We are pleased to present the first edition of "OIT Decrypted", a newsletter from the Office of Information Technology. We hope you find this information interesting and useful. If you have any suggestions for future articles or other information to be added, please contact us at OIT@dccc.edu.

Welcome!

Office of Information Technology (OIT)

The Office of Information Technology, (OIT) was formed in December 2007. OIT reports to the Chief Information Officer and is composed of the combined staffs in the former departments of Administrative Computing, Academic Computing, Media Services and Web Services. The overall mission of the Office of Information Technology is to provide technical innovation and quality support for computer, network and telecommunication services for the DCCC community.

Within the OIT Technical Services division, there are three teams supporting server, operations/administration, network infrastructure, telecommunications and web services. In the OIT Support Services division, we have two teams that staff the Support Center, multi-media services, and Banner Applications. OIT also works closely with other technology support areas: Learning Center, Faculty Technology Services, Distance Learning and the Library.
What we did on our summer vacation

We have been having fun over the summer preparing for the start of the new academic year. There have been significant strides in improving the delaGATE web portal and the introduction of a “Class Cancellation” channel, described later in this newsletter. Check out the Desktop Support section in this newsletter to learn about the installation of lab and classroom computers throughout the College, and our integrated Support Center. To respond to ever-increasing demand, we have been upgrading our networking infrastructure significantly. We upgraded the phone equipment on all campuses and introduced the VoIP technology which consolidates phone and computer communications over a unified network. We have also begun replacing our wireless network authentication system and our wireless transmitters. You can learn more about that in the Infrastructure section. New computers, audio/visual equipment, VoIP phones and wireless equipment have been installed in the new Advanced Technology Center. We’ve also introduced the latest web access version of our Faculty/Staff email (Groupwise 8) which has a lot of useful enhancements (training will be available in the beginning of the term and as needed during the year). Groupwise 8 Client will be pushed out to workstations later this fall.
The delaGATE portal has made major strides since its inception. Faculty are now able to contact their students via email from their class lists. They can create groups for class discussions, enter their final grades and post to WebStudy just by logging in once to delaGATE. This one-stop shop has pertinent information for faculty as well as students and staff. Students will soon be able to log into delaGATE before leaving their house to check and see if one or all of their classes are cancelled. Support staff with access will be able to post class cancellations effortlessly just by logging into delaGATE and posting the (CRN), Course Reference Number. In the “My Student Records” tab, students will have a myriad of information at their fingertips. They will have access to register for classes, check their schedules, check to see if their financial aid has come through, make payments with credit cards and even obtain a degree evaluation. The delaGATE portal is not just for a specific group. This portal for students, faculty and staff is chocked full of useful information at a click of a mouse. Students can click on such tabs as Academic Resources to learn how to log into the DCCC wireless network as well as other pertinent educational topics. They can click on the Library tab to find research guides or the Campus Life tab to learn about the Career and Counseling Center services to clubs and organizations they can join.

delagate.dccc.edu

This year we will install over 300 new computer workstations replacing older equipment in classrooms, faculty offices and administrative areas. We have been working closely with the College deans to develop the list of upgraded/new software needs for installation in the labs and classrooms. We have also added a new computer classroom to the Marple campus (room 4163). The Marple campus Advanced Technology Center workstation installations are complete for staff, faculty, and students; this includes 4 state-of-the-art Apple IMACS in the reception area. We also completed the integration of the Academic and Administrative helpdesk into one unified support center. This helpdesk provides assistance to the DCCC community for hardware, software, connectivity or any related technology issues. The help desk is easy to access at one main location (Marple campus room 4274), at one main number (5211), or with one web-based centralized ticketing system (support.dccc.edu). We have expanded the OIT knowledgebase on the Information Technology Support Suite ticketing system. This ever-growing knowledgebase is designed to provide helpful information on the use of DCCC computer systems and other pertinent technology information. The OIT knowledgebase can be found at www.dccc.edu/oit/kb.
We have been working on upgrading our network infrastructure on several fronts. Last year we began updating the Hewlett Packard network switches that have been in place for the last 10 years to state of the art Enterasys network switches. We have moved to a 10GB (Gigabit) architecture at the core of the network and we are doubling network bandwidth capacity in each network closet as we upgrade to 2Gb (Gigabit). This upgrade has been planned to happen in 3 consecutive years. Phase 1 has been completed and the next phase has just begun. These new switches also allow for an additional layer of security which will be applied in the future.

