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Columns

- Network Connection
- Link of the Month
- Helpdesk FYI
- ITC News
- RSS Matters
- Short Courses
- Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [Issues](#)

Benchmarks - January, 2010

[Campus Computing News](#)



The Shared Services Initiative

By [Dr. Maurice Leatherbury](#), Acting Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer

The following status report is my attempt to answer some of the questions I've received from across the campus about the impact of the Shared Services Initiative on UNT's IT departments.

[Read more](#)

[Talon High-Performance Computing System now Available for UNT Researchers](#)



By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Director of Academic Computing and User Services

The Talon Research High-Performance Computing System is now available for use by UNT researchers whose research or scholarship requires use of computationally-intensive applications.

[Read more](#)

[Computing Resources at UNT - Finding Your Way Around](#)



By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* OnlinEditor*

Welcome, or welcome back, to UNT! If you're new, or if you've just been away for awhile, it is our hope that this article will serve as a handy starting point to get you acquainted (or re-acquainted) with the resources that are available to you here at the University.

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[EDUCAUSE Southwest Regional](#)

By the Numbers

Classes/events per day (Jan. 14th-24th) scheduled into the 230 Classroom Support Services ([CSS](#)) supported rooms:

- 29 - Thur. Jan. 14
- 41 - Fri. Jan. 15
- 4 - Sat. Jan. 16
- 1 - Sun. Jan. 17
- 6 - Mon. Jan. 18
- 1,246 - Tues. Jan. 19
- 1,281 - Wed. Jan. 20
- 1,216 - Thur. Jan. 21
- 615 - Fri. Jan. 22
- 47 - Sat. Jan. 23
- 1 - Sun. Jan. 24

Conference 2010

[Register NOW!](#)

There is still time to register for the upcoming conference at the early registration rate. The theme this year is "The Ever-Evolving Role of IT."

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Today's Cartoon

Click on the link above for an information age laugh.



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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#)

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The Shared Services Initiative

By [Dr. Maurice Leatherbury](#), Acting Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer

The following status report is my attempt to answer some of the questions I've received from across the campus about the impact of the Shared Services Initiative on UNT's IT departments. The Shared Services [Initiative](#), announced by the UNT Board of Regents last [November](#), is a "a collaborative system-wide governance model for **Information Technology** and **Human Resources** functions." Here is where I believe we are today:

- The Shared Services Council has been appointed and consists of the Chancellor, the Presidents of the UNT institutions, the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services, the System and university chief financial officers, the chief academic officers of the universities, and the future Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The 14-member Council will have its first meeting on Tuesday, January 19th.
- A job description for the new System CIO is being drafted and will be discussed by the Shared Services Council when it meets. Once the job description is complete, a search will be conducted to fill the position.
- A 140-page report on the organization, funding, and staffing of IT units across our campus was sent to the System on Monday, January 11th. I'm deeply appreciative of the hard work so many people put in to get the data collected and sent to us for the report.
- The second report on key IT and HR projects and on existing shared IT services was sent on Friday, January 15th.
- As I announced in [November](#), we are proceeding with the consolidation of six administrative units that provide desktop computing support to the campus: ABN, Student Development, Facilities, CITC desktop support, Fiscal Affairs, and the Microcomputer Maintenance Shop. I have selected Abraham John to head that unit, and he starts his new duties next Tuesday, January 19th. We'll spend about a month gathering information and making plans about how best to make the transition to CITC operation of the combined support unit, at which time we'll formally reassign staff and move budgeted amounts where appropriate.
- I've been asked several times recently about plans to consolidate academic support units (i.e., college and school desktop support units.) No plans are being made for such a consolidation. However, if you're in one of those support units and think that you could provide better or more efficient service to your faculty and staff by partnering with some other support unit, by all means contact that unit and initiate a conversation about how to make it happen.

I realize there are a host of questions about what's going on with the System IT initiative, but it's just too early in the process to have answers to those questions. In the meantime, I know that everyone working in IT at UNT will keep doing what they do so well - providing superior IT services to the UNT community.





