Benchmarks Online

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"Expanded Adaptive Facilities Available for the UNT Community" Read all about it!

IMSP Remote Address Book and Options Service to be Discontinued

As of September 1, 2002, the address book and options server will no longer be available. If you wish to continue to use Simeon, you will need to save your options and addressbook entries to your local computer. Instructions on how to do this are contained within.

Renew PRAS Accounts Now

If you purchased a Premium Remote Access Service subscription for the summer -- or had paid through the summer -- and you want to keep it, you will need to renew it very soon.

Interim General Access Lab Hours

Frequently, the time between the end of Summer II and the beginning of the fall semester is a time that many of the General Access Labs on campus use to update facilities, etc. The General Access lab hours during this period are listed in this article.

UNT General Access Labs

Computing Center

About Benchmarks Online

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Find out what they've been up to this summer.

Usability Guidelines for Web Sites

Kenn Moffitt, Director of University Online Communications, shares his expertise on Web site usability.

Statistical Application Installation

If you are a user of statistical resources on campus, the information in this article will matter little to you - technically - but it will matter a lot to your network manager who will be installing software to your machine from a different location. It is good, therefore, for all parties to be aware of the new procedures.

TODAY'S CARTOON

Click on the title above for an information age laugh.

Don't forget to check out our monthly columns. This month's topics:

- **RSS Matters** -- "What's good about Stata?" Answers within.

- **SAS Corner** -- "What is Hot Fix?" Not a solution to your dating problems, but maybe something almost as good.

- **The Network Connection** -- "Standards" Read about the "standards battleground" and find out what it means to you.

- **Link of the Month** -- "UNT's Anti-Virus Web Site" Check it out!

- **WWW@UNT.EDU** -- "Breaking News in Web World"

- **Short Courses** -- The Academic Computing Services (ACS) short courses are over for the summer. Other training is still available. Check out this article for more

information.

- **IRC News** -- Minutes of the Information Resources Council are printed here when they are available. June and July minutes are included on this page.

- **Staff Activities** -- New employees, people who are no longer employed at the Computing Center, awards and recognitions and other items of interest featured here.

Research and Statistical Support
University of North Texas

RSS Matters

Click here to read last month's RSS Matters.

What's good about Stata?

By Dr. Karl Ho, Research and Statistical Support Services Manager

The RSS office has recently expanded our arsenal by adding one more statistical package. Stata is a "general-purpose statistical package that does all of the textbook statistical analyses" (2001 Kolenikov). So, Why Stata? Some may ask, considering the three general stat. packages already on board (namely, SAS, S-Plus and SPSS). Well, that is what I will be addressing in this article. But before I introduce the features of this software, let me briefly talk about our general strategy in acquiring software for the RSS office.

First, our primary goal at RSS is to support researchers on campus. So, we constantly solicit suggestions of new software that best supports latest research procedures and data analyses. However, we need to have a general interest to justify a centrally supported package, i.e., we will have a large enough group of users who will enjoy the benefits of the new acquisition.

Second, to keep us on the cutting edge, we work hard to keep up-to-date on development of methods and research-related software. Certain packages are already well-developed and have strategies on updating procedures to catch up with latest development. But some specialized procedures can only be developed by users and researchers who write their own scripts. We intend to target at these software that support an "open" policy that allows support from a network of advanced users who can supply add-on scripts.

Third, the software has to have an affordable option for students purchase. Given the decentralization of computers and new modes of distributed learning, we have to take into account an option that allows students to acquire the software for home use at a reasonable price.

Last but not least, the price of software must justify the cost in the long run. We cannot support a software, regardless how excellent it is, that raises maintenance prices two- or three-fold in a few years. So, this new package must be cost-effective.

After multiple requests from customers and careful consideration, we decided to acquire Stata, for not merely the reasons stated above, but also a long list of features that support almost all statistical procedures and data analysis. Moreover, it provides ample room for user development. Regarding cost, the perpetual license price is much lower than what we are currently paying for other packages. Also, an affordable package is in place for faculty and student purchase (*).

So, what is Stata?

To give a not-so-general answer, I shortlist some key features that make Stata different from SPSS, SAS and S-Plus.
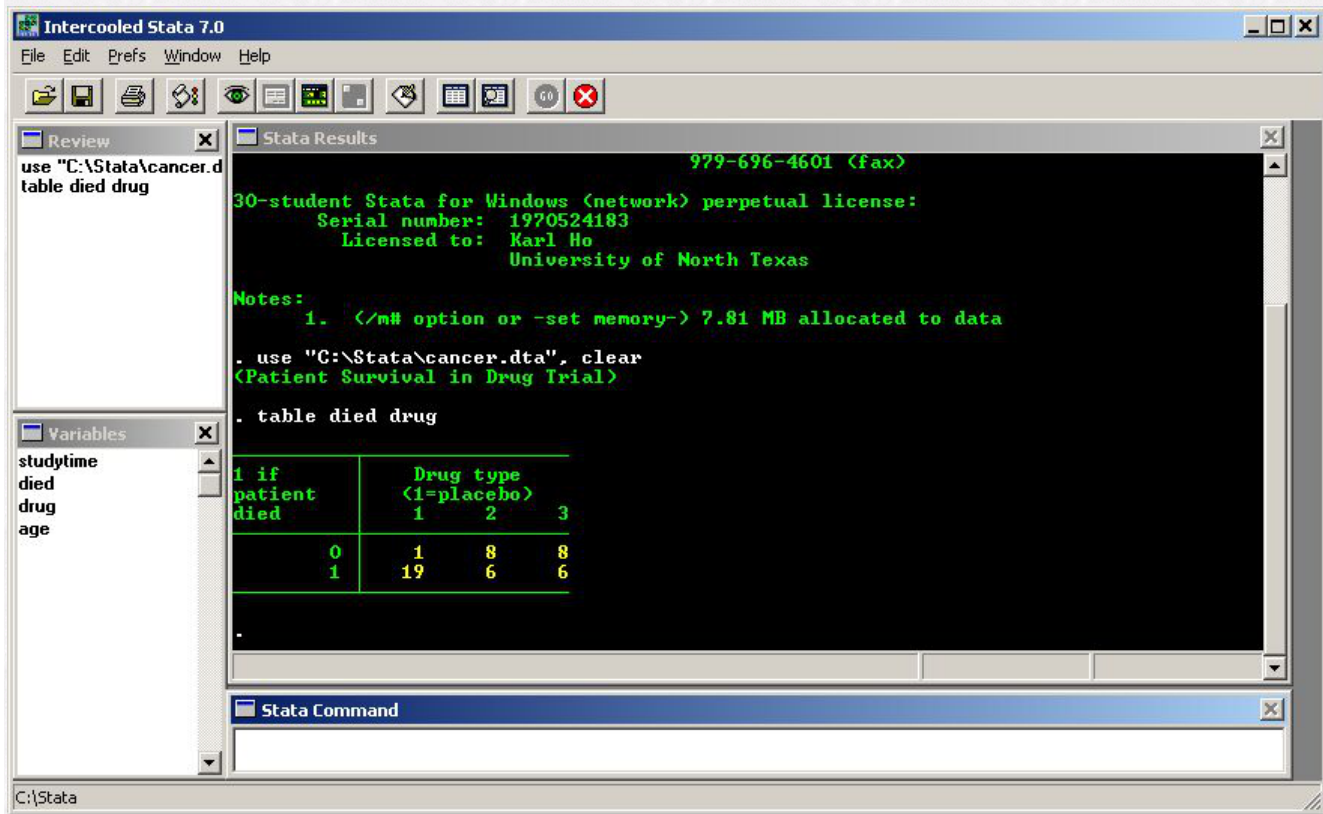
1. Command-based operation

Stata is primarily designed for daily operations for researchers. Procedures are run in commands at a prompt (.):
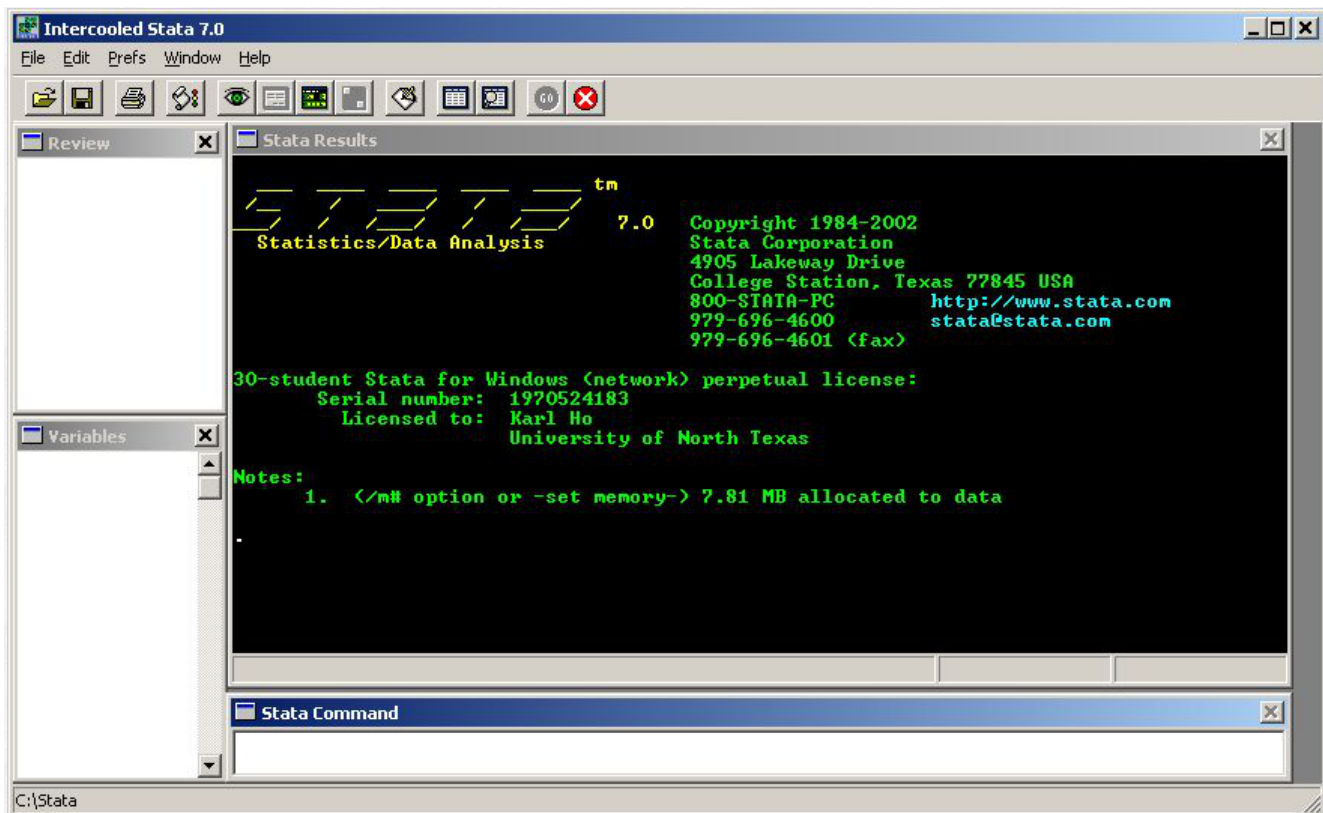
For example, the following command generates a crosstabulation of two variables:

table died drug

All output can be easily cut and paste to other environment. The above table is in ASCII and can be copied and pasted as follows:

```
----------------------------
 1 if | Drug type
patient | (1=placebo)
died | 1 2 3
---------+----------------
```

```
0  |  1  8  8
1  |  19 6  6
   -----------------------------
```

