

Information and Instructional Technologies (IIT) Sampling of 2008-2009 Projects

Regents Hall

Regents Hall was a dominant project for many IIT staff, consuming 1,856 hours of staff time (4.04% of our total work hours). Our role and responsibilities included designing the network and installing the building electronics, coordinating the move of over 450 computers and printers from the Old Science building to Regents, designing and overseeing the installation of teaching technologies in all the classrooms and labs, coordinating and managing the installation of the new card lock system, and assisting with the building management system that ultimately will produce data used for teaching. While the design and core infrastructure phases took place over a period of months, the actual installation phase was condensed from the original seven week transition period to less than three weeks, all during the most hectic part of the school year (the first weeks of class).

Google Apps for Education

Over the course of the year the entire St. Olaf community was transitioned from our St. Olaf managed system to Google Apps for Education. Google Apps for Education is an integrated suite of applications including Gmail, calendaring and document sharing that is easy to use and fully featured. This project will save the college nearly \$18,000 annually (plus staff time). The transition, including training and consulting services for the users, took 1,162 hours (2.53% of total work hours).

Student Accounting

This year IIT and Business Office staff began designing the new Student Accounting System. The anticipated "go live" date is scheduled for December, 2010. Even as we are developing the new system, IIT staff are making enhancements to the current system that can be migrated to the new system including a new feature that allows students to see their billing statements online via SIS. They also may pay their bills online using the TMS online payment processing system. Students can also authorize their parents to view these statements by using a unique URL that is emailed to them. Starting with the incoming class of 2009, students will no longer receive paper statements and instead all statements will be viewable online. 1,659 staff hours were logged to this project.

Teaching and Learning

IIT partnered with CILA to provide the second annual Faculty Instructional Technology Showcase. This event features faculty uses of innovative and smart uses of technology for teaching and learning. This event is a popular and well attended event. One fun project for the staff was to set up a video conferencing system for the Nursing department. The video conferencing system allowed the Nursing Department to have their joint faculty meetings with the faculty at Gustavus Adolphus College as well as teach courses remotely at the other campus. This experiment was highly successful and will be a role model for other uses of video conferencing on campus.

Video editing has become a hot topic on campus and IIT has been aggressively working to ramp up our services to meet the demand. We increased and enhanced the pool of equipment available for check out to both faculty and staff, developed new online help videos that teach students how to use the check out gear, and updated our documentation and web pages. Another unique project was setting up the St. Olaf Football organization video server so that they can edit footage from their games and then serve the games to the other colleges in the conference via the Internet. A particularly exciting project was the installation of the new Computer Science labs. The computers were configured to run an additional virtual instance of Linux which the CS Department uses for cluster computing. We also created a small utility to allow certain CS

instructors and students to administer these virtual computers. To highlight some of the technology projects, IIT now broadcasts these projects on IIT Channel 13 on the St. Olaf cable system. IIT also invested lots of staff and student time working with the Library staff to develop the St. Olaf digital asset management system and website using ContentDM. Overall, direct faculty support (not including classroom or student support) amounted to just over 8% of the total IIT staff work hours.

Central Systems

Over the course of the year almost 60% of the St. Olaf servers have been virtualized. This has dramatically cut down on our electrical, cooling, and maintenance costs. At the completion of the virtualization project, IIT will have reduced the number of physical servers from 40 down to 12. We also began the process of replacing our storage area network (SAN) with a new system which allowed us to replace the functionality of 6 physical servers and remove costly fiber channel connectivity in our data center. This year we also developed an Active Directory infrastructure on campus (including full synchronization with other local directories, as well as procedures for integrating all of the Macs on campus to the campus network via Active Directory), and continued preparation for the removal of Novell servers from our data center. Finally the systems team made further progress on the systems redundancy project by deploying two redundant network information servers (DNS, DHCP) – one locally and one at Carleton College.

Business Efficiencies

IIT is continually looking at ways to help improve campus efficiencies. Projects this past year include rolling out the new copier and copier accounting software that integrates with the College's one card system, writing a new workflow tool that provides online processing of documents and forms including digital authorizations (the first use of this application is the work authorization system for financial aid that eliminates the need to hand enter the 3800 student job descriptions), expanding ImageNow to the Business Office, and developing an Ole Card/Add Funds page to allow students/faculty and staff to add money to their Ole Card via the web. In addition we upgraded ImageNow, PowerFAIDS, and Recruitment Plus systems. We also provided technical support for the installation of the Advancement Division Campus Call Phoneathon system, rolled out a new digital signage system for Admissions and Student Government for marketing and informational purposes, created a new Admitted Students website and were instrumental in leading the initiative to digitize the paper forms previously sent to incoming students

IIT Operations

Josh Pioske was hired to serve as the Helpdesk manager. This is a new position created after the retirement of Carol Rhoades. Under Josh's guidance the Helpdesk will undergo a make over including expanded student consulting hours in the library, a new asset management/work order system, new on-line documentation, and a rigorous training program. A small IIT team has continued to work on pandemic planning including work on internal operations (back up personnel, documentation, etc.), as well as making plans for a possible distance education scenario.

Desktop Computing

As a way to reduce costs (operating, capital and staff costs) IIT has transitioned over to using the iMac hardware platform as the common platform for both Mac and PC users. This strategy allows us to use the most reliable hardware while also giving us the most flexibility to move computers about campus as needed. As part of this process we also tested and have begun implementing a new streamlined Mac software deployment system.