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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [Talon High-Performance Computing System now Available for UNT Researchers](#)

Talon High-Performance Computing System now Available for UNT Researchers

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Director of Academic Computing and User Services

The Talon Research High-Performance Computing System is now available for use by UNT researchers whose research or scholarship requires use of computationally-intensive applications. As reported previously, the Talon cluster was [installed](#) starting in July of 2009 and had its [official inauguration](#) in November of 2009. Since July, much work has gone into preparing the system for production use, including installation and configuration of hardware and system software as well as installation of the scientific computing software currently in use by UNT researchers on other HPC resources. Also during that time, usage policies for central HPC resources, including Talon, have been developed in consultation with an advisory committee of research faculty. That committee will continue to advise the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and the Vice President for Information Technology regarding use and development of central HPC resources.

HPC usage [policies](#) and other information can be found on the newly-constructed UNT HPC Initiative [website](#), along with general [information](#), central HPC resource [specifications](#), and frequently asked [questions](#) about central HPC use. UNT Researchers may now apply for access to Talon by completing the HPC account request form linked from the User Information [page](#) of the web site.

Access to the account request form requires authentication with a UNT EUID and password. By policy, access may be granted to UNT graduate or undergraduate students who are working with faculty or other principal investigators for which access has been approved. Before student accounts are granted, application must be made by the faculty member with which a student's research is associated. Before applying for an HPC account, it's advisable for users new to the use of HPC resources to consult with Academic Computing and User Services HPC [staff](#) as to whether their research or research software can be supported on UNT's central HPC resources. HPC staff can be contacted by e-mailing hpc-admin@unt.edu.

Availability of the Talon HPC system greatly increases the computation resources available to UNT researchers. Academic Computing and User Services HPC staff are pleased to be able offer this new system and look forward to assisting in increasing computational research productivity consistent with UNT's strategic goals.



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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [Computing Resources at UNT - Finding Your Way Around](#)

Computing Resources at UNT - Finding Your Way Around

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Online* Editor*

Welcome, or welcome back, to UNT! If you're new, or if you've just been away for awhile, it is our hope that this article will serve as a handy starting point to get you acquainted (or re-acquainted) with the resources that are available to you here at the University. Students, faculty and/or staff members should all benefit from the information that follows.

When all else fails ...

If you have a computing question and/or problem and can't think of who to contact or where to look for a solution, just remember this: **Contact the Helpdesk**

The Computing and Information Technology Center (CITC) Helpdesk is located in room 119 of the Information Sciences Building ([ISB](#)), directly beside the Science and Technology Library. Their hours are listed on the Helpdesk website: <http://helpdesk.unt.edu/>. Besides stopping by or searching for answers on the website, you can call the Helpdesk at 940-565-2324 or send mail to helpdesk@unt.edu.

Speaking of the Helpdesk, *Benchmarks Online*, publishes a column each month called "Helpdesk FYI." This month's article is [Connecting to your Work Email via Exchange on your iPhone](#). Following is a selection of articles published within the past year. Perhaps one of these topics is something you've been wondering about:

- [Preparing Outlook for Christmas](#) (Using Outlook's Out of Office Assistant)
- [Connecting to EagleConnect using Thunderbird](#)
- [Using Android E-mail for Work](#)
- [Using Mailhost as your Outgoing Mail Server \(SMTP\)](#)
- [EagleConnect Redirect](#)
- [Creating an Appointment in EagleConnect](#)
- [EagleConnect for Alumni and Retirees](#)

New students are probably familiar with the **Tour of Student Computing Services at UNT**. There are lots of topics touched on that are of interest to non-students also. Check out the website:

<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/studenttour/>

General Access Computer Lab System

The UNT General Access Computer Lab System is a collection of 14 computer labs spread across the UNT Denton campus, with one lab in Dallas. They have been set up to provide computing to the University community. The [GACL website](#) states:

The labs are intended to meet the general academic computing needs of UNT students. These labs are supported and maintained primarily through a portion of the Technology Use Fee.

Students with a valid UNT photo ID card may use any General Access Lab except where noted.

A list of labs and their locations and operating hours is available from the [GACL website](#). The lab in ISB 104 is an **Adaptive Lab**. As the [website](#) states:

The University of North Texas Academic Computing Services General Access Lab is located in the Science and

Technology Library in ISB 104. The mission of this lab is to provide general services to the UNT community with an emphasis on the special features that Academic Computing Services has to offer including helpdesk support and research assistance. Additionally the ACS lab is the designated adaptive lab on campus providing state-of-the-art adaptive equipment for those who need it. For more information about adaptive services on the UNT campus visit the Office of Disability Accommodation at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>.

