Tech News June 2021

Top News

Major network expansion to improve connectivity: EITS networking staff are working on a multi-year project to upgrade building routers, increasing network bandwidth for research and allowing for 10G connectivity. The Building Edge Router Refresh project will upgrade the current building edge routers and cabling in 180 buildings to a new platform that connects buildings back to the university's core network.

Buildings completed through June include: The Computing Services Building, Driftmier Engineering Center, Phi Kappa Hall, the Chapel, Meigs Hall, Moore College, Candler Hall, Bishop House, Lustrat House, New College, Administration Building, Terrell Hall, Holmes-Hunter Academic Building, Peabody Hall, Leconte Hall, Fine Arts Building, Army/ROTC, Business Services, Human Resources, Lumpkin House, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

Buildings currently scheduled for July: Orkin Hall, Amos Hall, the Hodgson Oil Building, Riverbend North, Riverbend South, Caldwell Hall, the Law School, Brooks Hall, and the Hull Street area.
Visit https://eits.uga.edu/network_and_phones/building_edge_router_project/ for more information.

IT Services in Action

University task force to examine lessons from the pandemic: As the University of Georgia prepares for a full return to normal campus operations this fall, it is also looking back to identify how lessons learned from a year and a half of teaching during the COVID pandemic can enhance the learning environment. The Task Force on the Future of Teaching and Learning at UGA, charged by Provost S. Jack Hu and Vice President for Instruction Rahul Shrivastav, is composed of 27 faculty, staff and students from across the institution. Its members will meet regularly over the next several months and are scheduled to deliver a report on their findings at the end of fall semester. The scope of the task force is broad, encompassing areas such as instructional formats, instructional spaces and technology, academic support services, student life, equity and inclusion. Its work is guided by the university's 2025 Strategic Plan, the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Plan, and the 2017 Task Force on Student Learning and Success. In addition, The Center for Teaching and Learning is taking their lessons learned from the pandemic to evaluate how they support faculty in the future. These improvements and lessons learned include:
- Offering teaching workshops and consultations face-to-face, as well as virtual, via Zoom.
- Adding Respondus Monitor, a proctoring solution for online exams, to the Lockdown Browser integration in eLearning Commons.

- Offering more Zoom capabilities in UGA classrooms, including some rooms with touchscreen monitors at instructor podiums with annotation features.
- Continuing to use Zoom as an option for meetings and working groups to provide a greater degree of flexibility.
- A continued use of web-based tools adopted prior to the pandemic, such as Google Docs and TeamDynamix. These tools proved their value in keeping accurate information flowing when staff were working remote.
- Continuing classroom support work face-to-face. Working with classroom installation clients, FMD, and outside installers requires classroom support technicians to be on campus.
- The pandemic and hybrid learning environment also showed an increased interest from faculty to incorporate hybrid and online learning activities in otherwise face-to-face courses. This summer, USG Chancellor's Learning Scholar and UGA Associate Professor in Learning, Design, and Technology Jill Stefaniak will offer a Hybrid Course Activity Design Slam to UGA faculty hoping to leverage the power of eLC in their learning experiences next year. The Slam begins July 12. Faculty can register at: https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0ezwRgrNzK6Ssia.

Wireless improvements coming to outdoor areas: EITS is working to improve the wireless performance in several outdoor areas in north and central campus, making it easier for students, faculty and staff to work and study outdoors. The $417K project, funded by the Student Technology Fee, includes updates to the wireless infrastructure and access points servicing five outdoor areas: the Old College quad, the Main Library quad, Herty Field, the area in front of the Miller Learning Center and outdoor areas around Tate Student Center. EITS plans to complete work on the Old College and Main Library quads by the end of this month; the remaining areas will be completed over the summer. To learn more, please contact Chris Fleming, cfleming@uga.edu.

Upcoming Changes and Maintenances

GACRC maintenance set for July 27-28: Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center staff will perform a scheduled maintenance July 27-28. This is per GACRC's standing policy on regular maintenance. During the maintenance, the Sapelo2 cluster and all data transfer nodes will be unavailable. The GACRC teaching cluster will not be affected and will remain available during the maintenance. Staff plan to service the Lustre hardware, upgrade the Lustre and ZFS storage software, perform maintenance on the InfiniBand network, implement an upgrade and minor configuration changes to the Slurm queueing system, and reinstall the compute nodes with an upgraded system image. Any questions should be directed to Dr. Guy Cormier, gcormier@uga.edu.

Updated VPN client to be released this month: For users of UGA's Remote Access Virtual Private Network (VPN), the latest update to Cisco AnyConnect, version 4.10, is now available for download: https://eits.uga.edu/access_and_security/infosec/tools/vpn/. This latest update shows improved performance for the MacOS version on new Apple computers based on the M1 CPU. The updated software will be pushed out to all Cisco AnyConnect clients in late July. Once the update is released, your VPN client will automatically update to the newest version of Cisco AnyConnect the next time you connect to the VPN. For more information, contact Lance Peiper at lpeiper@uga.edu.