Simple as it is, it is fast in generating output, even graphics and reiteration-intensive procedures such as Maximum Likelihood Estimation and Logistic regressions. Despite that, Stata can also please some users who only attach to menu. A free add-on module, StataQuest, is available for downloading (http://www.stata.com/support/quest/), providing teachers and students easy access to some commonly used procedures:
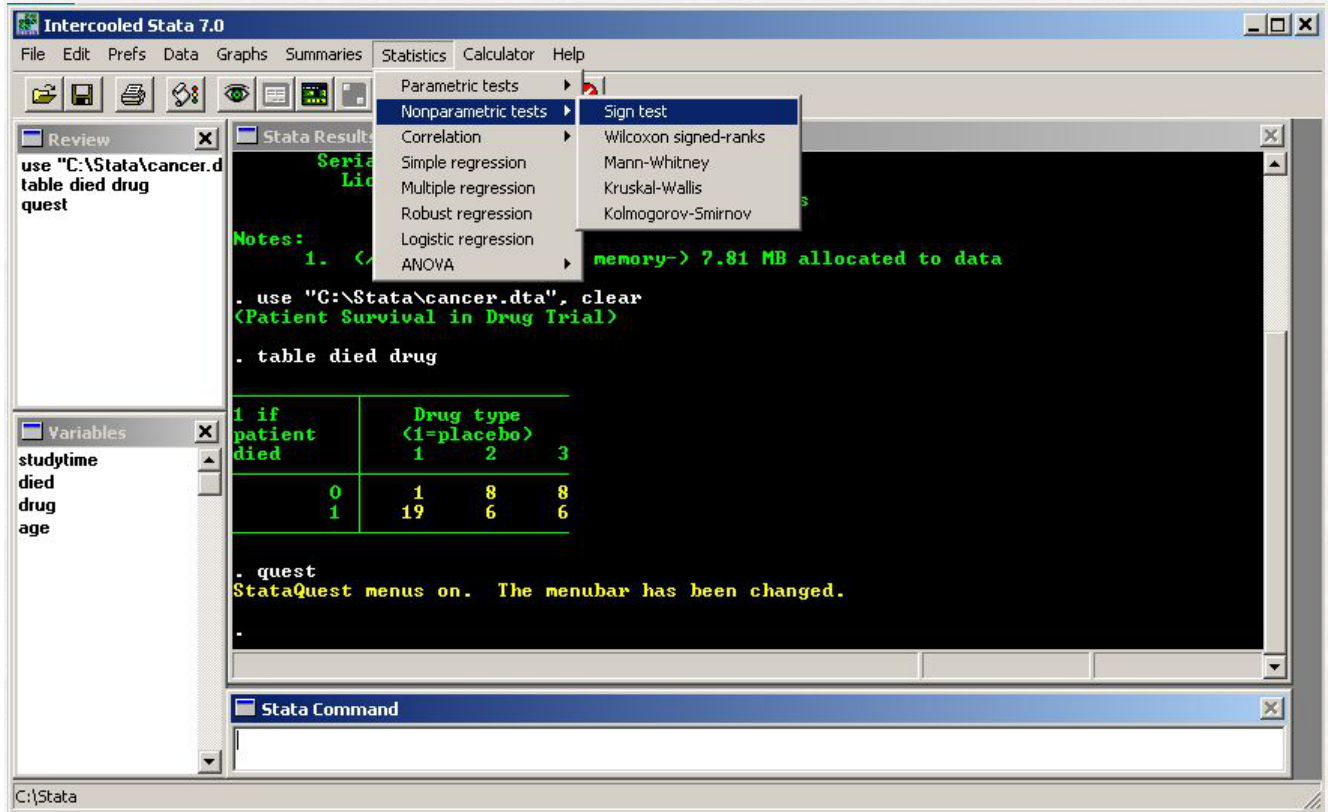
2. Speed

Unlike other packages, Stata handles data all in RAM (Random Access Memory). That makes execution of procedures much faster than other software packages that spend time in hard disk access and generation of objects. Users can also specify amount of virtual memory to be used for large data sets and matrix operations. In my case, I allocate 8 Mb of space for storage (by adding a /k8000 at the command line), which is sufficient for medium to large data sets on most procedures. There is no limit on the number of observations and variables, only up to the virtual memory or space on the harddrive. Click here to find out the benchmarks on some commonly used procedures.

3. Modularity

This is the feature I like the most about Stata: Its "open" architecture permits users to write their own procedures using simple Stata codes. Stata is composed of two types of commands. The basic suite of commands (kernel commands) is responsible for primary operations and "factory-provided" procedures.   Users can write ASCII text file programs, called ado files, to run specialized procedures. And, these interpretable ado files can be shared with other users, who just need to download the ASCII files and placed them in appropriate directories. This design makes upgrading, updating and development fast and accessible for all parties involved, vendors and users alike. The built-in connectivity in Stata 7 even allows running upgrades or updates within the software via the internet, provided the machine running Stata is on-line. As a result, although Stata is a product of a commercial firm, it virtually represents an "Open Source" effort by a multitude of users and supporters all over the world.

On top of the above features that make Stata special, another note I want to add is the software is really easy to learn and get attached to. Once you start using it, you will stick to it for most of the analysis. In the following, I introduce how to get started with a simple regression procedure and get to know more about this package.

Using Stata

Stata is composed of four windows by default. All these windows are adjustable in size and fonts according to your personal preference. The biggest window is the output windows, putting on top of the command windows for command input. On the left hand side are the review window recording the commands entered and the variable window. The former facilitates well the data analysis process which takes very often replication and modification of previous procedures. For instance, the following simple command runs a regression on three variables:

regress price mpg headroom rep78

Since regression process takes reparameterization (i.e. modifying the model by changing independent variable combinations), users will find Stata's design really convenient, just by clicking the previous command at the review window, (or just by hitting the pageup key) and change or add variables on the right hand side.

There is one downside about the software, nevertheless. Stata can only read ASCII data and its own binary format of data, although a conversion software, Stat/Transfer, is available from the same company for doing the conversion to and from most formats. Another not-so-smart way is to cut and paste the data from other packages such as Excel to Stata's data window:

Data management tools in Stata are all command-based. So, if you are not familiar with the syntax, it is recommended you create and document all the variables and cases before importing into Stata. It will save you much time from figuring out how to create a subset and conditional variables within Stata.

That said, sources for help are plenty. The company's Website (http://www.stata.com) provides a plethora of links and resources leading to downloadable files and answers to most questions. Stata also provides a low cost course, Netcourse (http://www.stata.com/info/products/netcourse/), delivered over the web for those who are serious about learning Stata from beginner to expert levels. Plus, many class notes and user developed manuals are readily available on-line from Websites of most big Statistics departments (e.g. StatLib at Carnegie Mellon, UCLA, Harvard-MIT Data Center).

Below are some images produced by Stata:
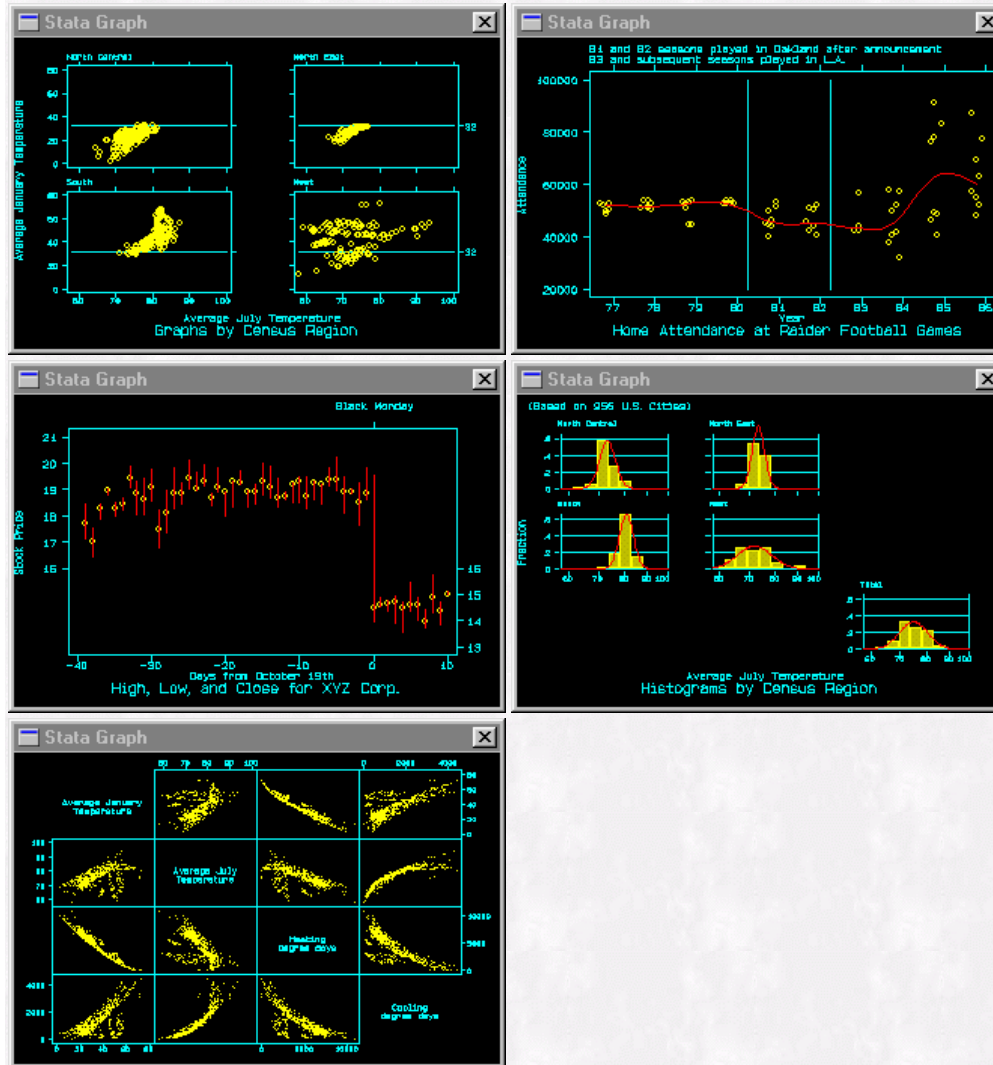
For list of statistical procedures, check Stata's posting at http://www.stata.com/info/capabilities/. Among all these, the following procedures make me choose Stata over other packages:

- Pooled Cross-sectional Time Series analyses (Panel studies), featuring robust models and models with panel corrected standard errors

- Survival analysis

- Discrete Choice models or Limited Dependent Variable analysis featuring all types of logit and probit models (except Multinomial Probit at the time of this writing).

