Benchmarks Online

Computing and Information Technology Center

| CITC Home | Help Desk | Training | About Us | Publications | Our Mission |

Volume 12 - Number 4 * April 2009

Columns

- NetworkConnection
- Link of the Month
- Helpdesk FYI
- IRC News
- RSS Matters
- Short Courses
- Staff Activities

- About Benchmarks
- Search Archive
- Subscribe to Benchmarks

By the Numbers

EIS Servers Supporting Registration:

- 14 web servers
- 8 application servers
- 2 database servers
- 3 batch servers

Campus Computing News

Change Comes to Academic Computing and User Services

UNT Computing Goes Green!

How Green is Our Learning?

Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Up

Eaglemail to be shut down in May!

Today's Cartoon

Don't forget our monthly columns!

BOOKMARK

Return to top

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

Network Connection | Link of the Month | IRC News | RSS Matters | Helpdesk FYI | Short Courses | Staff Activities

Computing and Information Technology Center Home | Help Desk | Training | About Us | Publications | Our Mission

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Benchmarks Online

Campus Computing News

Change Comes to Academic Computing and User Services

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

Academic Computing and User Services has recently undergone a change in organization in order to enhance services and increase overall effectiveness. This change aligns student computing services under one management area and supports a couple of new initiatives under a new Assistant Director position. The change is effective immediately, but will not change how services are provided to those who interact directly with Academic Computing staff.

An Assistant Director and two new positions

We are happy to announce that Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner has been promoted to the position of Assistant Director. Elizabeth has a record of outstanding performance during her tenure in ACUS and in particular has been the "face of UNT computing" to all entering freshman and their parents at orientations for many years. She has represented the CITC on a number of committees over the past several years and has taken the lead on strategic project such as the Eaglemail to EagleConnect migration, computer classroom development at Discovery Park, and the creation of a scientific visualization lab.

Two new positions will be reporting to Elizabeth. The first is a Computer Classroom manager who has responsibility for four University computer classrooms developed by ACS at Discovery Park in partnership with the office of Academic Affairs. Another new position is to support the development of a scientific data visualization lab at Discovery Park, featuring an LCD array, specialized data visualization software and large format print capability. In addition to these new positions, ACUS Host Systems support, and ACUS Documentation Services will report to Elizabeth. In her new role, she will continue to serve as a key resource to coordinate communication about ACUS and CITC Services to the UNT community, and also manage new strategic initiatives to enhance academic computing services at UNT.

User Services

The management of the Academic Computing Adaptive General Access Lab and Lab Checkin System that was previously reporting to Elizabeth has been moved under the responsibility of Richard Sanzone. His role as Helpdesk Manager has been enhanced under the title of User Services Manager and encompasses continued responsibility for the CITC Helpdesk as well as oversight of the AC/Adaptive GAL. This consolidation offers some efficiencies of management, and the opportunity to develop new collaborations between the Helpdesk and the GAL. Both services primarily support students, and both employ groups of student employees to support their operation. Richard has excelled as manager of the Helpdesk, maintaining a high level of services and playing a pivotal role in the development of the Kinetic Service Request system that serves as the entry point for IT users needing to submit tickets to our BMC Remedy system.

