

Year 2000 initiative at the University

By Linda Deneen

The Year 2000 Initiative at the University of Minnesota is being led by the Office of Information Technology (OIT) at the Twin Cities Campus. ITSS is coordinating Year 2000 efforts here at UMD. OIT sent representatives to UMD on November 11 to present two workshops, one here on campus and one at NRRI.

OIT has developed an excellent web site to assist us in ensuring that our computer systems are ready for the year 2000. You can find this web site at www1.umn.edu/oit/year2000/. (Or, you can link to this web site from the ITSS home page at www.d.umn.edu/itss/.)

The ITSS desktop team is studying the Year 2000 problems for desktop computers and will be making recommendations to our customers about strategies. They are also evaluating some software tools that we can use to evaluate desktop computers for Year 2000 compliance.

ITSS has been doing quarterly monitoring and reporting of our major computer systems on campus and tracking to ensure that they are made compliant in time for the century change. If you are aware of a large computerized system that we haven't talked about, please drop an e-mail message to Linda Deneen at *ldeneen*.

ORTTA and ITSS will be working cooperatively to ensure that our researchers are aware of Year 2000 issues and that their equipment is compliant. National funding agencies are beginning to ask grantees to sign compliance forms before more funds are awarded.

Lines added to campus dial-up modem pool

By Dan Burrows

ITSS has placed an order for more modem lines to help minimize the busy signals that our external modem pool customers are experiencing. Last year we had 98 lines; we added 20 lines during fall quarter and will be adding another 50 lines winter quarter. If all goes well, these should be in place by early January 1999.

As many of you know, the latest technology available for dial-up modems employs something commonly known as 56K technology. The technical standard for this is known as V.90. Basically, this means that the connection between your home computer and our dial-up modems can transmit data at a higher speed than before.

ITSS has been working this year to provide 56K technology for off-campus customers. Unfortunately, due to technical and financial barriers, we will not be providing this technology this year.

For details about the 56K situation, please see the following web page:

<http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/computing/56kmodem.html>

Draft of new ITSS rates available in January

By Linda Deneen

ITSS management is working hard to set new rates for 1999-2000. These new rates will take effect July 1, 1999, but we plan to release a draft of our rates in January 1999 for budget planning purposes. New rates will be posted on the web and distributed to area class managers.

There is one service where we expect a significant rate increase for the coming year: networking.

Networking and Telecommunications Services (NTS) at the Twin Cities Campus has established a network charge that applies to all campuses. The charge pays for central infrastructure and access to the Internet for all campuses.

During the present fiscal year, central funds were appropriated to pay UMD's share of these charges. We anticipate that next year these central funds may no longer be allocated. In that case, we anticipate adding the NTS charges to our current ITSS charges for customers on the UMD campus, which could raise our network rate by double or more.

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New department directory on the web

By Linda Deneen

UMD has a new department directory on our web site that is updated through an on-line web form. Each department should designate one person to enter their department information into the web form. When the web form is submitted, your directory page in the new directory is automatically updated. After a substantial number of departments have updated their entries in the new directory, we will replace the old directory with the new one.

Adding your department

To get to the department directories (both old and new), click on the "departments" button on the left side of the UMD home page. Click on the Update New Directory link.

At this time, you will be required to enter a user name and password. For most departments, we have chosen

the department e-mail address listed in the printed UMD directory (for ex: itss, sbe, geog). You will need to know the password for this account to update the directory. If you don't have a departmental e-mail address, or if you wish to change the authentication privilege to someone else in your department, please contact Andrew Manteuffel at *amanteuf* or x6927 for assistance.

Once you have entered the department username and password, follow the instructions to complete the form. Be sure to click the "Submit" button when you have finished entering information. Your new page will be created and displayed for you to see.

To see an example of a completed page in the new directory, check the listing for Information Technology Systems and Services.

Making changes

You can update your department directory information at any time by repeating the above process.

Classroom technology upgrades continue

By Judy Kurschner

Projectors and VCRs have been permanently installed in MWAH 195, MonH 70 and MonH 80 this quarter. The rooms also are equipped with closed-caption capability. Documentation with operating instructions is available on the web at <http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/classroom/Resource.htm> for MWAH 195 and MonH 80.