- simulation-based inference

- post-modeling diagnostics in Categorical data analysis, featuring a whole suite of tools from J. Scott Long of University of Indiana

Not enough? Check out Stata's web site and the links from UCLA, CMU and Harvard-MIT. Spend a day or two and learn Stata and you'll find it as interesting as rewarding.

Reference:

Stanislav Kolenikov, 2001. "Review of Stata 7," *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, 637-646 Vol. 16 (5) pp. 637-646. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., available at: http://giganda.komkon.org/~tacik/stata/in.progress/stata-review.pdf

(*) The full version for student and faculty purchase is priced at $99.

Research and Statistical Support
University of North Texas

SAS Corner

By Dr. Karl Ho, Research and Statistical Support Services Manager

What is Hot Fix?

On a regular basis, SAS upgrades the software and releases new versions to licensed customers. However, what if bugs are identified between the releases? Hot Fix is provided by the company that fills the gap. The Technical Support at SAS defines Hot Fix as addressing "specific alert issues uncovered by customers' applications". According to SAS, "while the hot fixes would have been tested and are fully supported, they have not gone through the full QA process". As a responsible measure, the company mails alert notes to licensees when a bug is located. It will also provide solutions (fix) for the bug or give information on how to download a patch. Two sample Hot Fix alert notes were appended at the bottom of this article.

Hot Fix for bugs can be procedure-related. For instance, the latest Hot Fix is on the accuracy of a Kendall's tau b, a crosstabulation statistics for two variables, generated in the PROC CORR procedure. The Hot Fix message reminds users of the problem and gives suggestions to circumvent the inaccurate output. In some cases, the Technical Support will provide patches (hot fix bundle) to fix the problem. But in most cases, it recommends waiting for the next release which will incorporate the fixed procedures, unless a problem is encountered.

To get more details on Hot Fix or locate a bug, visit the Hot Fix website. Or you can subscribe to the Hot Fix Alert mailing list.

With frequent bug reports, it may appear that the software is prone with defects. From the other prospective, it also indicate the company spends a lot of effort in keeping the customers abreast of the bugs and newest fixes to show good will and responsibility. Not a lot of software companies have the courage to provide customers what they need to know. SAS certainly is well ahead on this.

Sample Hot Fix alert notes:

With Hot Fix Releases:

```
From:    SAS Technical Support <tsdlist@UNX.SAS.COM>
To:      <TSNEWS-L@VM.SAS.COM>
Date:    8/2/02 1:32PM
Subject:        SAS Institute TS: New Hot Fix Releases
```

New Hot Fixes are available on the Technical Support Hot Fix Web
site
for SAS Release 8.2 (TS2M0).

The latest SAS Release 8.2 (TS2M0) Hot Fixes are for:

SAS/ACCESS INTERFACE TO DB2 (OS/390 only)
SAS/ACCESS INTERFACE TO INFORMIX (UNIX only)
BASE SAS (Windows and UNIX)

For more information, please review the Release 8.2 (TS2M0) Hot
Fix
"What's New" page:
http://www.sas.com/techsup/download/hotfix/82_SBCS_whats_new.html

If you are running SAS with Asian Language Support (DBCS), please
review the DBCS "What's New" page:
http://www.sas.com/techsup/download/hotfix/82_DBCS_whats_new.html

A comprehensive list of all Hot Fixes is available at:
http://www.sas.com/techsup/download/hotfix/hotfix.html

Alert Note only:

¡@

From: SAS Technical Support <tsdlist@UNX.SAS.COM>
To: <TSNEWS-L@VM.SAS.COM>
Date: 8/5/02 11:52AM
Subject: SAS Institute Alert Note SN-008065

SN-008065   ***Alert Sas Note***

Kendall Partial Tau b Correlation Coefficients are incorrect when
a
variable has zero variance and the PARTIAL statement is used

Product: Base SAS
Component: CORR procedure
Priority: ALERT

  If you are using a PARTIAL statement, and if any of the analysis
  variables have a standard deviation of zero, then the Kendall
Partial
  Tau b Correlation Coefficients are incorrect. The coefficients
that are
  produced are actually the unpartialed Kendall's Tau b
correlations.

  To circumvent the problem, remove the variables for which the
STD Dev is
  zero.

Keywords:
  incorrout incorrstat kendall tau b correlation partial
  kendall partial tau b correlation coefficients are incorrect
when a
  variable has zero variance and the partial statement is used
  008065 8065

SAS Note Revised On: Thu, 25 Jul 2002

System	Version Reported	Version Fixed
AIX 64 bit	8.2	TS2M0
AIX/6000	7	TSP1
AIX/6000	8	TSM0
AIX/6000	8.1	TS1M0
AIX/6000	8.2	TS2M0
VM/ESA (CMS)	7	TSP1
VM/ESA (CMS)	8	TSM0
VM/ESA (CMS)	8.1	TS1M0

```
VM/ESA (CMS)                              8.2   TS2M0
Compaq Tru64 UNIX                         7     TSP1
Compaq Tru64 UNIX                         8     TSM0
Compaq Tru64 UNIX                         8.1   TS1M0
Compaq Tru64 UNIX                         8.2   TS2M0
HP-UX Operating Systems                   7     TSP1
HP-UX Operating Systems                   8     TSM0
HP-UX Operating Systems                   8.1   TS1M0
HP-UX Operating Systems                   8.2   TS2M0
HP-UX 64 bit                              8.2   TS2M0
Intel ABI                                 8     TSM0
Intel ABI                                 8.1   TS1M0
Intel ABI                                 8.2   TS2M0
Linux                                     8.2   TS2M0
MIPS ABI                                  8     TSM0
MIPS ABI                                  8.1   TS1M0
MIPS ABI                                  8.2   TS2M0
OS/390 (MVS)                              7     TSP1
OS/390 (MVS)                              8     TSM0
OS/390 (MVS)                              8.1   TS1M0
OS/390 (MVS)                              8.2   TS2M0
IBM OS/2                                  7     TSP1
IBM OS/2                                  8     TSM0
IBM OS/2                                  8.1   TS1M0
IBM OS/2                                  8.2   TS2M0
Solaris                                   7     TSP1
Solaris                                   8     TSM0
Solaris                                   8.1   TS1M0
Solaris                                   8.2   TS2M0
Solaris 64 bit                            8.2   TS2M0
OpenVMS VAX                               7     TSP1
OpenVMS VAX                               8     TSM0
OpenVMS VAX                               8.1   TS1M0
OpenVMS VAX                               8.2   TS2M0
OpenVMS Alpha                             7     TSP1
OpenVMS Alpha                             8     TSM0
OpenVMS Alpha                             8.1   TS1M0
OpenVMS Alpha                             8.2   TS2M0
Windows NT                                7     TSP1
Windows NT                                8     TSM0
Windows NT                                8.1   TS1M0
Windows NT                                8.2   TS2M0
Windows 2000 Datacenter Server            8     TSM0
Windows 2000 Datacenter Server            8.1   TS1M0
Windows 2000 Datacenter Server            8.2   TS2M0
Windows 2000 Professional                 8     TSM0
Windows 2000 Professional                 8.1   TS1M0
Windows 2000 Professional                 8.2   TS2M0
Windows 2000 Server and Advanced Server   8     TSM0
Windows 2000 Server and Advanced Server   8.1   TS1M0
Windows 2000 Server and Advanced Server   8.2   TS2M0
Windows 95                                7     TSP1
Windows 95                                8     TSM0
Windows 95                                8.1   TS1M0
Windows 95                                8.2   TS2M0
Windows 98                                7     TSP1
Windows 98                                8     TSM0
Windows 98                                8.1   TS1M0
Windows 98                                8.2   TS2M0
Windows ME                                8.2   TS2M0
Windows XP                                8.2   TS2M0


No Fixes Available
```

Network Connection

By **Dr. Philip Baczewski**, Associate Director of Academic Computing

Standards

The Internet works because it has standards. I'm not talking about the kinds of "standards" which measure exclusivity, such as the possession of a Y chromosome as the basis for membership in the Augusta National Golf Club. Instead, I am talking about standards which promote inclusive behavior. The whole idea of the Internet, from its start, is that there is a standard and openly documented way to communicate. If everyone knows that standard, then anyone can develop software to utilize it. Everybody is included. All you need to expend is your time and effort.

The open standards model has been quite successful. Economics has limited the types of computer hardware available (a computer is still not something that most people can whip up from spare parts in their basement), but the simple agreement on standards has opened up worldwide communication to a point that's never been seen before. An e-mail to Belgium is not any more difficult than an e-mail to Boston. SPAM from Romania is as common as SPAM from Redmond.

A standards battle ground

One area which has always seemed to be a standards battle ground, however, is the World Wide Web. The driving concept behind the development of the Web was the possibility of providing content independent of presentation. In other words, a publisher was responsible for providing the information, but the recipient (Web Client) was responsible for the presentation. Such a scheme allows content to be provided to a large variety of computers which, through their software, can determine how or if to display that content.

