It’s been a big learning curve for us as well as the students. One of our big focuses is on building community in our classes. We hope the Facebook page will help with that, but we’re also doing a lot of group work in class.”

Lobegeier hopes to improve and expand the course’s innovations in the months ahead.

“I think the summer will be helpful because it will give us more time to prepare and fine-tune the class,” she said.

Technology Grant Recipients

The following faculty members recently received innovative technology grants:

• **Tyler Babb**, “Electronic Flight Bags in the Classroom,” Aerospace

• **A. Bruce Cahoon** and **Kevin McNulty**, “Production of Animated Short Films to Explain Aspects of Mendelian Genetics,” Biology and Electronic Media Communication

• **Ngee-Sing Chong**, “Improvement of Student Learning in Chemistry Laboratory Courses via the Implementation of Lab Archives and Target View Software,” Chemistry

• **William Crabtree**, “Video Tutorials for Recording Studios,” Recording Industry

• **Cheryl Hitchcock**, “Supporting Teacher Candidates Using Professional Development Learning Modules,” Elementary and Special Education

• **Rachel Leander, Zachariah Sinkala, and Wandi Ding**, “Technical Resources to Support Undergraduate Research in Mathematical Biology,” Mathematical Sciences

• **Zhigiang Dong**, “Knowledge Database of Syntax Errors for CS1 and CS2 Students,” Computer Science

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**ITD Workshops Available for Faculty and Staff**

Get started with computer graphic programs such as Illustrator; edit and enhance pictures with Photoshop; get familiar with D2L, and get trained in Word, Excel, and Access; learn to design Web pages; and more!

Registration is required (except where noted).

• Register on the Web or call ITD at x5345.

• Most workshops are offered at the ITD Training Center in the Telecommunications Building.

• Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

• Please give a 24-hour cancellation notice.

Individual consultation for instructional technology needs can be requested by calling ext. 8189. Other workshops are available upon request.

See our website for more information at www.mtsu.edu/itd/facstaff_train_itd.php.
The Man of Many Talents

As a senior systems analyst, Sheraz Hanif’s duties include supporting the Banner Document Management System (BDMS) and content within Pipeline (Luminis). He also develops programs and customized solutions for various departments.

The Information Technology Division’s Sheraz Hanif is a man of many talents. The senior systems analyst doesn’t only support various systems at MTSU; he has also developed innovative applications that have benefited the entire campus and have even received national attention.

Hanif’s various duties include supporting the Banner Document Management System (BDMS) and content within Pipeline (Luminis). He also develops programs and customized solutions for various departments.

“As my background is mainly software development, I enjoy working on opportunities involving solutions,” he said.

Before joining ITD in 2012, Hanif began his professional career at United Parcel Service in 1996 as a network and desktop administrator at the company’s Shared Services Center in Nashville, where he was later promoted to supervisor for the Information Services department. His responsibilities there included managing a staff of approximately 20 employees and designing and publishing reports for regional controllers. While he worked full-time at UPS, he also took night classes at MTSU.

In 2000, he accepted a position as a software developer at a Microsoft partner firm in Franklin, where he developed custom software for various businesses. Two years later, Hanif began working for RR Donnelley as a developer at the Shared Services Center Continuous Improvement department.

“I worked closely with the accounting, payroll, and finance departments and helped develop processes to reduce cost and improve processes by developing customized solutions,” he said.

One of Hanif’s most notable achievements at RR Donnelley was developing innovative software for the accounting department that reduced monthly, quarterly, and year-end accounting activities from 10 business days to three.

“As part of making processes more centralized and reducing costs, RR Donnelley implemented a highly efficient document management and workflow system,” he said. “I provided support and training for the document management system and worked with various departments to outsource their business activities to various countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America.”

Hanif also received a Six Sigma Green Belt certification in October 2004.

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ITD Staff News

Instructional Technology Specialist Brenda Kerr recently completed her ASTD (Association for Talent Development) Advanced E-Learning Instructional Design Certification. The ASTD is the world’s largest association dedicated to individuals who develop talent in organizations by disseminating knowledge, skills, and abilities. ASTD has members in more than 120 countries who work in public and private organizations in virtually every industry sector.

Associate Vice President Tom Wallace, Assistant Vice President Lisa Rogers, Assistant Vice President Brian Holley, and Senior Systems Analyst Dave Munson recently attended the 43rd Annual Tennessee Higher Education IT Symposium in Chattanooga. The yearly event is open to higher education professionals in Tennessee and focuses on information related to the technological needs of their institutions. Attendees include information technology professionals, faculty members who integrate technology into instruction, and staff providing support for critical administrative tasks.

Assistant Vice President Lisa Rogers and Senior Systems Analysts Debbie Warren, Theresa Stevenson, and Phyllis Kitzler recently attended the Ellucian Live Conference in Anaheim, Calif. The annual event draws more than 8,500 participants from over 1,300 higher education institutions around the world to discover new ideas, develop new insights, and design new approaches to help education move forward.