Other ACUS teams

The Call Tracking Administration, Data Management, Research and Statistical Support and High Performance Computing teams within ACUS will still report directly to the Director of Academic Computing and User Services, Dr. Philip Baczewski. The reorganization better aligns ACUS' technical and user service areas and provides for additional focus on research computing services at the Director level. A graphical representation of the ACUS organization can be seen in the [diagram](#) below. ACUS remains committed to providing an efficient and high quality set of services to the University community. Any questions can be directed to Dr. Philip Baczewski (baczewski@unt.edu). For more information about Academic Computing and User Services, see http://www.unt.edu/ACS.
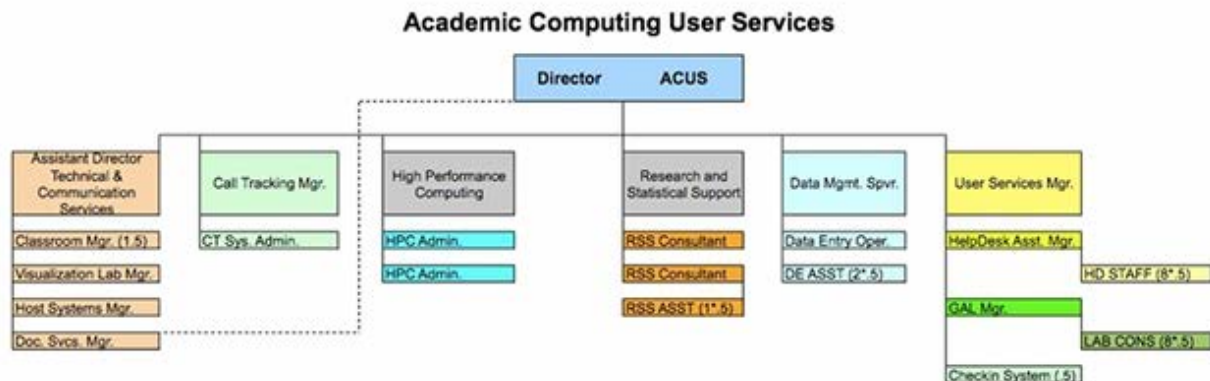
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[Return to top](#)

Benchmarks Online

Skip Navigation Links

UNT Computing Goes Green!

By **Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner**, **Assistant Director - Academic Computing and User Services**

The other day I got an email from a music organization asking me whether I wanted to get their newsletter digitally or continue to receive it in 'dead tree format'. Well, in addition to being a very effective way to get folks to convert to digital (who wants to get anything 'dead' in the mail?!) it got me to thinking about how technology is SUPPOSED to ultimately save time and resources. I still remember when utopian techies envisioned that the need for paper would be eliminated completely by technology, little dreaming that there are still folks who print out every email they receive! And even though it may take me awhile to get used to drinking my morning coffee while perusing the newspaper displayed on my laptop, I imagine that this day is not long in the future as the 'dead tree format' paper on my doorstep keeps getting ominously thinner every week.

I and my colleagues from Academic Computing and User Services (ACUS) will have a presence at UNT's upcoming Earth Week extravaganza at both the Clark Park and Library Mall Sustainability Fairs. Come by our table to learn more about earth-friendly computing projects at the Computing and Information Technology Center (CITC) at UNT or, better yet, read about these projects and the people who run them below and then come by and say, 'Hello!' anyway!

EagleConnect - bringing a digital communication suite to students at UNT:

In February, CITC unveiled its EagleConnect student digital communication system which contains many earth-friendly features. EagleConnect is powered by Microsoft and features the same email package and compatible chat and calendar and address book packages that are utilized by the UNT faculty and staff. This allows for exclusively digital communication between student services and their constituents. Ultimately letters, forms, announcements, reminders and other information that may have had to be sent via 'dead tree format' can be communicated digitally. Of course, UNT's old Eaglemail system allowed this as well and email *is* the official means of communication between the university and the students, but now with EagleConnect, that official communication can also be via chat, calendar appointments and the like. Imagine getting advised on your schedule for the summer semester via text message with your advisor on your cell phone while sipping coffee at Jazzman's. Or working on a group paper assignment via the Office Live collaboration tools while curled up comfortably on your bed in your apartment rather than having to walk across campus to meet together at a pre-arranged

spot, paper printouts in hand? Students, faculty, and staff are reminded here that the deadline for migrating any emails you want to keep from the old Eaglemail system to the new EagleConnect system is May 18. Don't wait for the deadline - get some earth-friendly computing in your life today! For more information see this article in this issue of *Benchmarks Online.* To switch over to EagleConnect go to: eagleconnect.unt.edu.