Over the course of development of the Web, however, there came an increasing desire on the part of publishers to control the presentation as well as the content. Some of this was necessitated by the development of Internet-based commerce and some by the desire to make web pages appear as if they are locally run applications. The extreme result of such efforts to exert control lead to messages on web pages such as, "This page best viewed with <your browser name here>." Such a message is totally counter to the founding concept of the World Wide Web, to the point that some pages now contain the (somewhat sarcastic, I think) message, "This page best viewed with any browser."

What we've seen in the web world is only the tip of the standards battle iceberg. Competing standards for online identity, commercial interaction, and data interchange are being developed right now. Microsoft is doing so through it's ".NET" product and Sun is driving the J2EE set of standards (see this O'Reilly.com article: http://java.oreilly.com/news/farley_0800.html). On the other hand, there are efforts for open standards in areas such as online identity as seen in the openSAML project (http://middleware.internet2.edu/opensaml/).

Will you have a choice?

The ongoing question is "will you have a choice?" We know that Microsoft's. NET will work with Windows PCs, but possibly not with any other platforms. You already experience exclusion from some web pages if you can't or won't use Java or Javascript (both of which provide an external application a degree of access to or control of your browser or operating system). The other ongoing question might be "who do you trust?" Lost in the daily stock market roller coaster ride was the news that Microsoft settled with the Federal Trade Commission over allegations that they misrepresented their use of personal data collected via their "Passport" online identity service (http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2002/08/microsoft.htm).

Capitalism has driven the development of an industrialized society, but is it the right model for the development of Internet technology? Capitalism is inherently amoral, having as its goal the development and preservation of capital. Concepts such as the development and preservation of human rights and freedom of information are valued only to the extent that they affect the generation of profit. I'm sure that many corporations sincerely have the public interest as a primary concern, but it only takes a few companies such as Enron and WorldCom to understand that companies actions can easily have a devastating effect on their investors, their employees, and even on the general public.
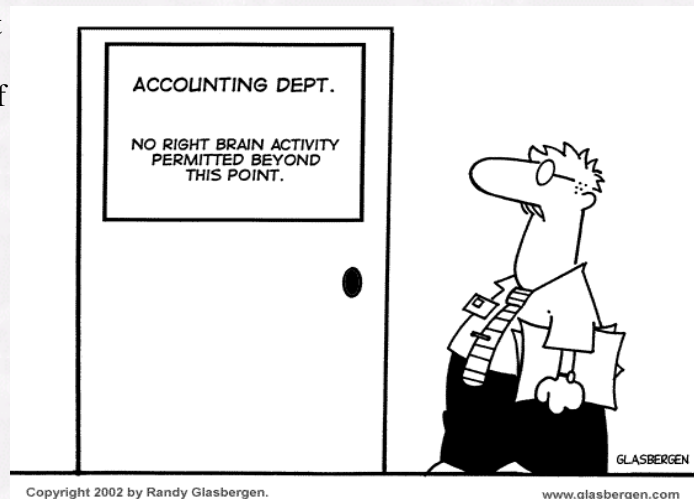
Who will control the ongoing development of the Internet?

The bigger question is who will control the ongoing development of the Internet? There's no question that the Internet is here to stay and that it will have a increasingly greater affect on how we live our lives. Will the ongoing model be based upon inclusion or exclusion? Will development be open and available to all or proprietary and exclusive to those who have capital to invest?

So who do you trust? Are you suspicious of the open source community of scholars, students, business people and plain folks whose motivation is to develop some software which is useful to them and others? Are you content to wander with the herd of convenience without the inclination to worry about your own interests? What are your standards?

The cartoon above is from "Today's Cartoon by Randy Glasbergen", posted with special permission. For many more cartoons, please visit www.glasbergen.com.

Link of the Month

Each month we highlight an Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list(s) or Website(s).

UNT's Anti-Virus Web Site

In case you missed all the hoopla, UNT is **giving away** anti-virus software! As if that news weren't good enough, Mike Williams, the Campus Wide Networks (CWN) staff member responsible for the site has also put together a tutorial and FAQ to facilitate the use of the software.

Point your browser to http://cwn.unt.edu/virus/tutorials/homeversion6 for instructions on installing McAfee Version 6 for home use. Frequently asked Questions regarding McAfee Version 6 for home use can be found here: http://cwn.unt.edu/virus/tutorials/homeversion6/faq.html. UNT's anti-virus homepage, if you haven't guessed already, is here: http://cwn.unt.edu/virus/

WWW@UNT.EDU

Breaking News in Web World

By **Shannon Eric Peevey**, **UNT Central Web Support**

Hi, everyone!! How has everyone been? We have been busy getting ready for a move from a single server to a web farm for Web2.unt.edu/osprey and this has been exposing some very interesting problems that were not apparent in the previous setup. This article is going to cover these problems, and the fixes that we have put into place.

Internet Explorer...

Internet Explorer has been topping our list of trouble-makers. The first, and most dangerous flaw is covered in an article by Sam Costello, "Severe IE flaw undermines SSL security". This flaw is detrimental to the security scheme that most of us have taken for granted when doing online transactions.

> **PROBLEM 1:** "IE fails to check the Basic Constraints of certificates signed by intermediate Certificate Authorities (CAs). That means that as far as IE is concerned, anyone with a signed certificate for any domain can generate a certificate for any other domain, which will appear to be signed by a valid CA."

> **IN PLAIN ENGLISH:** A certificate, in this case, is talking about a special certificate that is generated by a webmaster to prove the authenticity of a secure Website. (Basically, "is this site who they say they are?") This certificate is then used by your browser to create a secure connection to the server, which means that it is encrypted and therefore, more difficult for third-parties to view. (Not impossible!!) One part of the secure certificate process is that we send this certificate to a third-party that has been designated as a Certificate Authority. This Certificate Authority, (we use VeriSign), then signs the certificate, verifying that they have researched this business/school, and that they are a legitimate institution. It seems that Internet Explorer does not really check to see if the certificate is signed by a viable Certificate Authority. Therefore, any person in possession of a secure certificate signed by a Certificate Authority can create a certificate for another domain and sign the certificate themselves, bypassing the need for a Certificate Authority. This is very dangerous, as the Certificate Authorities have been setup by the "powers" of the internet to be the "last word on authenticity "of Websites, and completely authoritative. If Internet Explorer is not checking this correctly, then no signed certificate is authoritative, and the structure of web security has broken down.

> **SOLUTION:** This problem is found in all version of Internet Explorer, up to and including 6.0. I have not yet seen a security update, or bulletin, from Microsoft, so am wondering about the silence. This means that you should never use Internet Explorer

for any personal transactions, such as credit card payment, online banking, personal information browsing, etc. This problem does not effect Netscape Navigator, so you should switch to Netscape for all important online transactions.

Another problem that has come up with Internet Explorer occurred when we upgraded to Apache 2.0.39 and PHP 4.2.2.

PROBLEM 2: When trying to administer a MySQL database using PHPMyAdmin, Internet Explorer does not update the browser page with the most current information. For example, you create a new table in your database, and IE does not refresh the page to show this new table, (though, it exists on the database server). In essence, IE is perpetually showing you a cached page.

SOLUTION: This problem occurred as a direct result of upgrading to Apache 2.0.39 and PHP 4.2.2, but only effects PHP applications that take advantage of sessions. (Sessions are the way through which we remember your information, as a user, for a specified period of time. This can be achieved through using cookies, or by keeping the information in a database, etc, and associating that information with a unique identifier for a specific user. The problem with PHPMyAdmin is found in the use of cookies, and the implementation of cookie-handling in Internet Explorer. This effects all version of Internet Explorer up to, and including, 6.0. The work-around is to use either Netscape, which has a better implementation of cookies, or by using a secure connection, (being aware of Problem 1, as stated above).

Microsoft SQL Server

Our next look at web problems that are becoming apparent have to do with Microsoft SQL Server. As usual, we, meaning universities, must do things in a unique way, and it seems that Microsoft didn't foresee the use of the SQL Server administrative tool, Enterprise Manager, in the multi-user environment that we are now using it. Let me explain.

PROBLEM 1: The security model that is used by Microsoft SQL Server doesn't work with our situation. When I create a database for your web front-end, I want you to have complete control of your database so that I don't have to help you with administering it. (This is a bit selfish but more efficient for you, as I am administering over 150 databases, and you would have to wait your turn... What a pain, no?) This means that I create you as a database owner, or, in my mind, dbo. The dbo is the owner of all objects in the database when I create it, and is the user that you would want to own all of the objects in your database, to keep from having to worry about conflicting rights to objects. (In other words, "jon" wants to select data from the "earl.test" table. ("earl" is the owner, and the dot notation is a shorthand way of seeing both the owner and the object.) "earl" would have to explicitly give rights to "jon" to select data from his "test" table. This becomes a pain when more than one user are making items in the database. An easier solution, is to make "dbo" the owner of all items, but Microsoft has thrown a kink into this solution. Only members of the sys_admin, or system administrator, group can create items that are mapped to "dbo". But... In our situation, if I would make everyone a member of the sys_admin group, I have given everybody administrative rights to everything on the SQL Server. No matter how much we like each other, I'm sure that we don't want someone coming in a messing up our most important applications by mistake... (Bad Microsoft!!) Therefore, there is no way for you to create any items as "dbo", (even if you are a member of the "dbo" group for that database...

SOLUTION: I have written a stored procedure that will check for items in your

database that do not belong to "dbo" and change them to "dbo.object". If you need help, contact me at speeves@unt.edu

The second problem is similar to the first, but has to do with permissions on Enterprise Manager itself.

PROBLEM 2: If you are using Enterprise Manager to administer your database, I have given you certain rights to your database. In the best case scenario, you would only be able to see the items that you have rights to on your screen. In Enterprise Manager world, you see all of the databases, (you cannot manipulate any database that you do not have rights to, but still...) and can view various items that should not be available to everyone.

SOLUTION: There is none. Obviously Microsoft did not think of our implementation of Enterprise Manager as a campus-wide administrative tool. Therefore, they will probably not fix the problem either. It is my intention to create a web gui, modeled after PHPMyAdmin, that would allow us to limit the abilities of users to view objects on the database server. (Anyone that would like to get involved, is more than welcome to contact me :))

Conclusion

As you can see, this is an exciting time! We are pushing the envelope, and are finding the boundaries of current technology. I have covered only a few of the problems that are becoming apparent as I get ready to migrate web2/osprey, but am sure that many more will become obvious as we push technology further and further. If you have any problems that you are encountering, let me know, and we will either mention it in a future article, or work on fixing the problem together.

Until then...