Did you know that voice mail messages are stored in the voice mail system for 10 days from the date the messages are received? Messages older than 10 days are automatically purged from the system and are no longer retrievable. If your summer plans have you away from the office for more than 10 days, consider the following:

- Record a personal greeting telling callers that you will be away from the office. For instructions on recording a personal greeting, please visit http://mtsu.edu/itdtele/services/voicemail.php.
- Disable call answer so that your voice mailbox will not accept new voice messages.

1. **Log in to your voice mailbox.**
2. **Press option 5 from the main menu (not a spoken option).**
3. **Press option 7 to administer call answer options.**
4. **Press option 1 to prevent callers from leaving messages.**
5. **Repeat the process when you return to turn on call answer so that callers may leave messages.**

- **Message Manager or Enabled Voice Mail** allows you to store messages in preselected folders on your PC. For more information about Message Manager or Enabled Voice Mail, please visit http://mtsu.edu/itdtele/services/voicemail.php.
2013 Information Technology Quality+ Study Results

In its second annual study, conducted in November/December 2013, the ITD leadership team gathered thoughts and opinions regarding the quality and effectiveness of technology services at MTSU. Using the Higher Education TechQual+ study instrument, IT-related service quality metrics were assessed to help identify service quality and note areas needing improvement in three categories: Connectivity and Access, Technology and Collaboration Services, and Support and Training. In analyzing 571 responses to an email request to participate, improvement in perceived quality from the previous year was noted in Technology and Collaboration and Support and Training services.

Connectivity and Access remained the area of most concern to respondents. The greatest improvement was noted in questions related to “getting timely resolution of problems that I am experiencing with campus technology services,” while “having wireless Internet coverage in all places that are important to me on campus” was the area of most concern. The increase in number of wireless devices being used by respondents and their increased preference for wireless connectivity was reported, which is closely related to the assessment of quality. Results of the study have been used to review division accomplishments for the 2013—2014 year and to help strategic planning for the upcoming year. ITD thanks respondents for their time and comments and looks forward to repeating the study again in fall 2014 and continuing to use that data in planning.

Print Management Update

ITD is well into implementing a print management solution in order to provide more efficient copying and printing services on campus. A contract was awarded to the RJ Young Company based on the company’s technical and cost proposals that were submitted during the request for proposal (RFP) process. MTSU currently owns or leases all printers and copiers on campus.

In the near future, the University will consider printing and copying as a service. For participants of this program, this means that there will be no leases, purchases or buying of printing or copying supplies. The RJ Young Company will provide an all-inclusive acquisition and service solution for MTSU’s printing and copying equipment and maintain the fleet and associated services as an integral element of the University’s educational and academic mission.

Departmental participation continues to increase, which helps decrease the price of the service. The current printing rates for faculty and staff are 0.01799 for black and white and 0.04999 for color. The project is more than halfway completed with departmental installations, and student installations are scheduled to begin on August 1. Departmental funds currently budgeted for the purchase of printers, copiers, and expenses such as maintenance, toner, or lease payments will remain with the department and can be reallocated within the department to other departmental needs.

Contact Robin Jones at 898-2214 with any questions regarding the program.

Sheraz Hanif (continued from page 6)

After leaving RR Donnelley, Hanif worked as a software developer and business analyst for two years before joining ITD in 2012.

MTSU was an ideal fit for Hanif, who graduated in summer 2000 with a degree in Business Administration.

“I have been living in Nashville and Murfreesboro since 1994,” he said. “When I lived in Nashville, I was commuting to MTSU for classes. When I decided to move to Murfreesboro, my employment places were either in Franklin, Brentwood, or the Nashville area. After spending several years in traffic, especially I-24 East from Murfreesboro to Nashville, I decided to start looking for something close to home. So, I found a job in the Administrative Information Systems Services (AISS) department. I enjoy the campus environment and no longer have to spend hours in traffic each day.”

One of Hanif’s creations garnered national attention when he developed a Web application for the Albert Gore Research Center. Director Jim Williams was in need of a front-end application to search information from an intricate database he received from Congressman Bart Gordon.

“The project was a huge success,” Hanif said. “Now, officials from other states have started to approach Dr. Williams and are showing interest in this application. Dr. Williams has also talked about it in different conferences.”

In addition, Hanif developed Transfer Equivalencies at Middle (T.E.A.M.), a program that helps transfer students from other institutions look up MTSU course names and numbers.

Hanif is an instrument-rated pilot and belongs to a Murfreesboro-based flying club.

“I love to travel and fly with family for vacations or sometimes just take a day-long trip to Atlanta or other bigger cities nearby,” he said. “I also enjoy riding motorcycles every now and then to visit nearby scenic places.”

Hanif lives in Murfreesboro with his wife, Shahnela, who is from the United Kingdom and has a teaching degree from London, and daughter, Aalia. His daughter is a seventh grader at Central Magnet School, an overall grade-A student, and a talented flute player. She was a junior winner at MTSU’s Flute Festival held earlier this year.