ImageNow - making the world safe for empty file cabinets:

Tracy Hansen, head of Imaging Services in the Enterprise Systems and Technical Services area of the CITC, describes what she and her team is doing: "We are using a product called ImageNow. It allows us to capture documents from scanners, faxes, email and any electronic file type to then index and archive for later use. This allows us to free up large areas that are currently full of file cabinets. Staff and faculty will no longer have to print docs out, but can retrieve them directly from the ImageNow client or the WebNow browser via IE or Firefox. We have rolled out 10 departments on campus including Enrollment Management, HR, PPS and many others. We are working toward a goal of making UNT as paperless as possible and ridding ourselves of the waste of ink and toner cartridges while making UNT more efficient and productive." Digital imaging promises to continue to be an important part of the 'paperless campus' in the future.

Now I am *still* trying to figure out how all this technology is going to save me TIME...so far it hasn't but at least it is saving me paper!

GreenVM - not only saving energy resources but human resources as well:

Craig Terrell, head of the GreenVM project (also a part of Enterprise Systems and Technical Services), like Tracy Hansen sums up his team's project nicely with an eye towards its environmentally-friendly potential: "The UNT GreenVM project aims to consolidate server resources and hardware costs into a centralized location. This means that the hardware is being used to its available capacity instead of wasting cooling and electricity as the majority of servers do. With our existing VM infrastructure, we can run between 25 to 60 virtual servers (Web, Application, File & Print, etc.) on each physical server. This method also allows us more efficient use of storage resources by utilizing a SAN (Storage Area Network) which shares a large array of drives across multiple servers."

Terrell further explains some of the technical aspects and advantages of his project: "All the virtual servers are running on clustered physical servers. If we do suffer a hardware failure, the virtual servers automatically move to another physical server with minimal down time, typically under 2 minutes or less. If we receive notification of a looming failure we can migrate the servers with zero downtime. There is no worry about setting up or maintaining any hardware. No AC issues, no power issues, no hardware failure or associated parts issues. A VM behaves like a physical server but boots much faster. You retain all control over it, just as you would if you owned the hardware, but without the hardware headaches. That does mean you will be having to patch and backup the virtual server just as you would a physical server. Physical servers can be migrated onto a virtual server, a process called P2V. This is

useful if there are existing server hardware issues or the need to retire an older server without the expense of new hardware." So like many green technologies, not only are virtual servers a way to stay green but they also offer overall workflow and efficiency advantages as well.

The GreenVM project has helped the distributed computing areas on campus in freeing up many of their technical and personnel resources to concentrate on direct desktop and user services. With server management not so much a part of their jobs, staff members can really hone in on their already fine customer service. Terrell reports that over 70 VM's are in production for departments such as Facilities, Student Development, the College of Music and TAMS as well as several CITC internal projects. Terrell cites future plans and advantages as well: "The CITC VM systems are available to all departments within UNT with a nominal cost. It is typically less expensive than purchasing a server over a three-year period with the added benefits of high-availability and easier management. In order to maximize the benefit of a virtual environment, the plan is to migrate or launch new projects in VM whenever possible. The more we move to VM, the less cooling and electricity we need per server." In addition, his team is implementing full offsite DR (Disaster recovery) for major systems and projects.

UNTranet - Today UNTranet, Tomorrow the (Green) World!:

Susan Pierce (also of Enterprise Systems and Technical Services...somebody get this department an ecology award!) manages the UNTranet project, UNT's SharePoint services. She describes several green aspects of the work of her team: "Our SharePoint farm, called UNTranet, runs on five servers – three of these are virtual servers, which require less power and cooling. UNTranet is accessible by UNT employees from home or on the road. Users can access their documents directly via the Internet, so there is less of a need to drive to the office or leave office computers running for remote login. SharePoint facilitates collaboration between members of departments, committees, etc. These collaborating groups can access a single site with their documents, easily set up electronic discussions, task lists and calendars, etc. People can have "offline" meetings, saving time and gas. SharePoint's document libraries make much better use of disk space when compared to using email for document collaboration. (For some of us, this also helps to save our sanity.) The version control feature in SharePoint document libraries automates the tracking of changes to a document. This saves time and possibly lots of printed copies of each revision."