We have also added redundancy to several key systems which will allow the Internet to be used during most server maintenance windows. We have implemented a new time keeping server that provides a central internal time source for all College IT assets. The net result is that your phone, PC and digital wall clock should all display the same time.

We are introducing Voice over IP (VoIP) technology leveraging our investment in the new network switches. The VoIP technology allows more flexibility and features, while reducing some of the complexity of managing our telecommunications systems. In September we will begin routing all phone calls between sites using our fiber optic network instead of Verizon. The Advanced Technical Center and the new Contact Center will be the first 2 areas to receive new VoIP phones. Training for these phones will be provided to the end users as the phones are installed. Caller ID for inbound calls was implemented at Southeast, Downingtown and Marple. We have completed the upgrades to our voicemail and central phone switch system and they are all up to date. As a result we will be rolling out several new features in the fall. Stay tuned.

A new wireless authentication system is on the way that will allow staff, faculty and students to login. These upgrades will make access faster and more secure. New features include wireless guest passes that will make it easier for visiting presenters, vendors or colleagues to connect to the Internet. This system will be in place in late September.

Tech Tips:

Want to transfer a call directly to voicemail? Hit the transfer button on your phone. Enter x3100. Type the number of the extension you wish to connect the caller to. Hit connect once the mail system repeats the extension you entered.

Did you know:

The DCCC Email systems receive over 7 million email messages a month, of which approx. 140k (2%) are legitimate email.

Approximately 44,000 DCCC student email accounts have been created since September 2008.

Did you know:
The DCCC telephone system handled over 43,000 inbound calls, 13,000 internal calls and 12,000 outbound calls last month.
Banner Document Management goes LIVE in Financial Aid

The Banner Document Management Suite (BDMS) went live in the Financial Aid office on June 15th. DCCC's decision to purchase BDMS was based on a need to streamline the Financial Aid verification process so that more students will successfully be awarded Financial Aid and will then attend DCCC. BDMS is a SunGard Higher Education software application that seamlessly integrates with our Banner system. BDMS allows paper documents to be scanned in batches into an electronic warehouse. Those scanned documents are then indexed so that they have meaning in our Banner system. For example, a student tax return document is scanned and then indexed using their DCCCid. This enables the Financial Aid team across remote campuses to immediately access all documents related to a specific student while they are working in the associated Banner forms. The Financial Aid management and staff took an active role in configuring this application to meet DCCC's needs. With their hard work, along with the Banner and Infrastructure teams, we were able to successfully hit the target go live date so that there could be a positive impact on Fall 2009 Financial Aid. It is also important to note that many other key business offices took part in the Needs Analysis phase of this project. The College Senior Management Team has already tentatively earmarked funds for several of those business offices to install BDMS. This will continue to be an evolving and exciting initiative for DCCC!

Green Computing at DCCC

Green is in at DCCC. We have always strived to be energy efficient here at the college but our efforts have been renewed with our recent STEM and TECH building projects and other enhancements to our infrastructure. The Office of Information technology is also “greening” its operations. We have already implemented a virtual server infrastructure which allows us to run multiple servers on a physical machine. Not only does this mean that we expend less energy to run multiple servers on one machine, we can also manage a greater amount of services for our students, faculty and staff. To put it simply, we can do a lot more with less! For the future we are looking at other ways to reduce our energy footprint such as configuring our machines to automatically fall asleep or shutdown when they are not in use and replacing our full sized desktops with thin clients that use only a fraction of the power while performing the same tasks. For more information about Green Computing at DCCC, please contact the Office of Information Technology.

