WordPress now hosted by Edublogs

UD has offered WordPress Web sites and blogs to faculty, staff, and departments since 2010. At the end of November 2013, 885 sites and 1,715 site administrators or contributors were on the service.

WordPress allows clients to create a professional looking Web site without knowing HTML.

In September, IT migrated UD's WordPress service to the hosting service provided by Edublogs. Edublogs provides WordPress hosting to educational institutions worldwide, including Cornell University, Stanford University, University of Oregon, Baylor University, San Jose State University, and others.

Benefits of hosting WordPress through Edublogs include:

- A robust hosting environment for more uptime and faster response time.
- More access to advanced functions in WordPress—form generators, table support, etc. (Don't see what you're looking for? Ask us.)
- Built-in, site-wide spam control for forms and comments.
- Updated themes (40+ for all, with 100 in reserve) with more being added regularly.
- Mobile support—20 responsive design themes, plus a plugin (WPtouch) to make any site display properly on mobile screens.
- 10GB storage space for each site.
- Training resources—to learn what you need when you need to know it.

Any faculty member, employee, department, student, or Registered Student Organization (RSO) may have a WordPress site, subject to University policy. To create a basic site as an individual, log in at http://sites.udel.edu using your UDelNet ID and password. To request an official UD site or an RSO site, use the site request form.

For more information, including training documents and site help, see the UD WordPress Web site. Or for specific questions, send email to the IT Support Center.

Equipment Activity process moves online

The Equipment Activity process has moved online. Because many UD departments need to continually update the location of equipment, we have implemented several new Web Forms to make gathering information about changes in the status of tagged and non-tagged equipment more efficient and accurate.

Phase I of the project is now complete. The phase I form allows departments to submit changes on the status of equipment, including equipment that is junked, cannibalized, stolen, permanently transferred off campus, sold, or relocated on campus. The form also includes information regarding the proper sanitization of equipment that contains digital media.

If the services of UD Movers are required for tagged equipment and the appropriate selection is completed on the equipment activity form, an RFS facilities form will automatically be generated and sent to the equipment activity form originator's inbox.

Future phases of this form will include reporting of temporary off-campus relocation, fabrication of new equipment, and found equipment.

Accurate reporting of equipment, particularly tagged equipment, is of great importance to the University as well as to the sponsors of grants to UD. This online process provides a valuable mechanism to assist campus departments and central offices in timely and efficient tracking of the status of such equipment. To start an equipment activity update, go to www.udel.edu/webforms and choose "Equipment Activity."

IT Web Development (IT-WD) collaborated with Asset Management, Procurement Services, Research Office, Facilities, Facilities Accounting, IT Management Information Services (IT-MIS), and IT Network and Systems Services (IT-NSS) to define and enable this process. You may read more about these new services in this *UDaily* article.

Tech Fair 2013

A record number of faculty and staff (over 400) attended this year's Tech Fair. Participants had the opportunity to visit nearly 40 booths where they experimented with new technology, asked IT-related questions, and met with staff members who support technology on campus.

This year, six offices participated in the Tech Fair for the first time. Staff from Human Resources, Procurement, Institutional Research, Registrar, Disability Support Services, and Communications & Marketing attended to showcase their technology-related services. We heard many positive comments about the variety of topics these offices presented. Participants who completed our feedback survey had comments similar to the following:

- "The IBM Cognos demonstration was very helpful."
- "This is my first year as a staff member on campus, and I loved the Tech Fair! I hope to continue going to the Tech Fair for many more years and having engaging conversations with the knowledgeable IT team!"
- "The fair is a great way to see what's going on in educational technology. I find it very stimulating to learn what other faculty are doing and to present the specifics of my teaching to IT staff to see whether new solutions might apply."
- "It was very cool seeing the up-and-coming technology and learning more about what is available here at UD. It was great meeting those that I get emails from but have never met."
- "The Procurement Services table offered new "Works" enhancements with computer display. Staff was informing and welcoming."

If you attended this year's fair and haven't yet shared your experience with us, please fill out a brief questionnaire.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2014 IT Tech Fair.

Planned Outages

UDSIS outages
- UDSIS will be unavailable for an entire weekend in mid to late January due to a PeopleSoft tools upgrade. The exact dates of the outage will be announced on the CAS login screen.
- UDSIS will be unavailable for about one day on a weekend in late January or early February to apply pending patches and fix bundles from PeopleSoft. These patches will be applied one or two weeks after the tools upgrade.

Teaching and Learning

Faculty Transformation Grants update
The Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning (CTAL) and IT Academic Technology Services (IT-ATS) jointly funded 12 projects as part of the 2013 Transformation Grant program. An investment of $150,000 is being made in all seven colleges across 15 departments. All projects are being developed or implemented during the 2013-2014 academic year with a target completion at the end of spring 2014.