Computer Based Training

Due to the rising costs of training, shrinking budgets and changing technology, computer-based training at UNT is in a state of transition. The Computer-Based Training [website](#) has a list of training resources currently available to the UNT community.

Online Learning/UNTeCampus

For students, a good starting place is found on the [student tour](#). Faculty will want to visit the Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign (CLEAR) [website](#) and/or the Center itself. The recent *Benchmarks Online* article, [How Green is Our Learning?](#), about, in part, Blackboard Vista (our centrally-supported learning management system), may be of interest to faculty members. **iTunes U at UNT** is a new offering that has lots of people excited. Read all about it [here](#).

Other Items of Interest

- **Gartner Research** -- UNT students, faculty, and staff have access to Gartner Research at: <https://gartner.unt.edu/> CITC also sponsors direct access to Gartner researchers. For more information see [Gartner Research Services](#).
- **Campus Subscription to Higher Education Newsletters**-- UNT has negotiated a group online subscription allowing campus members free access to the *Online Classroom* & *The Teaching Professor* higher education newsletters produced by Magna Publications. Click [here](#) for more information.
- **Statistical and Research Support Services** -- "The mission of the Research and Statistical Support (RSS) group at the University of North Texas (UNT) is to facilitate access to current research tools and statistical methodologies and to promote these methods to the research, instructional, and administrative communities at UNT; to encourage a collaborative research environment for researchers through the development and use of innovative computing technologies; to provide training and consultation in the appropriate use of statistical methodologies and computer software; and to facilitate access to data collection and data management technologies." [From the [Research and Statistical Support website](#)]. The RSS Group publishes a monthly column in *Benchmarks Online*.
- **[CITC Data Management Services](#) - Services include:**
 1. **Exam Grading/Analysis:** NCS @Forms 4521 & NCS @Form 106173, and (New!!) SCANTRON @ Form 882-E. Exams can be processed within 15 minutes while you wait, or you can drop off and have results e-mailed for your convenience. Analyses' include Detailed Item Analysis, Frequency Distribution, and General Test Analysis.
 2. **Research Projects:** Key-Entry of survey or research projects (grad student dissertation research allowed!) into a custom data file, ready for analysis.
 3. **Scannable Form Design:** Customized scannable survey forms created using any current form, or just a new idea! Our service includes scanning the completed forms into a data file, ready for analysis, quick and easy!
 4. **Faculty Evaluation Processing:** Scan, edit and process UNT departmental faculty evaluations. Standardized reports provided: Department Overall, By Instructor-Course-Section, and By Instructor. An Excel data file will be provided to run any customized reports desired.

Location: ISB (Information Science Bldg.), north entrance, Room 140.

For more information contact: Joann.Luksich@unt.edu 940.369.7416

- **High-Performance Computing Initiative** - For the latest information on the High-Performance Computing

Initiative, see the [article](#) in this issue of *Benchmarks Online*. The HPC [website](#) states: "The Academic Computing and User Services division of the CITC supports multiple clusters of 64-bit processor systems running Linux for compute-intensive scientific research. Cluster computing provides dedicated systems for concurrent processing of jobs in a batch environment."

- **Information Security** -- "The Information Security Team helps protect UNT Information Technology assets from misuse, abuse, and unauthorized access. The mission of the Information Security Team is to assist and collaborate with UNT administrative, academic, and student communities to help assess, implement, and maintain information security needs." [From the [Information Security Website](#)]. **UNT Faculty, Staff, and Students are required to read the Security Handbook**. Links and further information can be found on the Information Security [homepage](#).

- **Campus VPN** -- The Campus VPN is an interface that will allow you to connect remotely to on-campus resources. For more information click [here](#).

- **Free or cheap software**
 - **McAfee VirusScan** -- [Free download](#) or \$3 purchase.