Did you know:

As of mid-August the Financial Aid office has scanned almost 17,000 documents provided to us by new and returning students for the Fall 2009 semester.
e-portfolio

An e-portfolio or digital portfolio is a collection of electronic evidence assembled and managed by a user, usually on the web. Such electronic evidence may include inputted text, electronic files, images, multimedia, blog entries, and hyperlinks. An e-portfolio can be seen as a type of learning record that provides actual evidence of achievement.

An e-portfolio system should be available for use at DCCC around mid-Fall 2009. The e-portfolio will be part of the Webstudy LMS (Learning Management System), so instructors who use Webstudy will have access to the electronic portfolio, allowing students to add or include their projects, papers and other course deliverables within the e-portfolio.

Students will be able to create multiple e-portfolios and provide targeted access to potential employers, four year transfer schools, or class assignments. Students will retain access for one year after they leave DCCC. They will have options to move their content to another e-portfolio after this time.

Banner 8 is on the way!

DCCC uses Banner in every business office. Banner provides the vehicle for students to interact online with the College, such as registering for courses, paying bills, checking their Financial Aid, etc. DCCC has been running Banner 7 for several years. Banner 8 introduces many new features that will benefit students, faculty and staff. Banner 8 also introduces some behind the scenes technology & security enhancements that improve the integration between our SunGard Higher Education UDC (Unified Digital Campus) components that include Banner, Luminis (the delaGATE portal) and the Banner Document Management Suite.

Banner 8 has been installed by many Colleges and Universities in 2009, and is now a very stable platform. OIT is planning to begin the migration to Banner 8 later in the Fall semester. The migration effort will involve a significant amount of planning and testing. All business offices (as represented by the Data Custodian group) will participate in this planning and testing.

Let's go Banner 8!

Tech Tips:

Miss part of a voicemail?
Press 1 to rewind or Press 3 to fast forward.

Tech Tips:

You can access the latest DCCC phone directory information in the delaGATE web portal on the Maingate tab in the Directory Channel.

Here you can do a search for someone by name, extension or even by room number.
We always have lots of projects to keep us busy and the Fall promises to be even more exciting!

As mentioned above, we will continue a three-year plan to significantly upgrade our network infrastructure on the Marple campus with faster, more reliable and secure facilities.

The Banner administrative systems are also being upgraded to faster, more reliable servers. In addition to speeding access and delivery of administrative services, we are planning to move to hot backups which could completely eliminate the need to schedule outages over night for system maintenance.

At the same time, using the latest technology available now with the telecommunication upgrades we did over the summer, OIT will be partnering with the Office of Enrollment Management to implement a modern Contact Center system. The Contact Center will begin as a pilot operation and will ultimately revolutionize the way the College provides information and services to our phone-in customers.

Last, but by no means least, we will be working to outfit new computers, networking, audio/visual, wireless access and VoIP phones in the new STEM building.

In order to maintain the College infrastructure, OIT has two maintenance windows per month. During these outages, most systems are offline for a short period of time. You can find out what systems will be impacted by reviewing the outage notice that is sent out the Tuesday prior to each outage. If you have any questions or concerns about a particular outage, please do not hesitate to contact the OIT Support Center.

Maintenance Windows:
First and Third Fridays of the month from 5pm to 10pm.

Upcoming Maintenance Schedule:
Friday, September 4th
Friday, September 18th
Friday, October 2nd
Friday, October 16th
Friday, November 6th
Friday, November 20th

Tech Tips:
Did you know you can access your voicemail directly from outside the college?
Dial: 610-355-7165
Office of Information Technology
901 South Media Line Road
Media, PA 19063-1094
Marple Campus
Room 4213
(610) 359-4151
Phone Ext. 4151
Fax: (610) 359-4123
E-Mail: OIT@dccc.edu

We’re on the Web!
See us at: www.dccc.edu/oit

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OIT SUPPORT CENTER
Marple Campus
Room 4274
(610) 359-5211
Phone Ext. 5211
Fax: (610) 359-4123
Web address: support.dccc.edu

Hours
Mon-Thu...7am to 10PM    Saturday ...8am to 4 pm
Fri...7am to 5 PM        Sun...Closed

Tech Tips:
When in doubt... put it in a Support ticket.

View the OIT Knowledgebase at www.dccc.edu/oit/kb

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