Requests from the campus which have been completed include:

- Remote mouse in MonH 108 (currently available for the PC and almost ready for Mac)
- Additional digital cameras, camcorders, slide projectors and audio recorders for checkout from AV;
- New, lighter computer projector for off campus use
- New Macs (with Office 98) and projectors in the checkout pool

Projects we are working on include:

- Projector and VCR installation in Cina 316 (work begins during the holiday break)
- Audio cassette player in Chem 200 (on order)
- BohH 90 sound system
- Planning is in progress for a major update in Hum 403
- A "stand-alone" Mac on a cart will be added to the checkout pool of equipment very shortly for use in rooms with permanently installed projectors

Documentation will be out soon for equipment in Campus Center 120 and MonH 70. Continue to check the resources page at the URL given above for the latest additions and operating instructions.

Laptop initiative at UMD: What's next

By Linda Deneen

The proposal to require all students to have laptop computers at UMD starting in fall 1999 has been withdrawn by UMD administration. Discussions will continue about the future of laptops for our campus, and laptop pilot projects are being considered for fall 1999.

In the meantime, those interested in the laptop issue might want to check out these web sites:

- www.vcsu.nodak.edu/offices/itc/notebooks/
- www.shu.edu/compute/mobile/index.html
- www.dartmouth.edu/comp/new-info/index.html
- www.hied.ibm.com/ThinkPadU/
- www.crk.umn.edu/technology/thinkpadu/thinkpadu.htm
- www.wfu.edu/Computer-information/tpinfo.htm
- www.winona.msus.edu/cis/luniac/



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Learn for free from ITSS

By Bruce Reeves

The Training Team of the ITSS department offers many opportunities to learn technology skills at no charge. Attend one of our workshops or choose from self-paced learning packages – all at no cost.

Workshops: For winter quarter, a demo and 4 workshops are being offered covering everything from “Using Virtual PC on the Macintosh” to “MS Word 97 Level Two.” All workshops are listed on the Training Team Web site at <http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/support/Training/>.

You may sign up for the workshops from this site. Please also look for our flyers in your mailbox.

The Training Team’s workshops use a hands-on approach to learning. Because the ITSS Training Team features hands-on workshops, the size of classes are limited to ensure a good learning environment. Be sure to sign up early as class sizes are limited.

Self-Paced Learning: Self-paced learning is ideal if you want to go at your own pace and when learning is convenient for you. Material for both the PC and Mac are available in SBE 45B. Additionally, material may be checked out from the Library Reserve

Desk and taken back to your office. To find out what’s available, please take a look at the Self-Paced Learning Web site at <http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/support/Training/SPLA.htm>.

Listserv: Get the latest in technology training information from IDS and ITSS delivered directly to your e-mail box. Join the technology-training listserv today.

Go to <http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/Training> and click on the link for the

“technology-training listserv” at the bottom of the page.

In the e-mail message that pops up, substitute your own first and last names for the angle-bracket phrases. Remember to delete any signature or anything else from the message.

Netscape Calendar

By Laura Carlson

So long Clockwise!

Netscape Calendar is the new multi-user scheduling software solution at UMD. Netscape Calendar will enable you and your colleagues to keep track of multiple schedules all via the Internet. Netscape Calendar allows users to easily manage meetings, events, and to-do lists as well as providing timesaving group scheduling.

Netscape Calendar training will be available soon. Check the Training Team Web site at <http://www.d.umn.edu/itss/support/Training/> for details.

New ITSS staff member

Sarah Paro began working with ITSS December 7th as an Office Specialist. Her primary duties include computer lab and composition support for students, faculty and staff using the H470 computer lab.

Sarah is a graduate of UMD and is currently working towards completing a masters degree in English Literature. Sarah’s past employment experiences include both teaching and administrative office support in higher education. She is located afternoons in the H470 computer lab and can be reached at x6238 or e-mail *spara*.

Lab hours extended

By Jason Davis

Beginning Monday, January 4, the Library 165 computer lab will remain open until 2:00 AM Sunday - Thursday. This same lab is open by 7:00 AM Monday - Friday, so we have increased our operating hours on both ends.

More and later lab hours have been a recurring theme in our student surveys, but the campus buildings have been officially closed at midnight in past years.

Recent changes in campus policy now allow us to stay open after midnight. The late night hours will continue through the 10th week of winter quarter. At that time, we will assess usage patterns versus cost and safety issues to determine if we should continue offering extended hours.