Susan adds, "In many ways, SharePoint saves time. Perhaps the time saved could be used to walk, bike, or use public transportation! " I know from personal experience that SharePoint can be quite useful. Several of us in the ACUS area had to do some application maintenance projections recently. We used to have to pass around an Excel spreadsheet with all of our responses which were then compiled by ACUS Director, Dr. Philip Baczewski. This year we could just go on to the UNTranet and fill out the form there and save our changes with no passing around needed. At first, I had to figure out some technical issues on my end but once I got the document functioning properly for my laptop, the collaborative form worked quickly and well.

High Performance Computing

Finally, though many may think of "environmentally friendly high performance computing" (HPC) as an oxymoron what with all the electrical power and air-conditioning needed to keep large server clusters happy and running well, this is an area contributing extensively to our earth's future. Many of the HPC cluster projects on campus including those managed by CITC's Academic Computing and User Services are churning away on biological and chemical simulations of global warming scenarios in an effort to come up with solutions to these pressing earth issues. As one ACUS staffer put it, "We are doing lots of research so that your children can still have frogs in the Amazon!"

Savin' the Green

Green computing practices not only save the earth, they also 'save the green' as in those nice, green dollar bills. As illustrated above, not only do most of these projects save on the power bills, they also allow for greater efficiency of physical resources and human energy. Think about ways you can practice green computing:

- Take online courses and/or send your professors assignments digitally instead of as a print out.

- Don't print out all those emails, save all your important documents to a flash drive "file cabinet" rather than printing them out and filing them in a real one.

- Be sure to configure the energy-saving settings on your desktop computer.

From UNT centralized computing all the way to your laptop, green computing is the way to go! See you at Earth Day! (Thanks to Tracy Hansen, Craig Terrell, Susan Pierce, Larry Talley, Philip Baczewski, and DaMiri Young for their help on this article.)

BOOKMARK

Return to top

Benchmarks Online

How Green is Our Learning?

By **Jane Himmel**, Associate Director, CLEAR

UNT's technology resources play a vital role in providing options for green learning.

Blackboard Vista, our centrally-supported learning management system, enables faculty and students to conduct course work and activities in a secure, web-based environment. UNT continues to have the largest number of semester credit hours (SCHs) online of any public senior institution in Texas. Student enrollment in distributed learning courses at UNT has grown from 2251 in the fall semester 2000 to 13,333 in the fall semester 2008.

In 2007, UNT added Wimba Classroom to its suite of distance learning technology options. The addition of this synchronous, collaborative learning environment has enhanced courses already offered online while attracting more departments to consider online and blended learning. A lesser known tool available through Blackboard Vista is Wimba's Instant Messaging. The unique and especially green thing about Pronto is that it is powered by wind energy! Both Wimba Classroom and Pronto can be used not only for live classes, but for holding office hours one-on-one with students. Additionally, Wimba Classroom plays a role in non-academic areas as a virtual conference space for meetings with employees in multiple locations or for meetings with colleagues from other institutions.

In support of the President's Climate Commitment, the 2009 Learning Enhancement Grants Program included as one of its priorities a focus on green learning and gave special consideration to proposals that either contributed to reducing the university's carbon footprint or incorporated sustainability into the curriculum. Most of the projects awarded include objectives related to one or both of these criteria.

One other green technology option for faculty members online or in the traditional face-to-face classroom is Turnitin's Grademark. Grademark makes it possible for faculty members to accept and grade writing assignments online, eliminating the need for printing and manual grading. UNT has a free trial of Grademark through summer 2009.

While we have seen tremendous growth in online and blended learning offered at UNT over the last decade, only 6% of students take online courses only. 20% more take online courses, but drive to campus for traditional classes. Another 75% are taking only campus-based classes. With the technology tools available it is possible to do more to reduce the number of trips students and faculty make to campus while maintaining a thriving and interactive learning environment. It is also possible to use some of these tools to reduce printing and make assignment management and grading easier.