Winter Faculty Institute 2014

Save the date for the next Winter Faculty Institute (WFI) on January 9, 2014 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Trabant University Center. Dr. Bob Gonyea, associate director of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research, will lead with a keynote presentation and workshop. Dr. Gonyea coordinates research and reporting for the National Survey of Student Engagement. Early registration is available at the IT-ATS Web site.

Do you have a success story from your teaching? Want to share a compelling teaching technique that you've tried? Stories from UD faculty are one of the most valued and appreciated parts of the faculty institute.

We are collecting session ideas of all formats and lengths for WFI 2014. Send email to ats-info@udel.edu with your idea, and we'll follow up with you about the details.

WFI 2014 is co-sponsored by CTAL, the Institute for Transforming Undergraduate Education, and IT-ATS.

Delivering Learning Experiences Online course for faculty

"Delivering Learning Experiences Online" is a course designed to provide faculty who are considering teaching online courses with an authentic experience in online learning. Participants have the opportunity to practice using online tools and determine whether the tools might fit into their own course design. Faculty members are introduced to the ADDIE instructional design model, which they apply throughout the development of their own course.

Participants will:

- Learn the strengths and weaknesses of online instruction.
- Learn techniques to design course content for hybrid or fully online courses.
- Increase their understanding of appropriate technologies for teaching online.
- Learn instructional design methodology.
- Develop a community with other faculty.

Faculty interested in participating in the next offering of this course should contact IT-ATS (ats-info@udel.edu or 302-831-0640).

New UD Capture self-service room

ISE 208 is the home of a new UD Capture self-service room on campus. The room allows faculty members to self-schedule one hour blocks of time to record anything they'd like including exam review sessions, prerequisite material, homework review, or finishing a topic that wasn't completed during class. The studio features a simple interface to start and stop the recording, along with a microphone, laptop connection, and optional document camera.

Recordings are free for those who teach an official course at UD. This new room and the existing Gore 309 self-service room now give faculty two options for creating video content for their courses. Feedback on the room has been very favorable. Faculty like the convenience of scheduling the reservations themselves as well as UD Capture's ease of use. For more information or to schedule a block of time, visit the UD Capture Web site.

Business Systems

Recurring journal voucher update

General Accounting and IT-WD continue to make improvements to the Journal Voucher (JV), which is one of UD's most-used Web Forms. Recently, an additional JV type known as "Recurring Journal Voucher" was added in response to client requests. This new type allows for input of a JV that is to recur over sequential months with the same entries, thus saving time and improving accuracy for several units on campus. Instructions have been added to the help section on the JV form, or you may contact General Accounting at 302-831-2175 or general-accounting@udel.edu for additional information.

Purchasing business controls for colleges

IT-WD worked with Procurement and the College of Engineering to add a new set of features to the Requisition/Vendor Payment Request Web Form to improve the authorization and tracking of expenditures at the department and/or college level for credit card purchases less than $5,000. Units may now assign the speedtype(s) used for the expenditure to specific Web Form group baskets for final approval. The final approver may also opt to route the form to Procurement for additional handling. In October, Procurement offered a workshop on these features to credit card administrators from different departments and colleges. The addition of these business controls provides colleges with another tool to manage their daily business. If colleges or other UD departments are interested in using pre-purchase features, they should contact Procurement Services.

Development Office employs an automated recurring payment system

UD donors have the option of paying annual gift pledges in monthly installments charged to a credit card. Until recently, these charges were processed individually each month by Development Office staff. In October, a new feature of UD's payment processor was deployed to allow staff to enroll these donors in automated recurring payment plans. The new process streamlines gift recording—increasing production efficiency and minimizing errors in data capture. This collaborative effort involved the Development Office, IT-WD, Finance, and the CASHNet payment processor's team. Approximately 100 UD donors are now enrolled. In the coming months, the Development Office hopes to expand this service to donors through the call center and the online giving form.

Parent/guardian secure services

A year ago, UD enabled students to share information, such as their grades or class schedule, with parents and guardians. We are excited to report that about 14,000 undergraduate students have shared views with at least one or more parent/guardian—an adoption rate of over 80%. Parent/guardians may view student-authorized information on any device, including their tablet or smartphone. For more information on parent/guardian access, see this *UDaily* article or the Registrar's Parent/Guardian Secure Services Web site.

m.udel.edu update

UD's mobile site at m.udel.edu receives over 38,000 visitors a month. We believe many of these visitors are students because the "For student" area receives the greatest number of hits. Currently, all central student business is available for phones or tablets at m.udel.edu. "People Search" is the second most used service, and it provides 1-click access phone numbers and dynamic mapping for addresses. Last year, IT-WD upgraded to a feature-rich application based on the open-source framework called Kurogo. See this *UDaily* article for more details.

