

EITS Status and Activity Report for December 2014

Prepared by Timothy M. Chester, Vice President for Information Technology (VPIT)

1. Announcements for Faculty and Staff Meetings

- *eLC to be Unavailable During Upgrade:* The University System of Georgia is upgrading Desire2Learn, which powers UGA's eLearning Commons (eLC). During the upgrade, eLC will be unavailable starting on Saturday, December 27 and ending on Friday, January 2, at 5 p.m. Classes for spring semester start on Monday, January 5. Given the downtime for eLC, instructors are advised to plan accordingly. This upgrade to eLC will include enhancements to existing features and is not considered a major interface change. Some of the functional enhancements include those to the assignment dropbox, quizzes, and course content. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) plans to conduct eLC drop-in sessions for instructors in early January. For more information, please contact Sherry Clouser by email at sac@uga.edu.
- *Wimba Classroom Ending as Web Conferencing Tool:* Instructors have until Friday, December 19 to download their archived Wimba Classroom web conferencing sessions. Wimba Classroom was replaced by Blackboard Collaborate in August as the web conferencing tool for instructional purposes with eLearning Commons (eLC) and outside eLC as freestanding sessions. The company that supports Wimba Classroom will end support of the product at the end of 2014. Wimba Voice tools, including Voice Boards, Voice Podcasters, and Voice Presentation, will remain available in eLC. Instructors may find downloading instructions at <http://ctl.uga.edu/web-conferencing/faculty> to download their recorded sessions prior to August 2014. After December 19, the archived Wimba Classroom sessions will no longer be available. For more information, please contact Sherry Clouser by email at sac@uga.edu.

2. Support for Student Technology Services

- *Spring 2015 Class Registration Opens in Athena:* Registration for spring 2015 classes opened on November 7 in Athena, UGA's new student information system. Athena uses a time ticketing system for students to register for classes. Students are given a date and a time they may log in to Athena to register for classes. Students may register for classes from their appointment times until the spring semester drop/add period. The final registration tickets were issued on November 21. As of this report, 25,650 students have enrolled in more than 118,490 courses for spring 2015. Overall, there are 11,916 sections available for student registration in the spring. For more information, please visit <http://connectuga.uga.edu>.

3. Support for Academic and Administrative Computing

- *Free Office ProPlus Software Available to Employees:* University faculty and staff now have free access to download and install Microsoft Office ProPlus software. Students have had free access to Office ProPlus since May through Microsoft's Student Advantage program. This same service is now available to all UGA employees at no additional cost to the University. Faculty and staff may download and install Office ProPlus software (which includes Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) on up to five personal devices, including phones, tablets, and computers. EITS has complete details on how employees can

download this software on their personal devices via their web-based UGAMail account at <http://office365.uga.edu>.

- *Self-Service Website to be Updated:* UGA's Self-Service website (employee.uga.edu) for employees will be updated to use the University's Central Authentication Service (CAS) for logins. Visitors to the website will no longer need to provide their MyID and password on the Self-Service home page. Instead, they will click on a link on the Self-Service homepage that will redirect them to the CAS login page, which is used by multiple UGA online services. The change is tentatively scheduled for December 6. The UGA Self-Service website allows employees to view and update information related to their employment, such as paychecks and leave balances. For more information about this change, please contact Russell A. Hatfield by email at hatfield@uga.edu.

4. Support for Research

- *Regional Partnership to Facilitate New Scientific Discoveries:* The National Science Foundation has awarded a grant to a collaboration of southeastern institutions, including the University, to fund a regional network to support next generation networking and its use in enabling scientific discoveries. This collaboration, called the Southern Partnership in Advanced Networking (SPAN), includes UGA, Clemson University, South Carolina State University, and Georgia State University. SPAN will offer—to campus IT personnel and researchers alike—workshops, expert presentations, documentation, and site visits to participating institutions on topics such as institutional cyberinfrastructure plans, network upgrades, and cyber security. For more information about SPAN, please contact Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu by email.
- *New Research Cluster Named:* The Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center (GACRC) is preparing to launch its new cluster, which has been given the name Sapelo. When fully launched in early 2015, Sapelo will offer significant research computing resource enhancements, including 1 petabyte of storage for research computing and three times the processing capabilities of the current Z Cluster. The name Sapelo refers to UGA's long-standing research on Sapelo Island, where University researchers have made significant advances in the field of ecology and other disciplines. For more information about the new cluster, please contact Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu by email.

5. Core Campus Infrastructure

- *Additional Data Storage at Health Sciences Campus:* EITS recently installed additional equipment at the Health Sciences Campus that will provide redundancy to some of the University's core infrastructure systems and services. By installing this equipment at the Health Sciences Campus, the University is placed in a better position to provide future redundant options. For more information, please contact Mike Lucas at mlucas@uga.edu by email.

6. Did You Know?

- EITS continues to develop high-performing IT professionals at the University with its ongoing HR Competency Project. This 18-month project aims to engage every EITS employee in the development of competencies that outline how to observe and measure the behaviors exhibited by high-performing IT employees. To date, every EITS employee has participated in a series of workshops to identify the skills and competencies that

determine a high performer. Next, an evaluation/assessment tool for each job family will be developed, followed by the initial rollout of the new performance review process. A steering committee that includes EITS employees and UGA HR representatives is guiding this process. For more information about the HR Competency Project, please contact Wes Johnson at wesj06@uga.edu by email.

- EITS is working with several technical groups on campus to refine recommendations stemming from results of the TechQual+ survey. The annual survey measures the quality of IT services at UGA, based on feedback from students, faculty, and staff. An advisory committee was tasked with using the survey results to provide recommendations on four key IT topics. Those recommendations are being reviewed by campus technical groups, which are also providing additional input. A final set of recommendations will be submitted to the Vice President for Information Technology by December 31. Those recommendations will guide future IT initiatives and projects at the University. For more information about the TechQual+ survey, please contact Lynn Wilson at llatimer@uga.edu by email.

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