Short Courses

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

The summer Short Courses are over. Please consult the [Short Courses](#) page to see the types of courses likely to be offered for the fall. The fall schedule should be out by September.

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses from ACS, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

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, the [Center for Distributed Learning](#), and the UNT Libraries' [Multimedia Development Lab](#). Additionally, the [Center](#) for Continuing Education and Conference Management offers a [variety of courses](#), usually for a small fee.

GroupWise Training

If would like to have a Basic GroupWise seminar for your area, please contact Jason Gutierrez, Campus Wide Networks, jasong@unt.edu .

GroupWise 6 classes have already been scheduled for the fall semester. Here is the lineup:

    Sept 17-19 - Introduction to GroupWise 6
     Oct 22-24 - Basic GroupWise 6
     Nov 19-21 - Intermediate GroupWise 6

All classes are from 10 am to 11:50 am in the Eagle student Services Center (ESSC), Room 152. For signup information, go to https://home.unt.edu/hr/training/treg.htm or E-mail Bhavna Vaswani at bvaswani@unt.edu

ProDirections Instructor-led Training

UNT has formed a partnership with ProDirections to offer instructor-led computer training on Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access. Classes are $99+$42 for the book. Classes in a series (3 classes in the same series) are $99 for each class and the book is free. The Excel Series includes Basic Excel, Advanced Excel-part 1, and Advanced Excel-part 2. The Access Series includes

Basic Access, Intermediate
Access, and Advanced Access.

Upcoming workshops:

Basic Excel
August 27th from noon-5 p.m. (lunch provided)

Advanced Excel-part 1
August 28th from 1-5 p.m.

Advanced Excel-part 2
August 29th from 1-5 p.m.

To register, send E-mail to Bhavna Vaswani at bvaswani@unt.edu or call
Human Resources at x4246. Payments can be made by either a check request or
with a Purchasing Card and should go directly to ProDirections. Cancellations
must be done 2 days prior to the workshop date to receive a refund.

For a description of each class please go to http://www.prodirections.com/ and
click on "Corporate Workshops"

Center for Distributed Learning

The Center for Distributed Learning offers courses especially for Faculty
Members. A list of topics and further information can be found at
http://www.unt.edu/cdl/training_events/index.htm The center also offers a
"Brown Bag" series which meets for lunch the first Thursday of each month at
Noon in ISB 204. 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
Center for Distributed Learning Website.

Technical Training

Technical Training for campus network managers is available, from time to
time, through the Campus-Wide Networks division of the Computing Center.
Check the CWN site to see if and when they are offering any training.

UNT Mini-Courses

These 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/ccecm/cont_ed/UNT_Minicourse_mgt.htm .

Alternate Forms of Training

Many of the General Access Labs around campus have tutorials installed on
their computers. For example, the College of Education recently acquired some
Macromedia Tutorials for Dreamweaver 4.0, Flash 5.0 and Fireworks 4.0.

The Training Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of

training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered. Of particular interest are courses available via SmartForce (formerly CBT Systems). See http://www.unt.edu/smartforce/ for more information.

There are also handouts for computer training on the following topics:

- GroupWise 5.2 Handout for Win95/NT
- FAQ for GroupWise 5.2
- Computers - Back to the Basics
- Introduction to Windows 95 /98/NT
- Introduction to Word 97
- Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge It Together
- Introduction to PowerPoint 97 (Creating a Slide Show)
- Introduction to Remedy (THE Call-Tracking Program)
- AND, the award winning Introduction to Excel 97

Adobe Acrobat Reader Format only for the following:

- Introduction to Microsoft Word 2000
- Introduction to Microsoft Excel 2000
- Creating a Slide Show with PowerPoint 2000
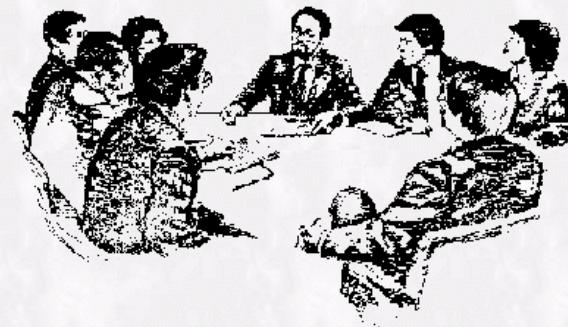- Using Netscape Communicator & the UNT Home Page

Use the Internet to search for answers to Microsoft Office problems. See http://www.zdnet.com/zdhelp/filters/office/ December 1999's "List of the Month" offers links to free Microsoft Word and Excel information also.

IRC News

Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey, Recording Secretary

IRC Regular and Ex-officio Voting Members: Judith Adkison, College of Education; Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Donna Asher, Administrative Affairs; Craig Berry, School of Visual Arts; Cengiz Capan, College of Business, GALC; Bobby Carter, UNT Health Science Center; Christy Crutsinger, Faculty Senate; Jim Curry, Academic Administration; VACANT, Student Association; Duncan Engler, University Planning Council; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, EIS Project Group; Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, Standards and Cooperation Program Group; Abraham John, Student Affairs; Christine Mitchamore, Graduate Student Council; Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Jon Nelson, College of Music; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Philip Turner, School of Library and Information Science and University Planning Council (Chair, IRC); Virginia Wheeless, Chancellor for Planning. IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members: VACANT, Telecommunications; Charles Andrews, GALMAC; Bill Buntain, Computing Center Networking; Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Richard Harris, Computing Center and University Planning Council; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center/Administrative; VACANT, UNT Health Science Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center/Academic; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary).

May 7, 2002

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: PHILIP TURNER, Chair, LOU ANN BRADLEY (for DON GROSE), ELIZABETH HINKLE-TURNER, DUNCAN ENGLER, CRISTINE MITCHAMORE, CHRISTY CRUTSINGER, JIM CURRY, JUDITH ADKISON, ARMIN MIKLER, SEAN HIATT, RAMU MUTHIAH, WIL CLARK (for JOHN PRICE), DONNA ASHER, KENN MOFFITT, NANCY MCCRAY (for VIRGINIA WHEELESS), JENNY JOPLING, JONEEL HARRIS, ROBERT NIMOCKS, BOBBY CARTER, CENGIZ CAPAN **NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** COY HOGGARD, RICHARD HARRIS, PATRICK PLUSCHT, MAURICE LEATHERBURY, BILL BUNTAIN, SUE ELLEN RICHEY(Recording Secretary) **MEMBERS ABSENT:** CHARLES ANDREWS, TOM JACOB, JON NELSON, DOUG MAINS, CRAIG BERRY, ABRAHAM JOHN, GINNY ANDERSON **GUESTS:** JENNIFER LAFLEUR

The minutes of the March 26, 2002 meeting were approved with one correction to the spelling of Tom Jacob's name.

IR Steering Committee

The Chair reported that the IR Steering Committee met last month but they did not consider the Security Policy at that meeting. The Web Publishing Policy has not been approved by them either, so both policies will be placed on a future meeting's agenda.

DCSMT

Maurice Leatherbury reported for the DCSMT that they have formed a Cooperation & Coordination Committee to try and set parameters for coordinating major infrastructure changes. In addition, Internal Audit has just completed a software licensing compliance

audit with favorable findings. Their only recommendation was that written materials be provided to students for training purposes on copyright compliance. These materials have been developed and were distributed to DCSMT members last Friday.

Instruction Planning Group

Jenny Jopling reported for the Instruction Planning Group that they have met electronically. The committee added a paragraph to the System Status Proposal they previously submitted to the IRC. The addition provides for notification of system outages to the Director of University Online Communications, Kenn Moffitt, so that he can post the alert on the UNT.edu web site. Jenny distributed copies of the revised proposal. There was some discussion about recent outages and concern that the Help Desk may not be as informed as they should be about whom to contact when informed of an outage. It was also pointed out that it is not clear who is responsible for resolving the problems that cause the outages. It was acknowledged that the Computing Center has a software called "Unicenter" which is a system monitoring software that could be used to help alert the appropriate persons in the event of any kind of outage. It was also suggested that there should be an alternative method of notification in the event that all systems are down. Although it is not entirely acceptable, the Help Desk can be called for information in such an event. It was also suggested that UNT have an off-campus internet site where a notification could be posted. A vote was taken on the revised System Status Proposal as presented, and it was approved. The Chair then charged Maurice Leatherbury to look into an alternative method of notification, such as a bounce to an outside internet site in the event that all systems are down, as well as an alternative monitoring system.

Communications Planning Group

Lou Ann Bradley reported for the Communications Planning Group that they met to deal with the communications outage between the Library Annex and the main campus. A new laser solution is being installed until such time as fiber optic cable can be run to that building.

EIS Planning Group

Joneel Harris reported for the EIS Planning Group that the Best and Final Offers from the Software vendors had been received on Friday, May 3rd. She reported that the pricing appears to be very competitive, but she is not in a position to reveal the actual figures yet. The Best and Final Offer requests to the Service Providers went out on Monday, May 6th and are due back Monday, May 13. The goal is to try to make a recommendation to the Finance Committee of the Board of Regents as soon after that as possible. The EIS Project Group will meet this Thursday, May 9th to review the final software offers.

Research Planning Group

Armin Mikler reported for the Research Planning Group that they have met and defined a new mission for the group to take a five-year outlook toward what the Computing Center can do to help the computational scientists. At the present time, the Computing Center has limited resources to help computational scientists get their projects on a UNIX cluster for processing. It is recommended that an additional research programmer be hired by the Computing Center for this purpose. Another issue they discussed was grid computing which is being widely utilized by universities across the U.S. It is proposed that UNT become a player in the high-end computational processing arena, and this can be done if the

Computing Center can offer research equipment and technical support to this end.

Standards & Policy Planning Group

Kenn Moffitt reported for the Standards & Policy Planning Group that they met and discussed background of the Accessibility Policy. They will meet again on May 28th to go over a first draft of a revision of that policy.

Student Computing Planning Group

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner reported for the Student Computing Planning Group that they met with RESNET representatives to gather background information, then the whole Planning Group met later to discuss an extensive list of things students need to know about computing at UNT. They discussed methods of disseminating this information to students.

Distributed Learning Team

Patrick Pluscht reported for the Distributed Learning Team that he will be bringing statistics to the Council on distributed learning enrollment since 1998. He reported that the TX DLA Conference in April was a big success, with over 500 attendees. In addition, they have a Tegrity demo scheduled on May 16 at 11:00 a.m., in ISB 201. This vendor provides a hardware solution that helps faculty convert their existing classroom teaching into something suitable for a web-based presentation. The committee is also evaluating a software tool that allows the function of monitoring a lab over a wide-area network. Cengiz Capan commented that COBA is also evaluating a software called Virtual Classroom which provides similar functionality at a fairly low cost. Maurice Leatherbury noted that the Computing Center has also evaluated similar products, but finds that they are extremely expensive.