 - **Microsoft Campus Agreement** -- UNT has had an agreement with Microsoft for a number of years that allows us to distribute various Microsoft products to employees of the University. According to the agreement, you can "use the software for school-related purposes on a personally-owned computer or an institution-owned computer designated for your exclusive use" and you must remove the software from your home machine if you leave UNT. ***This agreement does not cover students unless those students are also UNT employees. UNT Health Science Center employees CAN purchase their software on the HSC campus via the [ITS Helpdesk](#).***

 Employees wishing to install these products on University-owned computers should contact their [Network Manager](#) for further instructions. Contact the UNT Bookstore at 940-565-3185 for additional information about the Microsoft products available to faculty and staff and/or visit www.unt.bkstr.com.

 - **The Microsoft Home Use Program** -- Reduced price software for faculty/staff [home use](#).

 - **Student discounts in the UNT Bookstore** - As described on the [StudentTour](#).

 - **DreamSpark** -- UNT students can take advantage of DreamSpark, Microsoft's program that provides free development software to students. Click [here](#) for more information.

 - **Free/Open Source software** -- Two articles on that topic from the RSS staff:
 1. [Free != Cheap](#): Open Source and/or Free Alternatives in Statistical Analysis.
 2. [Free your research](#): Open source and other alternatives to cut your costs and improve productivity as a graduate student.

 - **Photoshop Express** - [Free Online 'Photoshop' is a pretty good deal](#).

**Various versions of this article are published each semester. -- Ed.*





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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [EDUCAUSE Southwest Regional Conference 2010](#)

EDUCAUSE Southwest Regional Conference 2010

There is still time to register for the upcoming conference at the early registration rate. The theme this year is "The Ever-Evolving Role of IT."

Click on the graphic below to register for the upcoming conference:



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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [network-connection](#)

Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Director of Academic Computing and User Services

On the Existence of Silicon Heaven

Recently, Dan Woods, writing for [Forbes](#), expressed a virtual sense of [loss](#) upon the service retirement of a server he had been administering for a number of years. He laments the loss of his server as a "physical shape" and being left with only "the idea of the server" as "the world becomes more part of the cloud." Perhaps it would be some consolation to point out that his old server was only the vessel on which his intellectual property was conveyed and that his service and information lives on having travelled to his new hosting company.

It's not exactly reincarnation, since it's likely that the new server is a virtual entity itself, a software simulation of the physical configuration of processor memory and disk which itself is hosted, together with other server entities, on any number of actual physical servers that form the plane of existence for multiple operating system instances forming the information lifescape that is the Internet. It isn't the hardware that is important any more, but rather the service that's provided. In a sense, there's a spiritual metaphor in the fact that the essence of a service (web site) can survive beyond one physical instance and be perpetuated across generations of hardware. Almost makes you believe in [silicon heaven](#).

Virtual inevitability

Those of us who have administered or still administer Internet servers understand the progression from the physical to virtual that has been happening over the last 10 years or more. The e-mail server that was so critical to so many and would demand your immediate attention at the slightest hiccup, has long since been replaced by a slice of someone else's data center. E-mail exists as a giveaway to attract attention to Internet advertising and to win a loyal user base. Likewise, the Apache web server that you hand-configured has had its content migrated to a Drupal cloud somewhere. The [inevitability](#) of the cloud seems unavoidable.

As computing becomes more mobile, it's an advantage to have your virtual "stuff" in the cloud and accessible regardless of location or platform. Why use e-mail on one physical server someplace when Google's GMail is ubiquitous wherever you can connect and regardless of your hardware. A laptop in a coffee shop, a netbook with a [WiMax](#) connection, or a phone with cellular data service all are equal in the eyes of the Google-net. And it goes beyond e-mail. Google has [announced](#) that their "Docs" service will allow you to upload and access any type of file. Previously this service had been restricted to files created in Google's online applications. Google's not alone. Microsoft provides a similar service with it's [SkyDrive](#).

Information lives on ...

So perhaps it's time to escape the physical bonds of earthly servers and ascend into the virtual heavens, or at least the clouds. Information lives on regardless of the format in which it is stored. An oral lore transcribed to a written language, translated and printed on paper, and then scanned and stored on digital media maintains it's meaning upon reinterpretation by the human brain. The information lives on regardless of the medium.

"No silicon heaven'? Where would all of the calculators go?"