Zoom student account reset planned for end of July: In order to ensure we can provide Zoom licenses to all active students in the fall, EITS will perform a reset on student Zoom accounts on July 30. During the reset, accounts belonging to students who are not actively enrolled in classes in July will be temporarily removed from UGA's main Zoom account. Students who wish to keep their UGA Zoom license during the Fall 2021 semester only need to log in to Zoom again after the reset occurs on July 30. Upon logging in with their MyID and password, their licenses will be re-provisioned. During the reset, students may lose access to meetings they are scheduled to host and custom user settings, including their profile and background photos. We recommend they take note of these meetings, and save any photos they wish to keep. The reset will not affect any meetings or classes hosted by UGA faculty and staff, including those scheduled with students. Departmental sub-accounts for Zoom will not be affected, but EITS strongly encourages Zoom sub-account owners to remove faculty and staff who have left the university. For more information, contact Bret Jamieson at bret.jamieson@uga.edu.

Changes coming to Wepa print kiosks cost: Effective August 1, the cost for printing from a Wepa print kiosk will increase by $0.02 per page for black and white printing, bringing the total cost of printing in black and white to $0.09 per single-sided page. This increase is due COVID-19's impact on student print volume. Price increases for other print forms this year include a $0.04 increase for black and white double-sided prints, a $0.10 increase for color single-sided prints, and no change for color double-sided prints. UGA is home to 63 Wepa print kiosks, which includes those located on UGA's Gwinnett campus. For more information, visit printkiosk.uga.edu.

Teams to Replace Skype for Business: As of July 30, Skype for Business will be retired by Microsoft. Teams is the recommended replacement for Skype for Business and is available to the UGA community. In preparation for this change, EITS will be providing repeated communication to current UGA users of Skype for Business. Information on Microsoft Teams is available at teams.uga.edu.

Fall network maintenance set for October 23: EITS plans to conduct a network maintenance on October 23. Network maintenances are necessary to continue to support the network, allowing EITS to provide ample bandwidth and Internet capacity to the University in the future. We typically conduct large network maintenances twice a year, during which campus Internet and information systems are usually inaccessible. For questions, contact Chris Baines at cbaines@uga.edu.

Campus IT announcements

Biannual UGA SSO upgrade planned for September 24: Our single sign-on service, UGA SSO, will undergo a scheduled maintenance September 24. This maintenance is necessary to move the service to the latest version and to receive up-to-date security patching. To prepare for this upgrade, application owners will be asked to test their applications in dev and stage to ensure the update does not affect their applications. A dev environment is available for testing now, and a stage environment will be available for testing August 9. Once the new stage environment is live in August, EITS will not move any new applications to UGA SSO until after the upgrade is complete in September. EITS applies

updates to UGA SSO twice a year, in February and September. For more information, please contact Kristi Wall at kristi.wall@uga.edu.

Annual MyID account clean-up under way: In June, EITS began notifying MyID account holders who are no longer eligible to keep their accounts, letting them know their MyID and UGAMail account information will be disabled and deleted in August. This includes former undergraduate, graduate and professional students who left UGA during the Spring 2020 semester or earlier; dependents who are no longer eligible for accounts; previous employees who haven't had their MyID disabled and a mailbox removed; other affiliate users who have not had their MyID disabled and a mailbox removed. The clean-up encompasses about 39,000 users. Of these, about 37,000 have a MyID and 35,000 have an email address. The 35,000 with an email will receive three notices before their accounts are disabled August 2. The clean-up process will include accounts of anyone who is forwarding their UGAMail to a third-party email account. If users need to maintain a MyID and access to UGAMail for UGA job duties, their UGA department can update the affiliation at https://onesource.uga.edu/faculty_and_staff_guide/#Affiliates. More information about UGA's MyID clean-up process is available on the EITS website at https://eits.uga.edu/access_and_security/myid/myid_account_removal/ .

Tech Tips

Access Office 365 software and online tools with your UGA MyID: Did you know eligible UGA students, faculty and staff have access to download Office 365 software to their personal computers? You can download the software, including Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Teams, Outlook and more on up to 10 devices. Students and employees also have access to a wide variety of web-based Microsoft applications, including OneDrive for Business, Microsoft Planner, One Note, To Do and Forms. Visit our software site for more information about downloading and accessing Office on your personal devices: https://eits.uga.edu/hardware_and_software/software/microsoft/ . In addition, as part of our Campus Agreement, all faculty and staff have access to Office software and Office 365 online apps on their UGA-issued computers. Additional products that are not included in the Microsoft Campus Agreement may be purchased. Contact your departmental IT staff for more information about items available for purchase.

UGA's information security protections against malware, ransomware: UGA's information security team operates multiple layers of network and computer protections against ransomware and malware. The team is continuously monitoring and adjusting these defenses to protect the University's vast and diverse technological environments. In May, network defenses blocked 1.5 million threat events. An additional 21,930 were blocked by our defenses at a computer level and another 3,576 were blocked in email inboxes. Public higher education remains a top target for cyber-attackers who attempt to disrupt our operations and steal our intellectual property. Students, faculty and staff should remain vigilant about potential threats. Remember to back up critical systems and data; stop and think before opening email attachments or clicking on links; always have strong passwords and use multi-factor authentication; and report suspicious events immediately. For more security tools and tips, visit infosec.uga.edu.