Resolution from the College of Business faculty

Cengiz Capan presented a Resolution from the College of Business faculty, which supports the establishment of lifetime e-mail addresses for UNT alumni. Maurice Leatherbury commented that the Computing Center has begun looking into the feasibility of this as a service to transfer e-mail to the forwarding e-mail addresses of alumni, rather than storage of email. It would then be the responsibility of the end-user to update their e-mail addresses whenever they changed.

June 18, 2002

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: RICHARD HARRIS (for PHILIP TURNER, Chair), LOU ANN BRADLEY, PAM HIGHT (for DON GROSE), ELIZABETH HINKLE-TURNER, DUNCAN ENGLER, CRISTINE MITCHAMORE, CHRISTY CRUTSINGER, JIM CURRY, JUDITH ADKISON, ARMIN MIKLER, SEAN HIATT, RAMU MUTHIAH, KENN MOFFITT, VIRGINIA WHEELESS, JENNY JOPLING, ROBERT NIMOCKS, CENGIZ CAPAN, CRAIG BERRY, TOM JACOB **NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** CHARLES ANDREWS, PATRICK PLUSCHT, MAURICE LEATHERBURY, MIKE MANER (for BILL BUNTAIN), SUE ELLEN RICHEY (Recording Secretary) **MEMBERS ABSENT:** COY HOGGARD, BOBBY CARTER, JOHN PRICE, DONNA ASHER, JON NELSON, DOUG MAINS, ABRAHAM JOHN, GINNY ANDERSON, JONEEL HARRIS **GUESTS:** JENNIFER LAFLEUR

IR Steering Committee

Richard Harris reported that the IR Steering Committee had not met but there have been

discussions with members of that committee regarding several old policies related to computing. During those discussions a question was raised as to why there was a policy about the Information Resources Council charge and composition. It was agreed that the policy would be deleted and replaced by a simple statement of the IRC's charge and composition, as well as the IR Steering Committee's charge and composition. Dr. Pohl and Phil Diebel will be reviewing those statements, and if there are any changes, Richard will bring those changes to the Council. The Security Policy was formally approved and will replace three older policies in the next Policy Manual.

Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee has been circulating an electronic copy of the Strategic Plan which has to be submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and DIR bi-annually. Richard explained that in the past it had been an Appendix to the University Strategic Plan. The DIR no longer has to approve Strategic Plans, but they do keep them on file for information purposes. Richard plans to discuss Strategic Plans with the Planning Committee some time prior to the next IRC meeting and will report back to the Council.

Distributed Computing Support Management Team (DCSMT)

Maurice Leatherbury reported that the Distributed Computing Support Management Team met and approved the development a plan for Unix and Linux support on campus. The campus-wide network division of the Computing Center will provide second level support to network managers, and actually provide first level support to the campus until those managers are up to speed and can provide first level support themselves.

Maurice also reported that in the latest McAfee licensing, home use of the product by students, faculty and staff was included. The Computing Center plans to have CDs burned with the virus software and sold at the UNT Bookstore at approximately $3.00 each. Maurice also noted that Rich Anderson has completed the second round of scans of all systems on campus and is ready to distribute the results of that. DCSMT will decide how to distribute those results.

EIS Project

Richard Harris reported that Joneel was at a meeting in Austin, and Coy was attending a meeting with Ciber, the chosen EIS project implementation partner. He reported that the Board of Regents approved the recommendation for PeopleSoft software with Ciber as the implementation partner, and authorized UNT to enter into contract negotiations with both companies. After a round of negotiations with PeopleSoft, the final contract was signed and a purchase order in the amount of $ 4,962,751.00 was issued, $2,247,228.00 of which is for 5 years of prepaid maintenance and software support. He stated that everyone is very pleased with the contract. Richard reported that it is expected that another $5 million will be spent on the implementation.

Standards & Policy Planning Group

Kenn Moffitt reported that the Standards & Policy Planning Group is working on a draft of a new Web Accessibility Policy.

Student Computing Planning Group

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner reported for the Student Computing Planning Group that the first goal of this group is to provide better computing education for UNT students. Elizabeth distributed information sheets which describe a new web site she has developed which will contain links to several other web sites and which gives a good overview of sources of computing assistance at UNT. Elizabeth plans to present this information at upcoming new student orientation sessions as well as other student group meetings. Jenny Jopling added that CDL will provide Elizabeth with information regarding WebCT so that she can include that in her presentations.

Distributed Learning Team

Patrick Pluscht reported for the Distributed Learning Team that they hosted a demo by Tegrity of their hardware solution that would enable faculty to transmit their regular classroom instruction over the internet. The solution, though innovative and useful, is too expensive to consider purchasing at this time. Patrick distributed a packet of graphs depicting distributed learning statistics. Patrick explained that the definition of a distributed learning course is one for which at least 51% of the course is presented electronically. Cengiz Capan asked if there are any projections as to the effect of distributed learning courses on the utilization of classroom space on campus. Jenny Jopling responded that at the present time no projections have been done. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner asked how the cost of developing and delivering WebCT courses compares with the amount of revenue generated by those courses. Patrick replied that in the Spring semester web-based courses (i.e., those delivered 50% or more online) generated 2.7 million in state funding.

Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund grant

Maurice Leatherbury announced that there is a new non-competitive Telecommunication Infrastructure Fund grant available for higher education institutions and that UNT is eligible for a $616,687.00 of the grant funds. This grant allows the use of funds for staff, but funds must be used within one year. Maurice will prepare the grant application and recommended that the IR Strategic Planning Committee make the decisions on how the funds are spent.

Student Government Association

Sean Hiatt announced that the Student Government Association plans to reconstruct their web site and plans to conduct on-line opinion polls. They plan to form an ad hoc committee to help get this done by Fall semester. Kenn Moffitt, Director of University Online Communication, has agreed to help them.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

IRC Meeting Schedule

The IRC generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. From time to time there are planned exceptions to this schedule. This fiscal year, the December meeting was changed to December 11th, the April meeting was cancelled, and the May meeting changed to May 7th. There will be no meeting in August. All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.

Staff Activities

Transitions

We have no transitions to report at this time.

Awards, Recognition

- **Linda Wallace**, Programmer/Analyst on the Student Records Data Systems Team, was elected as a representative to the Staff Council. For a complete list of Staff Council representatives see: http://www.unt.edu/staffcouncil/

The following people have been nominated as **Soaring Eagles** and will receive their award at the President's Staff Sack Lunch on October 22:

- **Sandy Burke**, Helpdesk Manager, was recognized for "saving the day when some medication was delivered and she noticed that it needed to be refrigerated. She kept it cool until someone could pick it up. Way to soar!"

- **Alan Wilson**, Programmer Analyst in Fiscal Systems, worked hard helping to sort out Wells Fargo disks. You rock!

Richard Harris, Associate Vice President for Computing and Communication Services, along with some other UNT friends, proves we've got some real sharp shooters among us:
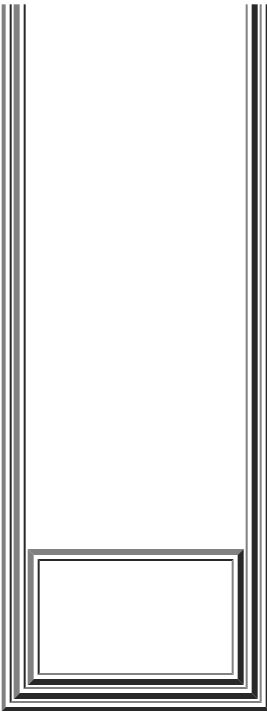
Shooting for dollars — A team of UNT veteran shooters — (left to right) Joneel Harris, interim associate vice president for enrollment management; Richard Harris, associate vice president for computing and communication services; Mitty Plummer, associate professor of engineering technology; George Morrison, professor of counseling, development and higher education and Velma E. Schmidt chair; and Bud Wheeless, professor of communication studies — participated in the second annual "Pulling for Kids" sporting clays event, benefiting Court Appointed Special Advocates of Denton County in April. The event raised $29,937.

Skip Navigation Links

Campus Computing News

By **Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner**, **Student Computing Services Manager**

Expanded Adaptive Facilities Available for the UNT Community

This summer Academic Computing Services, the Office of Disability Accommodation, the UNT libraries, and the General Access Lab leadership took the opportunity to evaluate and act upon recommendations by the UNT administration to provide more convenient access to adaptive computing facilities for the several hundred University community members who utilize adaptive equipment on our campus. The resulting planning sessions and budgetary allocations have resulted in exciting new technical opportunities and resources.

The University General Access Lab system has, since its inception, provided accommodation for those with visual impairment, the Deaf and hard of hearing, those with learning disabilities and those with mobility impairments in its facilities. The most prominent service area has been located in Chilton Hall 116 and has been known as the Adaptive Lab. This lab has been run effectively and excellently by the School of Community Service. However, access to services has been severely hampered by the lab's location out of the center of campus and by the need for lab patrons to cross busy and crowded Avenue C.

Adaptive Lab Being Moved, New Equipment Ordered

After careful consideration it was determined that the adaptive facilities should be moved to the Academic Computing Services General Access lab located in ISB 110. This location offers many advantages including its centralized location, its close proximity to the Union where Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) is housed, and the availability of ramp access far away from busy streets. After this choice of location was made cooperative efforts between the UNT library, Academic Computing Services, the School of Community Service and the ODA helped to make this new facility an outstanding resource for the university.

The Academic Computing Services General Access lab has been completely redesigned to accommodate old and new adaptive equipment and workstations while also continuing to serve its many customers at its other workstations. Three new workstations have been added to the lab which contain hardware and software specifically designed for special needs. Software available in the new ISB 110 location includes Dragon Naturally Speaking 6.0 Professional. This software allows one to vocally dictate documents into the computer. Professional 6.0 is a significant upgrade from the version formerly provided at the university and has many more features. Additionally, the software is bundled with Scientific Notebook and MathTalk which offer even more features including the translation of complex scientific and math symbols into Braille.

Other special needs software available in the lab will include Zoomtext, JAWS and the Duxbury Braille Translator.

