

Duke Office of Information Technology

Duke OIT – Inbox May 2008

The OIT Newsletter

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Nothing's missing at the Link: Teaching meets



tech

What's in a name? In fall semester 2008, an exploratory space opens in Perkins Library's lower level. Its formal name is the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC), but the university has also given it a shorter handle: the Link. It's a place that connects innovative teaching spaces, technology services and learning tools that will help students and faculty stretch boundaries in learning and teaching.

"We think this will be a place where faculty can experiment and learn how to integrate new technologies into teaching," said Ed Gomes, associate dean for Arts and Sciences IT. "It's also a place where the university will learn how to introduce new technologies into classrooms and create models to use elsewhere on campus. Students will have access to these rooms for meetings and events, and we expect they will learn new technologies for their activities and push the school to develop new tools." Rooms are already being assigned through the university registrar. All faculty members teaching during the 2007–2008 academic year were sent an email detailing the features of the TLC and telling them how they could request a spot there via the normal course submission process, using the Departmental Schedule Validator. The Link will feature a walk-up information and service desk, coordinated jointly by OIT and Arts and Sciences staff (see accompanying article). Since the Link is in Perkins, reference

librarians are a step away. The Center for Instructional Technology (CIT) is nearby and will offer expertise on using the new space. The Link offers six classrooms, four seminar rooms, 11 group study rooms and informal space for collaboration, discussion or individual work. Several of the classrooms offer special design and equipment features, including:

- Audio-video recording and playback
- The ability to project from multiple sources at once
- Built-in videoconferencing
- Attached space for breakout groups

More information about the Link can be found on CIT's website: http://cit.duke.edu/about/current/tlc/tlc_info.html.

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Stay up late, walk up to the Link's tech support



desk

Got a technology question and can't find the answer on the Internet? Can't get on the Internet? Starting fall semester, answers will be easier to find—at the new walk-up help and information desk in the Link at Perkins Library. The walk-up tech support service is moving from the Service Desk at the Bryan Center to the Link, and OIT is adding both full-time staff and part-time student employees to operate the expanded service. The desk will provide hands-on laptop tech support, and the Student Workers Assisting with Technology (SWAT) team will be based here to help with all sorts of technology problems. Kevin Davis, OIT's assistant director of technology support, hopes the new service desk will become "the one-place to do everything." If you need tech help, head for the Link. The service will handle an array of requests, from helping a staff member seeking a software license to a student setting up a multimedia presentation in one of the Link's classrooms. The new technology-support desk will be open seven days a week. Hours will run from 8 a.m. until midnight Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Fridays, noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and 3 p.m. to midnight on Sundays.

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Picture (and move) this: RENCI engagement center opens at Duke

All that's missing are Tom Cruise, 3D and a polished ball with some unlucky person's name on it. The rest is right out of the movie *Minority Report*, director Marilyn Lombardi likes to say, and it's soon to be showing at a RENCI Center near you. Lombardi is not a film auteur but director of the Duke "engagement center" on the first floor of the Telecom Building between Duke University Medical Center and West Campus. The center is one of several linked in a high-speed network to other institutions of higher education across North Carolina under the auspices of the nonprofit Renaissance Computing Institute (RENCI). Duke, along with North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina, is a founding member of RENCI. The state-supported centers are part of a grid that enables large data and media

transfer and teleconferencing and are linked to each other and a national grid by a powerful research-computing center based at RENCi headquarters in Chapel Hill. (For more information, see the RENCi website: <http://www.renci.org>.) RENCi is what Lombardi calls an “applied think tank.” Like the other RENCi centers, Duke’s will bring together in-house researchers, advanced visualization capabilities and a mission to build multidisciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration. After several months of planning and remodeling, the space officially opened in April and is already playing host to computational groups both local and national. This month, the big app arrives in the form of a 13-foot by 5-foot, high-definition display wall fed by six high-definition projectors. Multiple users will be able to touch and move rendered objects, shrink and expand and zoom in and out of landscapes and otherwise manipulate images like a gang set loose on a 12.4 million pixel, projected iPhone screen. Lombardi and her staff of computer scientists are interested in taking on research partners at Duke and can also offer qualified groups RENCi space for teleconferences and access to computing resources across the state. Contact information can be found on the RENCi site: <http://www.renci.org/about/duke.php>. The center will host its first public event May 1 at noon, the “Renaissance Bistro: Introducing the USC Shoah Foundation Visual History Archive.” More information is available on RENCi’s Shoah Web pages: http://www.renci.org/news/shoah_bistro2.php.

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Shoot me: Duke Digital Initiative embraces digital



video

Meet face-to-face with colleagues from around the world, from your laptop. Stream live events or record class projects from portable kits. Capture intricate details with high-definition video. Collaboration and innovation using digital media tools will be the Duke Digital Initiative (DDI) theme for the 2008–09 academic year, according to DDI’s coordinators in the Office of Information Technology (OIT) and the Center for Instructional Technology (CIT). Organizers said they are anticipating high interest for DDI, which starting next fall will offer faculty and students unprecedented access to digital video technology and technical expertise. Details of the program were announced on April 24 at the CIT’s Instructional Technology Showcase 2008: <http://cit.duke.edu/showcase/2008/>. DDI dates to the 2004–05 Duke iPod First-Year Experience and has since spawned a host of opportunities for learning-technology innovation at Duke. It is funded by the Provost’s Office. Besides a wide range of digital and HD video projects in the coming year, DDI will continue transitional support for some programs from past years, including grants to record lessons and instructional content; Web-based audio recording tools that work with Blackboard, Duke’s central course management system; the Tablet PC faculty loaner program; and the use of iPods for mobile classroom digital content. Frequently updated

information on DDI will be available now throughout the year at the DDI website, <http://www.duke.edu/ddi/>. Anyone wishing to receive DDI program information on a variety of video offerings as they become available may fill out an online DDI interest-form: <http://cit.duke.edu/help/ddi/interest.html>.

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NetID binge, NetID purge

OIT has cleaned up about 15,000 NetIDs that had no corresponding Duke affiliations. NetIDs and associated passwords grant Duke faculty, staff and students access to the Duke network, applications and other resources. “Affiliation” is one of the fields that is supposed to be filled out on a NetID application. When someone loses a Duke affiliation – for example, when a staff member leaves Duke or a student graduates – he or she is supposed to lose the ability to login to the Duke network. It didn’t always happen, however, since changes were made manually and were subject to human error. The process has now been automated and tied into Duke databases. The cleanup began after the Duke University internal audit in fall 2007, according to Klara Jelinkova, senior director of OIT's Shared Services and Infrastructure. Old NetID accounts can pose a security risk, as people with no affiliation with Duke could possibly gain access to the Duke network. There are essentially four groups of unaffiliated NetID holders: a few emeriti; about 3,000 people with pending passwords who never finished setting up their accounts; a few people with no associated email address and who have not been using their NetIDs; and the largest category, “everybody else.” Unaffiliated accounts aren’t deleted; they’re deactivated – meaning they can be reactivated if a person resumes an affiliation with Duke. This also protects against someone obtaining a NetID with the same name as a previous holder and perhaps inadvertently gaining access to parts of the Duke network granted to the previous owner. OIT has been careful about not deactivating accounts of people who might still be affiliated with Duke. It contacted unaffiliated account holders to determine their status. However, anyone encountering a problem accessing his or her NetID can contact the Service Desk at (919) 684-2200 or help@oit.duke.edu. As part of a new preventive maintenance procedure, Duke OIT is instituting an annual audit and cleanup of unaffiliated NetIDs. With the new automated system, there will be fewer of them.

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