UDSIS updates

- IT-MIS worked with the UD Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS) and IT-NSS to automate the interface between UDSIS and the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), the government system that processes documents for foreign students. Every night, data from UDSIS is transferred to SEVIS and data from SEVIS is transferred to UDSIS. This work will save OISS staff dual data entry into UDSIS and SEVIS and will speed up processing foreign student documents. Future projects include automation for exchange students and English Language Institute (ELI) students, whose paperwork has been processed manually.
- Enhancements were made to the "Advising Appointments" feature in UDSIS that enables faculty to receive timely email reminders of upcoming appointments.
- Several changes were made to the processing of undergraduate applications data to allow data to be downloaded and imported from the Common Application. IT-MIS worked with IT-WD and Undergraduate Admissions on this project.
- Changes to the XML Transcript to enable automated processing of transcripts through the National Student Clearing House are underway.
- Work has started on a major UDSIS security overhaul to make it easier to audit access to different screens in the system and make it easier for the Access control group to administer

security in the future. IT-MIS is working closely with the Registrar's Office, Student Financial Services, Admissions, and a consultant on this project.

Oracle database software security

The Database Administration (DBA) team implemented the latest Oracle database software security patches to bring the software up-to-date and tighten security.

Oracle database access security

The DBA team has been working with the Web Forms application programmers to tighten direct PeopleSoft database access through various Web form applications. The concept of least privileged access is driving the process to narrowly define and allow access to PeopleSoft data. This process involves more clients and significant limits on individual application user accounts.

Peoplesoft Tools upgrade

The DBA team is planning, testing, and implementing the latest PeopleSoft Tools software upgrade for Student Administration. Schedules, impact assessments, and timelines are currently being worked out.

UDTime database

The DBA team is working with the application programming team to help establish a data archiving process to alleviate database disk space growth as the use of the software is expanded and refined. A large amount of data is generated and collected as part of the application. The application team is working with the software vendor as well to help design an appropriate retention policy.

UD Financials

- The IT-MIS Financials group applied a large group of bundles at the end of October to version 9.1 of PeopleSoft.
- The group also implemented a "bolt-on" process that the Procurement Office calls the automated Accounts Payable scrub. The process automatically creates an adjusting voucher when the Treasurer's Office changes the reporting chartfields.

Event Production and Media Services

IT University Media Services (IT-UMS) provided full production technical support for the live Engineering Week Kick Off webcast from Mitchell Hall on November 15, 2013. The event, which was a collaboration between the Department of Engineering, DuPont, IEEE USA, and the Discovery E Foundation, promoted the field of engineering.

IT-UMS designed the staging, lighting, and provided staff to control the audio and video for streaming. IT-ATS hosted the stream, which was viewed at remote sites around the country. The archived program may be viewed online.

Training Opportunities

LearnIT@UD

The merger of LearnIT@UD with Human Resources' Employee Education and Development has provided new opportunities to offer custom training. We are working closely with departments to deliver targeted training that includes technology as well as other skills.

Training can be tailored to a particular group's needs. For example, we provided staff in Procurement with a series of six Microsoft Excel workshops. According to Debra Reese, Director of Procurement, "The LearnIT-HR team tailored Procurement's Excel training series with the data sets we provided prior to the start of the first class. This enabled everyone involved to be working on a familiar, real-life analysis that will assist us in our everyday efforts."

To request customized training sessions or for more information about employee education, send email to employee-training@udel.edu or consult@udel.edu.

To see all training sessions and resources visit the LearnIT@UD Web site.

IT UnConference scheduled

The 4th annual IT UnConference is scheduled for January 23, 2014, 8:30 a.m.–noon in the Trabant University Center Multipurpose Room. For more information, see the event's Web site.

Personnel

New personnel

- **Christine Cheserone** accepted a position in IT-WD this October as a Web Developer II. She had previously been employed as a contract employee in IT-WD. Christine has over eight years of experience in Web development and design and will take a primary role in developing and supporting Web-based information services used by the University's core business processes.

- **AJ Emerling** accepted the position of Service Supervisor in Telephone Services in IT-NSS in September. He coordinates and manages the operational aspects of telecomm installations, moves, additions, changes, and repairs across campus.

- **Sarah Meadows** joined the IT-WD group as a Web Developer I in October. Sarah graduated from UD in spring 2013. Following graduation she worked as a part-time Web developer in IT-WD. Sarah will use her technical skills in Web design and social media as she works on the University's central Web-based information services.

- **Levi Sikes** began working in IT Client Support & Services (IT-CS&S) as a Technology Support Specialist in October. He is working at the IT Support Center and provides first-level support answering technology-related questions and analyzing clients' problems. Levi recently graduated from UD and honed his IT skills on campus while working as a student employee at the Student Multimedia Design Center and as a Web developer and graphics intern for the Office of Communications & Marketing.

Retiring personnel

Beth Miller, IT Resource Consultant II in IT-CS&S, will retire at the end of December after 20 years of service. Beth will be greatly missed by her many constituents around campus and her IT colleagues. Thank you, congratulations, and best wishes to our most recent retiree!

The IT Activity Report is published 4-6 times a year. Archived reports are located at http://www.udel.edu/it/activity-reports.html. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions for future articles, contact the IT Communication Group at it-commgroup@udel.edu.