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ABOUT BENCHMARK ONLINE SEARCH ARCHIVE SUBSCRIBE TO BENCHMARKS ONLINE

Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [link-of-month](#)

Link of the Month



The CITC **Helpdesk** is one of those "need to know about" facilities on campus. As the "Computing Resources for Students" [brochure](#) states, "If you don't know who else to call, or when no one else can help you with your computer on campus, call or send mail to the Helpdesk: **940-565-2324** helpdesk@unt.edu."

The Helpdesk is located in the Information Sciences Building ([ISB](#)), Room 119, directly across from the Science and Technology Library. They welcome walk-in visitors during the hours found [here](#). Visit the Helpdesk website for the latest information on computing-related issues. FAQs and other information is also available for specific groups (Students, Faculty & Staff, Retirees, Visitors) by clicking on the appropriate link in the Helpdesk banner.

<http://helpdesk.unt.edu/>



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Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#)

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- [UNT System](#)
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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [irc-news](#)

IRC News

Minutes provided by Susan Richroath Recording Secretary*

The IRC -- unofficially now known as the INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL (ITC) -- is currently undergoing a reorganization, see the May 20, 2008 [minutes](#) for more information.**

No IRC/ITC minutes were available for publication this month.

*For a list of IRC Regular and Ex-officio Members click [here](#) (last updated 12/12/08). Warren Burggren is now the Chair.

**DCSMT Minutes can be found [here](#).



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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [rss-matters](#)

RSS Matters

Research and Statistical Support University of North Texas

A Retrospective of Recent RSS News

Link to the last RSS article here: [Splus 8.1 and Stata 11 are now available](#) - Ed.

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* *Online* Editor

The RSS staff is [short-handed](#), it is the beginning of a new semester, and therefore we provide you with a look back at RSS articles from the recent past. Enjoy!

- [Statistics and Adaptive Software Updates](#) -- This wasn't printed as an RSS article, but it contains a lot of information about statistical software.
- [Splus 8.1 and Stata 11 are now available](#) -- Last month's RSS column.
- [Fall 2009 RSS Software Update](#) -- SPSS, SAS, Stata, MATLAB, S-PLUS, LISREL, and EViews are discussed here.
- [Installing MATLAB For 32 Bit and 64 Bit Processors On Ubuntu](#)
- [Moving On Up: SPSS 15 Bids Adieu, PASW Statistics 17 Waves Hello](#)
- [Announcing SAS 9.2 For Windows](#)
- [PROC TWEET: Using SAS to Analyze Twitter](#)
- [Data Mining Options for the UNT Community](#)
- [Free your research: Open source and other alternatives to cut your costs and improve productivity as a graduate student](#)
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As always, visit the RSS Website - <http://www.unt.edu/rss/> - for FAQs and other information, including staff contact information.



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A green
light to
greatness.

The UNT logo is a circular emblem with a green background and a white grid pattern. The letters "UNT" are prominently displayed in the center in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

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Columns

Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

ITC News

RSS Matters

Short Courses

Staff Activities

[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [short-courses](#)

Short Courses

The fall Short Courses are over and the spring courses haven't been scheduled yet. One of our RSS staff members who regularly taught SPSS courses [has left](#) the University, and another one is transitioning into a new position within ACUS. We hope to have a new staff member hired and classes scheduled soon, most likely starting sometime in February. Surf over to the [Short Courses](#) page to see the classes that were offered last semester and will likely be offered in the future.

Special classes can always be arranged with the RSS staff. See "Customized Short Courses" below for further information. Also, you can **always** contact the RSS staff for one-on-one [consultation](#). **Please read the [FAQ](#) before requesting an appointment though.**

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

In addition to the ACS Short Courses, which are available to students, faculty and staff, staff and faculty members can take courses offered through the [Human Resources Department](#) (they have a new comprehensive training curriculum), and the [Center for Learning Enhancement, Assessment, and Redesign](#). Additionally, the [Center for Achievement and Lifelong Learning](#) offers a variety of courses, usually for a small fee.

EIS training is [available](#). Questions or comments relating to EIS training should be sent to EIStrn@unt.edu.