New and additional hardware has been ordered. A new Braille printer and translator has been installed. Besides being more compact and easier to use, this printer comes in a sound-dampening case eliminating much of the noise associated with its use. This printer works with the Duxbury Braille Translator software mentioned above. Another exciting new acquisition is the Kurzweil 1000 Flex scanning system. Coupled with an Epson scanner, this software is an aide for scanning documents quickly and easily with little or no assistance. The Kurzweil 1000 system will also translate these documents to Braille as needed. A Chroma CCD unit will be available for the magnification of reading materials.

ISB 110 Floor Plan Redesigned

In accordance with safety and convenience considerations, the floor plan of the ISB 110 lab has been completely redesigned. Everyone will have easy doorway access to the lab with a generous and obstacle-free path to the equipment. Several computer workstations will be on adjustable tables to accommodate all height needs. The lab is repainted and signage indicating the location of adaptive equipment and services have been added. Additionally, strobe fire alarms will be added in the near future, and other new safety accommodations include the alteration of one of the library exits for another escape route. A TTY phone system will also be installed in the lab.

Testing Facilities Relocated

In order to provide a better and more comfortable testing atmosphere, testing facilities formerly housed in the Chilton 116 lab will now move to the Office of Disability Accommodations (Union 322). A Chroma CCD will be available in the ODA for test reading, and all testing for special needs students will occur there.

Lots of good things to look forward to . . .

Staff for the Academic Computing Services ISB 110 lab have undergone intensive training both in adaptive issues by the ODA and in hardware and software use by the manufacturers. The lab is also fortunate that three additional staff members already well-versed in adaptive equipment will be joining the ACS lab team. These student workers originally were employed in the Chilton 116 lab. During 60 of the 100 hours per week that the ISB 110 lab is open, adaptive consultants will be on duty to provide extra service to patrons as needed. The lab is also open longer hours than the old Chilton 116 lab providing more time for those using adaptive equipment to do their work.

The ACS lab welcomes its new patrons and looks forward to accommodating their technical work at the university. Please note that all other workstations and services provided by this busy lab in the past have not changed and will continue to be a priority. Be looking for further updates as more equipment and services are added in response to changing needs and technologies. The new ACS adaptive facilities will open its doors on Monday August 26. All patrons in the UNT community are strongly encouraged to take a guided tour of the lab

located in the Science and Technology Library at that time. Individuals will want to familiarize themselves with the pathway to the lab through the library. Both library staff and ACS lab staff are available to help you do so in the weeks prior to the lab's opening.

IMSP Remote Address Book and Options Service to be Discontinued

By Dr. Philip Baczewski, Associate Director of Academic Computing

In July of 2001, we announced that we'd be phasing out support for Simeon in favor of the EagleMail web-browser client (see http://www.unt.edu/benchmarks/archives/2001/july01/simeon.htm). System usage records indicate that some people are still using our IMSP server for storage of their Simeon options and address books.

As of September 1, 2002, the address book and options server will no longer be available. If you wish to continue to use Simeon, you will need to save your options and addressbook entries to your local computer.

Instructions for modifying your Simeon setup for local operation are included below. If you are unwilling or unable to perform these instructions without assistance then it is recommended that you change to using one of the following supported e-mail clients:

1. EagleMail web client at http://eaglemail.unt.edu/ (just log in with your current ID and password);

2. Netscape Messenger (using imap.unt.edu for the outbound and incoming mail server);

3. Microsoft Outlook Express (using imap.unt.edu for the outbound and incoming mail server).

The Computing Center Helpdesk (940-565-2324, helpdesk@unt.edu) can provide assistance with any of the three options above. The Helpdesk **CANNOT** provide any assistance with Simeon.

Since all incoming mail is stored on our IMAP server, changing mail clients will not affect access to any existing mail or folders on that server. If you wish save your Simeon address book entries, it is recommended that you export them to a local file by selecting the addressbook in the Simeon addressbook window and selecting "Export Address Book..." from Simeon's "Address" menu.

To modify your Simeon setup for local operation, follow the proceeding instructions and perform them in the order that they are listed. **Note: Before proceeding with the instructions below it is recommended that you have or make a backup of your Simeon program directory and preferences (Mac users) or have the Simeon installer available to be able to reinstall the program if necessary.**

1. Run Simeon and log in as you normally do.

2. Copy Server Address book entries to your Local Address book - in Simeon, click on the Addr icon to open the Address book Window - select all entries in the address book named for your login ID and drag them to the addressbook named "Local"

3. Save a local copy of your Simeon options - in Simeon, select "options->saveas" from the "tools" menu - click on the button labeled "New" - if it's not already selected under "Option Storage Location", select "Local disk" - click on "OK" to save

4. EXIT THE SIMEON PROGRAM

5. Edit the default.tcl file - Windows users will find a file named default.tcl in the same directory as as the Simeon program. Macintosh users will find default.tcl in the Simeon folder inside the Preferences folder within the System Folder. - edit default.tcl with a text editor (e.g. Notepad for Windows or Simpletext for Macintosh) - find a line which reads options Options.Location "remote" and change it to read options Options.Location "local" - save the file

6. Edit the sysdflt.tcl file - Windows and Macintosh users will both find this file in the same directory as the Simeon program - edit sysdflt.tcl with a text editor capable of manipulating a large file (e.g. Wordpad for Windows or bbedit for Macintosh) - find a line which reads option -session Options.MandatoryRemote "TRUE" and change it to read option -session Options.MandatoryRemote "FALSE" - find a line which reads option -default AddrBook.Hostname "imsp.unt.edu" and change it to read option -default AddrBook.Hostname ""

7. Run Simeon - you will be prompted to enter your Post Office ID and password (enter your usual login name and password) - select "Post Office" and click on the "Info" icon - if it doesn't already say so, change "Folder Prefix" to INBOX. - if it doesn't already say so, change "Folder Location" to INBOX. - click "OK" - Simeon will prompt you to reopen the Post Office - click "Re-open" and you should see your Inbox and all of your folders.

8. Exit Simeon

You should now be able to run Simeon from your local computer and all future options or addressbook changes will be saved locally.

Renew PRAS Accounts Now

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

If you purchased a **P**remium **R**emote **A**ccess **S**ervice subscription for the summer -- or had paid through the summer -- and you want to keep it, you will need to renew it. You may also need to take action to ensure the continuation of your UNT Internet Account, under certain circumstances. Details for renewal of both these services follows.

Premium Remote Access Service Renewals*

Renewals may be purchased in person or over the phone at the software department of the Union Bookstore (940/565 3185). Basic subscriptions for the fall are $45. Year-long subscriptions may be purchased for $120. ISDN (128K) subscriptions cost $90 ($240 for a full year). **Note:** "Yearlong" subscriptions expire at the end of the fiscal year.

If your department is paying for the subscription, you can request PRAS Renewal forms from the Computing Center. The form serves as the IDO and has a place for the account number, account signature, and explanation of why service is needed.

All subscriptions that have not been renewed by Wednesday, 21 August 2002 will be deactivated on Monday, 26 August 2002. Please E-mail any questions regarding renewal to [pras@unt.edu]()

Internet Service Account Renewals

People who are no longer associated with the University lose their eligibility to have access to many services, including various computing services. If you have been notified that your account is going to be disabled and you are still associated with the University, please contact the Computing Center Helpdesk at (940) 565 2324 or to [helpdesk@unt.edu](). Retirees may continue to have a UNT Internet Service account, however these accounts must be renewed annually. You may be asked to provide documentation of eligibility for this service due to the absence of available data on retirees at this time.

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*Questions about PRAS? We answered some common ones in our [August 1998]() PRAS renewal article. The [Remote Access]() area of the Helpdesk Website is also chock full of information on that topic.

Interim General Access Lab Hours

By Claudia Lynch, Benchmarks Online Editor

Frequently, the time between the end of Summer II and the beginning of the fall semester is a time that many of the General Access Labs on campus use to update facilities, etc. Following are the hours for the various labs on campus during this period.

Please note, the Adaptive Lab is being moved to the ACS General Access Lab (ISB 110). See the Campus Computing News article for further details.

- The **ACS General Access Lab** (ISB 110) :

  August 10-August 25 - **Closed**
  Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- WILLIS:

  August 19-25
  Monday - Thursday: Open 8:00 a.m. - 5:50 p.m.
  Friday: Open 8:00 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
  Saturday: Open 9:00 a.m. - 5:50 p.m.
  Sunday: Open 1:00 p.m., return to 24-hour schedule

- SLIS:

  August 10-August 21 - **Closed**
  Resume normal hours, Thursday, August 22.

- MUSIC:

  August 10-August 25 - **Closed**
  Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- SCS (the Adaptive Lab is being moved to the ACS General Access Lab (ISB 110). See the Campus Computing News article for further details):

  August 10-August 25 - **Closed**
  Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- SOVA:

  Interim hours unavailable.

- COE:

  August 10-August 25 - **Closed**
  Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- COBA:

August 10-August 23 - **Closed**
OPEN Saturday, August 24, 8 a.m. - 5 p. m.
Sunday, August 25 - **Closed**
Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- CAS: August 10-August 25, all labs **Closed**

  Resume normal hours, Monday, August 26.

- **System Center Dallas (SCDGAL)**

  Interim hours unavailable.

"Normal" hours for all of the labs can also be found at the General Access Lab Website.

UNT General Access Labs:
What We Did This Summer

By **Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner**, **Student Computing Services Manager**

As schoolchildren across the country begin writing that all-important classic essay in their English classes so too must I put digital "pen" to "paper" and chronicle the mighty summer efforts of the general access lab managers to continue to upgrade and maintain their facilities and services. Some of these changes include equipment and software upgrades, the redistribution of resources, and in one case, the redesign of an entire lab area.

Equipment Upgrades

In the area of equipment upgrades the College of Arts and Sciences leads the way by outfitting all four of its facilities with Pentium4 2-Ghz machines. The College of Music lab has replaced its Pentium computers with new P4s. The College of Business lab has added color laser printing to all of its printing areas and has developed policies for the use of these new machines. They have also purchased new P4's. The Academic Computing Services lab has a sleek new look with 17-inch flat-panel displays replacing its old large monitors. This has freed up considerable workspace at each computer station. The Willis 24-hr lab has new tables, 17-inch flat panel screens, and P4 machines on order and looks forward to having them in place by mid-fall. Finally despite a tragic robbery in mid-summer, the School of Visual Arts lab is replacing the stolen equipment and is ready to roll for the fall.

