



News from ITS

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Computing and Technology Resources Available to Faculty
- Protect Yourself with Strong Passwords

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Retiring the Web Server

After many years of service “chet,” the server hosting www.union.edu is headed to retirement. A new server awaits – one that is better prepared to handle visitor traffic in the event of an emergency, provide increased security, decrease costs and enable development of new site features. The CMS (Content Management System) implementation has been critical to this migration and is nearly complete. The Web Office has imported nearly all administrative and academic department content over the past year. The majority of content is now

maintained by representatives from the respective offices and departments with ongoing assistance from the Web Office. The Web Office is now focusing on moving content and testing the new server while continuing to clean and identify remaining content on chet. **Due to the complexity of the web server there is the possibility of discovering content that is unknown to the Web Office or ITS. It is important that this content be identified as quickly as possible.** For more information about the transition to the new server, please contact the Web Office.

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Computing and Technology Resources Available to Faculty



Information Technology Services wants to remind faculty about some of the computing and technology resources available to them.

1. The Faculty Computing Resource Center has been recently relocated to larger quarters in Steinmetz 101. The FCRC is available to faculty 24/7 through the use of your ID card for access. Equipment in the FCRC includes two PCs configured for multimedia creation (audio/video/image editing), a MacPro configured for video editing, and an iMac configured to run both the Macintosh operating system and Windows Vista. There is a high-speed scanner with an automatic document feeder

attached to one of the PCs as well as a flat-bed scanner attached to the MacPro. Both systems have OCR (optical character recognition) software allowing documents to be scanned and then easily edited in Word. Additionally, both platforms have the ability to scan directly to PDF. Other equipment in the FCRC includes a 35mm slide scanner, a color laser printer as well as a black & white laser printer. A variety of software applications used on campus such as Office, Pinnacle Studio, iMovie, Adobe Acrobat, SPSS, ArcGIS, Mathematica, MatLab, and Adobe Creative Suite, are installed on the computers. Additional software may be installed upon request.

2. Interested in “Clickers”? ITS has purchased 100 clickers and 4 receivers for use by the campus community. This easy-to-use audience response system integrates with PowerPoint on both the PC and the Macintosh. Clickers provide an effective way to engage participants, generate instant response, and gauge audience feedback. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Kevin Barhydt at barhydtk@union.edu

3. Web Page Moves. ITS is assisting faculty in moving their personal/course web sites from “chet” (the College’s web server www.union.edu) to “minerva”, the web server maintained for faculty and student use. We will move files, assist with rebuilding the site in your web publishing software,



Find out more about the technologies available to Union faculty at <http://its.union.edu/facultySrvcs.html>

Computing Resources for Faculty, cont.

Continued from Page 1 and train you to maintain the site easily. This project will be moving forward over the next several months as web sites currently on “chet” (www.union.edu) are moved elsewhere in preparation for the server’s decommissioning. For more information or if you would like assistance in moving your web site from “chet” to “minerva”, please contact either Becca Fiveland (fivelanr@union.edu) or Dave Sindoni (sindoni@union.edu).

4. Teaching Laptops.

Teaching in a Minerva seminar room and wish you had a laptop? Teaching in a “laptop-only” electronic

classroom and don’t have a laptop? ITS has nine (9) laptops, five Mac and four PC, that can be borrowed for an entire term. These computers have the same software installed as the computers in an electronic classroom. If you are teaching in a Minerva seminar room or one of the “laptop-only” classrooms (Humanities 016, Social Sciences 010, or NWSE 114), and are interested in borrowing a laptop for the Winter 2009 term, please get in touch with Jim Strohecker at strohecj@union.edu

5. WebAdvising now uses your email username and password for access. This is a recent change designed to

make accessing information simpler. If you have comments or questions about [WebAdvising](#), please contact Steve Romanski at romansks@union.edu

6. Loaner Equipment.

Going away to a conference and need a laptop? Interested in using a digital camcorder? Bought a new computer for home and want to back up/transfer files? ITS has equipment available for short-term loan to faculty and staff. A list of the equipment that can be borrowed can be found at: <http://its.union.edu/loanerEquip.html>. If you have questions about equipment, please get in touch with your ITS contact.

Changes in ITS

Please join us in welcoming Carlos, Paul and Brent to Union College.

Carlos Nieves joined ITS on 8/4 as *Hardware Technician – Lead*. Carlos has 18 years experience working with hardware and software; the past 14 years have been spent providing consulting services in New York City to a variety of corporate clients including Time Magazine, People, and Popular Science. Carlos has a degree from the Electronic Technology Program of the New York City Technical College. He is also a certified Christian Minister and is bilingual (fluent in Spanish).

Paul Vinette joined ITS as a *Senior Systems Analyst* in the Administrative Computing group on 9/2. Paul has a MS in Advanced Technology from SUNY-Binghamton, in addition to his Bachelor of Computer Science undergraduate degree. He has over 20 years of varied IT experience, serving as a Programmer/Analyst, Database Manager, IS Manager, and Systems Analyst. His work experience includes technical support positions for the NY State Assembly, ProLiteracy Worldwide, and several corporate entities in upstate New York. Paul also has experience with the same database engine that is utilized in the College’s Datatel systems. He is an avid hockey fan and fisherman who is excited about returning with his family to the Capital District.

Brent Potter joined the ITS staff on 10/6 as Union’s *Network Manager*. Brent most recently comes to us from the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry where he was Supervisor of Computing and Network Services. Before that he worked at Cornell University as IT Manager Cornell Plantations, and before that he was at Clarkson University where he was Director of User Services. Brent serves in the Air National Guard, and he has just come back from a deployment in Europe. In the Guard he serves as a Network Administrator and Project Manager. Brent has a Bachelor of Science degree from SUNY Potsdam. In addition to his computing activities, Brent has also coached volleyball at Clarkson. He has also run leadership clinics at Cornell University through Cornell Plantations, and he has served as a volunteer mentor at the Syracuse City School District.