Microsoft E-Learning

Microsoft E-Learning courses are now available for **faculty and staff** via our UNT-Microsoft Campus Agreement. Please contact Claudia Lynch at lynch@unt.edu for instructions on accessing this training.

Microsoft Outlook Training and more

The Messaging Systems Group has all sorts of useful information on their website, including [training information](#).

Central Web Support

Consult Central Web Support for assistance in acquiring "Internet services and support." As described on their [website](#):

CWS provides Internet services and support to UNT faculty, staff and students. Services include allocating and assisting departments, campus organizations and faculty with web space and associated applications. Additionally, CWS assists web developers with databases and associated web applications, troubleshooting problems, support and service.

CLEAR (was Center for Distributed Learning)

[CLEAR](#) offers courses especially for Faculty Members. A list of topics and further information can be found [here](#).

The center also offers a "Brown Bag" series which meets for lunch the first Thursday of each month at Noon in Chilton 245. The purpose of this group is to bring faculty members together to share their experiences with distributed learning. One demonstration will be made at each meeting by a faculty member with experience in distributed learning. More information on these activities can be found at the [CLEAR Website](#).

UNT Mini-Courses

There are a variety of courses offered, for a fee, to UNT faculty, staff and students as well as the general public. For additional information surf over to <http://www.unt.edu/minicourses/>

Information Security Awareness

The UNT Information Security team has been offering Information Security Awareness [courses](#) to all UNT faculty and staff. Topics to be covered will include workstation security, sensitive data handling, copyright infringement issues, identity theft, email security, and more.

For more information, or if you would like to request a customized course to be taught for your department, contact Gabe Marshall at x4062, or at security@unt.edu.

Also, Information Security Training is [now available](#) through Blackboard Vista (formerly known as WebCT).

Alternate Forms of Training

Many of the General Access Labs around campus have tutorials installed on their computers.

See <http://www.gal.unt.edu/> for a list of labs and their locations. The Willis Library, for example, has a [list of Tutorials and Software Support](#).

The [Training Website](#) has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered, although due to the rising costs of training, shrinking budgets and changing technology, computer-based training at UNT is in a state of transition. For up-to-date information on CBT at UNT, see the CBT [website](#).

Gartner Research Services

Way back in 2006 we announced [Gartner Core Research Services Now Available to the UNT Community](#). Our subscription for Gartner services has always included **all** UNT faculty, students, and staff. All you need to do to access the subscription is to log into the UNT Gartner portal page at <https://gartner.unt.edu/>. Gartner is now offering "Webinar Wednesdays." To view all the offerings see: <http://my.gartner.com/portal/server.pt?tb=webinarcalendar> You can also listen to Gartner podcasts here: http://www.gartner.com/it/products/podcasting/asset_137461_2616.jsp.

State of Texas Department of Information Resources

Another possible source of training for staff and, perhaps, faculty members is the Texas Department of Information Resources. A look at their Education and Training [website](#) reveals some interesting possibilities. For example, under [Conferences, Briefings, and Events](#) is a "Microsoft Training Series" described as "free training classes ... delivered by Microsoft and hosted by DIR as part of the Technology Today Series (TTS)."



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[Home](#) » [issues](#) » [2010-01](#) » [staff-activities](#)

Staff Activities

Transitions

New Employees:

- **Dominique Dockery**, Computer Operator, Computer Operations (Admin & Compliance), (part-time).
- **James Daniel Ziegler**, Security Intern, Information Security (part-time).
- **Kristina Randolph**, IT Specialist, EIS Security Administration (AIS).

No longer working in the Computing and Information Technology Center:

- **Jana Crews**, Computer Systems Manager, Financial Aid & Scholarships Systems (AIS) **retired** -- very quietly -- at the end of last month. We wish her the best but she *will* be missed!

Changes, Awards, Recognition, Publications, etc.

Congratulations!

- **Joey Liechty**, "Popular DJ and computer support specialist," was [profiled](#) in *InHouse* this month. He won the **2009 Dallas Observer's Best DJ award**.



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Columns

- Network Connection
- Link of the Month
- Helpdesk FYI
- ITC News
- RSS Matters
- Short Courses
- Staff Activities

[Home](#)

Today's Cartoon



From "Today's Cartoon by Randy Glasbergen", posted with special permission.
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