Software Upgrades

Software upgrades have also been a part of lab improvements this summer. Charles Andrews, manager of the College of Education lab reports that COE has moved to Windows 2000 and lab visitors will now log in using their EUID to access the lab workstations. Additionally, software provided by *Lift* that works in conjunction with DreamweaverMX and FrontPage 2002 will be available for students and student workers in the COE lab to test web sites for federal/state/university accessibility standards. The software walks the user through making the necessary correction needed to meet standards. Shortly, all web sites on the various UNT web servers will be required to meet these standards, including instructor course materials. The COE lab is providing facilities for anyone to analyze their web site and to adjust it as needed. The lab located in the School of Community Service has also moved to Windows 2000.

Refurbishing and Redecorating

Refurbishing and redecorating activities have also flourished. The Graduate Student General Access Lab located in the School of Library and Information

Science is replacing all of its old workstation counters with new tables. The general access lab located in the School of Community Service (Chilton Hall) will have 10 additional machines available after a redistribution from the Chilton 116 lab. Finally, the Academic Computing Services Lab will have a **major** restructuring and "facelift" as it becomes the new facility for special needs students. This redesign and reorganization is covered in a separate article in this issue of *Benchmarks Online*.

Lab Hours

Important reminders about lab hours for the fall include new hours for the Graduate Student General Access Lab which will now be open Monday-Thursday, 8:00am to 11:00pm; Friday and Saturday, 8:00am to 10:00pm; and Sunday, 12:00pm to 10:00pm. The Willis 24-hour Lab will continue to serve the needs of night owls everywhere. Be sure the check out the General Access Lab System Website for a thorough review of lab locations, hours, and policies. We look forward to seeing you this fall!

Usability Guidelines for Web Sites

By Kenn Moffitt, Director of University Online Communications

I just returned from a conference in South Padre where I spoke about web site usability for news and information sites. I spent several months reading and rereading all of the web usability books that I could get me hands on including: *Homepage Usability: 50 Websites Deconstructed* by Jakob Nielson, *Designing Web Usability : The Practice of Simplicity* by Jakob Nielson, *Usability: The Site Speaks for Itself* by Kelly Braun, and *Shaping Web Usability: Interaction Design in Context* by Albert N. Badre.

The following list of usability recommendations kept showing up in all of the books. I bet I know what you will think when you read through the list. Probably something like "this stuff is just common sense". I agree. A lot of the recommendations do "make sense" but they are not as "common" as you might think when you begin looking at UNT web sites.

Help Your Audience Find Site

- Create an easy to remember web address for your site. This means that the web address should be easy to remember for your main audience not just that it is easy to remember if you are already familiar with UNT. Long acronyms and initials used in the names of web sites are not always remembered easily.

- Make sure that your main site is registered with the major search engines. Believe it or not many people think that Yahoo or Google IS the internet and will not try your direct URL first.

- Include your site's web address in your staff's e-mail signatures and on your letterhead and faxes to remind your audience of your web address.

Help Your Audience Return To Your Site

- Allow the audience to create usable browser bookmarks
  - Title the page succinctly so that important information shows at the beginning in a browser's favorites or bookmarks
  - Lead the title with a logical descriptive or key word such as the university name or initials (allows the user to quickly locate your site in the browser's bookmarks or favorites since IE orders the bookmarks alphabetically instead of in the order created like Netscape).
  - Don't include the word "home page" in the page title this takes up room in the bookmark or favorite for no real reason.

Help Your Audience Contact You

- Make sure that contact information is prominently located on your site.

- Use a real person's e-mail address if possible. Generic e-mail address such as news@unt.edu were perceived to be less likely to be answered promptly by audiences.

Help Your Audience Find What It Wants

- The top right or left hand corners of the page are the most common spots where your audience expects to see a search link or search box.

- Label the search button "search" or "go" (most used labels for search boxes on the web) instead of trying to be original or creative.

- Include a large entry area for the search box (25-30 characters wide) in case the searcher types in larger search entries.

Use Fonts and Colors Effectively

- Use sans serif fonts for text heavy pages to increase readability. Serif fonts do not display as well as on paper because monitor resolution is not as high.

- Make sure users can use the browser settings to adjust font sizes.

- Make sure that there is high contrast between background and foreground colors of a web page and to ensure proper printing on black and white printers (white text on dark backgrounds might not print in the default print settings in Netscape).

- Colors and fonts should be used to create visual hierarchies and to showcase content in order or importance.

- Fonts and colors should be used to standardize the look of the pages within the site.

Organize and Display Your Site's Content Effectively

- Name and purpose of site should be prominent on the top of the home page with the site name repeated at the top of each page within the site.

- Design your site for a resolution of 800x600 (the most popular screen resolution with 1024x768 coming in second place).

- Make sure additional content on the right-hand side of the page is not missed by those using the lower 640x480 monitor resolution.

- Design critical content placement to take advantage of audience reading patterns from left to right and top to bottom (Z design).

- Most important information should be "above the fold" (visible in the

window without the audience having to scroll down).

- Most important content should centered on the page (left, right and top margins are expected to be navigation, site name or advertising).

Use Links Effectively to Promote Navigation

- Allow links to have visited and non-visited colors to give the audience a history of their actions.

- Links should be succinct and should lead with information bearing words to promote scanning. There is no need to start every button image or navigation link with "UNT".

- If clicking a link is going to do something other than open a html page warn the user in the link (for example clicking the link will launch a real audio presentation)

- If using a link for e-mail, type out the entire e-mail address in case the web browser is not configured to send mail and the user wants to write down the address for later.

Create Effective Headlines and Leads If You Have News Features

- Headlines should be short to promote scanning.

- Headlines should act as the link to the actual news release or story (standard in the news web site genre and reduces the space needed for an additional link at the end of the lead) .

- Leads should include actual information for the reader.

- Leads under the headlines shouldn't automatically be the first paragraph of the story. Depending on the first paragraph's content, sometimes the leads should be rewritten to communicate the stories main message and provide better information.

Use Images Correctly

- Crop images for thumbnails so that the image portrays useful content.

- Recreate thumbnails of images instead of displaying big images at the smaller size. This will reduce the overall download time of the page.

- Don't overuse images in the visual design of your site, only use them if they allow you to convey essential information.

- Include alt tags for accessibility with a brief description of the image (if the image is essential).

Further Reading

Please take a moment to look at a couple of Kenn's previous *Benchmarks Online* articles. They could prove to be very helpful to you. - Ed.

- Designing UNT Websites for Accessibility
- Web Developers Meet to Discuss Changes at UNT

Statistical Application Installation

By **Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner**, **Student Computing Services Manager**

In order to better accommodate the more varied and larger statistical applications available for use by researchers, Academic Computing Services has purchased a server exclusively devoted to the distribution of these resources. Named "GAUSS" after one of the greatest early contributors to statistical science, this machine is now host to all statistical applications and data under the jurisdiction of Research and Statistical Support Services. These duties used to be a part of the load on the ACSLAB server. All current statistical resources will continue to be accessible via the ACSLAB server until June 2003.

If you are a user of statistical resources this information will matter little to you technically but it will matter *a lot* to your network manager who will be installing software to your machine from a different location. All network managers were notified of these changes quite some time ago and are prepared to deal with them. What will be of most impact to users is the fact that ACS/RSS can now offer many more application packages because of the greater hard disk space available.

All site-licensed statistical software is now metered utilizing Novell Licensing Services (NLS) which works in conjunction with other Novell services to gather usage data and keep track of license compliance. This data will help ACS/RSS to better track how many licenses to purchase in the future and determine which software packages seem to draw the most utilization. This greatly helps in our abilities to provide better service to you in terms of upgrades and installation numbers.

The following instructions are for network managers and outline the procedures for the installation and metering of all statistics software supported by ACS/RSS. If you have any questions regarding software and licensing purchasing please contact Dr. Karl Ho. Any technical questions can be directed to Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner at ehinkle@unt.edu.

Novell Licensing Services Tutorial*

Prepared by Blake Broyles, ACSLAB technical support

The purpose of this section is to detail the steps a Netware Administrator at UNT must take in order to legally distribute statistics applications to your general access lab and faculty/staff workstations.
*If your department purchased its own licenses for the applications, then disregard this tutorial.

License Metering objects have already been created. All you must do is link your statistics application objects to these NLS objects. Currently, NLS objects have been created for the following statistics applications:

- Eviews 4.1
- SPLUS 6
- Stata 7.0
- SAS 8.2
- SPSS 10.0.5
- Lisrel 8.3
- SPSS 11
- NU-DIST N6

These NLS objects are located in the container: **Application Metering.ACS.Acad.UNT** The applications themselves are located at: **STATAPPS.GAUSS.ACS.Acad.UNT** and the data and gismaps are located at **STATDATA.GAUSS.ACS.Acad.UNT** If you had rights to the similar volumes on the ACSLAB server, those rights have been duplicated to these new locations. Note: if you are not prepared yet to use Zenworks objects and NLS, the applications (with the exception of Stata 7, SPSS 11 and NU-DIST) are still available the old way on the ACSLAB server.

If using Console One:

1. Open the application object used to actually run the application. Some administrators may have set up separate install and run objects.

2. Under the "Run Options" tab choose "License/Metering".

3. Activate the checkbox next to "Use Novell Licensing and Metering for this application".

4. Click the browse button to the right of the only available text field.

5. Browse to the container specified above and choose the corresponding NLS object. For example, Eviews 4.1's License object is QMS+EViews+4_1.Application Metering.ACS.Acad.UNT

6. Click OK

If using NetWare Administrator :

1. Open the application object used to actually run the application. Some administrators may have set up separate install and run objects.

2. Click the "Software Metering" button on the right at the very bottom.

3. Activate the checkbox next to "Use Novell Licensing and Metering for this application".

4. Click the browse button to the right of the only available text field.

5. Browse to the container specified above and choose the corresponding NLS object. For example, Eviews 4.1's License object is QMS+EViews+4_1.Application Metering.ACS.Acad.UNT

6. Click OK

Any time a user activates that object, a request will be sent to the NLS object to

obtain an available license. If any are available, the user will be granted executable access. If none are available, the user will see a message stating that there are no licenses available for the application. Technical personnel should direct all inquiries to: Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, ehinkle@unt.edu, x4808 or Blake Broyles, beb0013@unt.edu, 369-8665.

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Today's Cartoon

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"I SPENT TEN MONTHS RE-PROGRAMMING THE SIMS SO THEY CAN TALK . . . AND THE FIRST THING THEY SAID WAS 'GET A LIFE'!"

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