Winter Quarter Workshops

Using Virtual PC on the Mac	1/25	M	03:00-04:00 AM	MWAH 191
Making your first web page with PageMill	1/28	Th	01:30-03:30 PM	CCTR 42
Mircrosoft Access 97 - Basics	2/2, 4 & 5	T, Th, F	01:30-03:30 PM	CCTR 42
Introduction to Excel 97	FILLED	T, W	09:00-11:00 AM	CCTR 42
MS Word Levle Two	2/11, 16 & 18	Th, T & Th	01:30-03:30 AM	CCTR 42

E-mail netiquette: Avoiding some common e-mail problems

By Dan Burrows

Electronic mail has certainly grown in use over the past years. Unfortunately, misuse has grown right along with it. Some of the things our staff respond to often include: hoaxes, inappropriate use, chain e-mail, forged e-mail, copyright materials, etc. After working with those involved we usually find out that those sending materials that are inappropriate (or illegal) could have avoided the fallout if they had kept the following items handy for reference:

Make the tone of your e-mail clear.

E-mail lacks the other 'sense' items that phone or person-to-person conversation includes. Such things as tone of voice or gestures provide a part of our everyday conversations. E-mail is devoid of these items, so it is best not to use e-mail if the topic is ambiguous without them. A phone call or a person-to-person works best for these items. The person on the receiving end can help out here too, by calling or visiting with the other person if something isn't clear in a message. Don't make assumptions about an e-mail sent to you.

Use a descriptive subject line.

Many people get dozens of e-mail messages a day. The quality of information on the subject line often determines which messages are read and in which order. This is particularly important when sending to a large e-mail list or a list server (such as umd.business.announce). Your subject line should provide as much of the "who", "what", "where", "when" and "why" as is reasonable.

Watch out for those novice mistakes.

Group replying to a sensitive e-mail instead of replying to the sender is a common one. Always look at your headers before you send something. It is easy to send something to a group that you meant for only one person in the group.

Another novice mistake is misaddressing a very personal message which then gets delivered to the wrong person. Be sure to test a

new e-mail address with a non-descript message before using it as a trusted address.

E-mail can be forged. This doesn't happen often, but it does happen. If something about a message doesn't look right, verify that it was sent to you by the person involved. A phone call works great for this.

Assume that a message may be forwarded to another person (or group). This will be especially true if you are successful in making a joke or an interesting point about something. Assume it might get forwarded to the person, place or object of your message.

Remember that to deliver e-mail requires resources.

Chain mail is a great example of what to avoid. Some chain mail specifically says it is OK because it does not include monetary rewards. Don't believe it. All chainmail is inappropriate because it wastes resources. Don't pass it on. You can report incidents to the site administrator, usually by e-mailing to "postmaster" at the domain names involved.

Keep the site address that explains the common hoaxes handy.

We get hoax questions all the time. What about the person dying of this disease? What about the FCC raising our phone rates? Do I have a virus now that I read this e-mail message? A good web page that discusses hoaxes is at:

ciac.llnl.gov/ciac/CIACHoaxes.html

Check here first before calling ITSS staff or passing anything on to another person or group. You'd be surprised that what can sound like such an appealing or appalling thing is really just a common hoax.

Don't make a joke of a sensitive issue to anyone.

You may suddenly find your inbox flooded with responses. Often the site e-mail administrator is contacted as well, so you might hear from one of our staff.

How about this rule: if you wouldn't say it to your mom, dad or in public, don't say it in e-mail.

Control your 'e-mail temper'.

When in doubt, don't respond to an item designed to raise your ire about a topic. Usually the best response is no response, especially if you find your pulse rate increasing.

What is illegal in regular life is illegal when using e-mail.

Threatening someone or something with physical harm is usually illegal. Free speech is something we all know about, but there are rules about when things cross the line between free speech versus illegal actions. If you wouldn't say it in a face to face conversation, don't say it in e-mail.

Don't trade copyright items.

This is often a legal issue, and can include court battles, fines, etc. Music files (MP3) and company logos seem to be the big items this year. These are traded via e-mail and put up on web pages and servers. There are organizations on the Internet looking for this activity, and you may as well assume they are going to find you. When they do they usually contact the site administrator and work through the legal mechanism to shut this activity down.

If you receive questionable e-mail

do almost exactly the same thing you would do if it came to you in paper mail or verbally.

One exception is that unsolicited e-mail from off campus usually cannot be traced. Responding to this type of e-mail usually won't work because it is usually forged.

If you receive objectionable e-mail from off campus it is probably best to just ignore it. However, if something is harrassment based on University Policy, or if you are threatened, please report the incident to the appropriate offices at UMD. These include the Office of Equal Opportunity and the UMD Campus Police.