Quick Tips — Just Say “No” to Phishing

Your account will be deleted if you do not act now! \$1 million left to you by your long lost uncle! Suspected unauthorized access to you account! Thousands of dollars unclaimed! Just click this link or send us your username, password, date of birth, bank routing and account numbers....



Don't fall for it, Union College! These types of emails all belong to the category of “Phishing.” defined by Wikipedia as “the criminally fraudulent process of attempting to acquire sensitive information such as usernames,

passwords and credit card details, by masquerading as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication.”

Here are some tips for recognizing and avoiding these scams:

- Look for poor or broken English – misspellings, poor grammar, punctuation, etc.
- Check the sender’s email address – if you don’t recognize it or doesn’t include the company’s name that the email is supposedly from, it is

probably not legit

- Beware of messages conveying extreme urgency or haste – if it tells you to act now or immediately or risk dire consequences, delete it
- No legitimate company will ever ask you for personal information, especially your password, by unsecure email

Phishing is part of the fastest growing crime in the world – information theft. Anyone can be the target of information theft, and the attacks are usually “blind,” meaning the attacker does not know the people receiving the fraudulent message. Don’t be a victim! Be vigilant, and just say no to phishing!

Find out more about phishing and how to protect yourself at NoPhishing.org or OnGuardOnline.gov

Blackboard News

Blackboard Upgrade

The Blackboard system (<http://online.union.edu>) was successfully upgraded to version 8 during the summer. This upgrade introduces a number of new features and enhancements to the existing features, such as Grade Center and Scholar. You may find a few new or updated handouts at the Curricular Support web site: <http://curriculum.union.edu/blackboard.php>.

Upcoming Workshops:

- Blackboard 8 Q & A: Thursday, Oct. 23, 3:50 – 4:40pm
- Blackboard Grade Center: Wednesday, Oct. 28, 3:00 – 4:00pm
- Blackboard Scholar, Thursday, Oct. 30, 3:00 – 4:00pm

Deletion of Old Blackboard Courses:

ITS will remove Blackboard courses more than two years old (Fall, 2006 or before) by **Friday, December 12, 2008**. It is recommended that instructors archive their courses before they are deleted. **ITS will not automatically archive any courses.** To learn how to archive a Blackboard course, see this tutorial.

http://curriculum.union.edu/blackboard/bb_archive.php

Remember, too, that you can request a course be deleted by following the easy directions at

http://curriculum.union.edu/blackboard/bb_remove.php.

Upcoming Curricular Support Event

Audio and Video Conferencing with Skype

Friday, Oct. 31, 3:00—4:00 pm

Academic Help Desk at Your Service

The Information Technology Services department Academic Helpdesk is there to provide excellent centralized software and hardware support to the academic community. The Academic Helpdesk is staffed

entirely by full-time professional employees. Our hours of operation are Monday- Friday 9:00 am— 4:30 pm, including the lunch hour. The helpdesk is physically located in Steinmetz Hall room 104.

Please stop in with your questions. You can also reach the helpdesk by calling extension 6400 or logging in at <http://helpdesk.union.edu>, where you can enter a work order with the problem you are experiencing.





Information Technology Services

Union College
Peschel Computer Center
807 Union St.
Schenectady, NY 12308
Phone: 518-388-6293
Help Desk: 518-388-6400

Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:54 pm



ITS is committed to understanding and supporting the growing and ever-changing uses of information technology for both academic and administrative purposes. ITS will ensure a robust, stable, secure and innovative technology infrastructure that allows members of the Union community to work efficiently and effectively from facilities both on and off campus. We will create, in partnership with members of the community, facilities that support and enhance the learning, teaching, research and collaboration processes. ITS will assist faculty in the integration of appropriate technology into their curriculum and pedagogy to further enhance student learning.



Protect Yourself with Strong Passwords

In an era where information and identity theft are rampant and spam and phishing emails arrive by the thousands, it is important to keep yourself protected. Part of your security in an information age is a strong password.

Definition of a strong password:

A strong password is defined as one that is designed to be hard to discover by either a person or a computer program.

Characteristics of a strong password:

In order for a password to be effective in protecting your data it needs to retain a certain degree of complexity. There are three major factors that are involved in creating a strong password: length, width, and depth.

- *Length* - refers to the number of characters in a password. A strong password should be at least 8 characters. The longer a password the more difficult it is to crack it.
- *Width* - refers to how many different types of characters are used in a password. A strong password consists of not only the alphabet characters but also numerals and special characters (such as \$, ?*,% #,@,!.)
- *Depth* - refers to how challenging and difficult is your password to guess. A strong password should not contain any dictionary words, usernames or biographical information like names and dates.

A strong password should seem completely random to others but be meaningful and easy to remember for you.

Tips on creating a Strong Password:

- Make sure your password is at least 8 characters long (more is better)
- Always use a mixture of upper- and lower-case characters.
- Intersperse punctuation marks or symbols such as #, \$, %, etc. Do not use a blank space.
- Make your password meaningful to you and easy to remember:

One of the most popular and effective methods for creating strong password involves picking the letters from a phrase that is meaningful to you and interjecting numbers, punctuation and/or special characters. For example:

- "Do you know the way to San Jose?" becomes: "DyktwtSJ?"
- "My favorite trumpet player is Dizzy Gillespie!" becomes: "MftpiDG!"
- "I have two cats: Gizmo and Lucky" becomes: "lh2c:G&L"

Avoid writing down your password; someone else might see it.