For more information about learning technology platforms or about developing an online or blended learning course, contact your CLEAR Instructional Consultant or Jane Himmel, Associate Director at jane.himmel@unt.edu.

How Green is Our Learning?

[Return to top](#)

Benchmarks Online

Page One

Campus Computing News

UNT Computing Goes Green!

How Green is Our Learning?

Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade

Today's Cartoon

RSS Matters

The Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

Short Courses

IRC News

Staff Activities

Subscribe to Benchmarks *Online*

Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade

By Cathy Gonzalez, EIS Training, Communication, and Administration Manager, CITC

The EIS Portal System named myUNT (http://my.unt.edu) is being upgraded to an enhanced version of software. Beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 25th, the myUNT portal (http://my.unt.edu) will be unavailable until Monday, April 27th. The HSC portal (http://my.hsc.unt.edu/) will not be available for its current users during this system outage. The outage will not impact student services independent of the portal, such as Blackboard Vista and EagleConnect. Business processes accessed through myUNT, such as Workforce Administration, Time and Labor, Records and Enrollment will be available through https://myLS.unt.edu. Cognos Budget reports and employee leave balances normally viewed through the portal will not be accessible.

The upgrade provides major improvements that make portal navigation easier and more intuitive. A new feature in the improved portal is the "myUNT Message Center." The Message Center allows custom messages to be created and targeted to individuals or groups by UNT student service departments. Advantages of the Message Center (versus sending emails) include:

- Elimination of email bounce backs

- Reduction in student inquiries due to not receiving documents, letters, or deadline information

- Tracking to know if recipients have "read" the message

- Notification of a waiting message via text messaging, if desired

The upgrade team realizes there is never an ideal time to take a mission-critical service down. Every effort has been made to schedule this outage during a time that has the least impact on students and their ability to access self-service functionality (financial aid, registration, grades, payments, etc.). The primary goal in picking the outage dates is to minimize the impact on the whole UNT community. Your understanding during this time is greatly appreciated by the UNT Computing and Information Technology Center.

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Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade

Questions and comments should be directed to benchmarks@unt.edu

Benchmarks Online

Eaglemail to be shut down in May!

By Dr. Philip Baczewski, Director of Academic Computing and User Services

This is a slightly edited version of an article that appeared here last month. -- Ed.

Students are reminded that the deadline is May 18, 2009 to move from Eaglemail to EagleConnect. For all information and instructions on how to get connected to EagleConnect, go to: http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/

EagleConnect is the replacement for the aging Eaglemail system and incorporates great features never available before to UNT students including:

- Shared calendars and address books (pre-populated address book includes important UNT contacts!)

- Chat with your UNT friends, professors, and advisors

- Over 25 GB of online storage space for your documents

- Over 10 GB of space for your email

- Collaborative capabilities with the Office Live feature

- Easy integration with your cell phone

- Forwarding to other preferred email accounts

- Your account stays with you when you graduate for as long as you wish

EagleConnect works on both Windows and Macintosh platforms. *All UNT students currently using the Eaglemail system should migrate to the new system as soon as possible* and if you have never used the UNT email system before, now is the time to check out EagleConnect and become part of the campus communication community.

Check out these current and previous *Benchmarks Online* articles on EagleConnect too! - Ed.

- Creating an Appointment in EagleConnect
- Configuring your Mail client to check EagleConnect

Eaglemail to be shut down in May!

- [EagleConnect is Launched!](#)
- [EagleConnect for Alumni and Retirees](#)
- [Migrating email from Eaglemail to Outlook](#)
- [EagleConnect is Coming Soon!](#)
- [A new communication solution for UNT students](#)

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[Return to top](#)

Today's Cartoon

Benchmarks Online

Page One

Campus Computing News

UNT Computing Goes Green!

How Green is Our Learning?

Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade

Eaglemail to be shut down in May

Today's Cartoon

RSS Matters

The Network Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

Short Courses

IRC News

Staff Activities

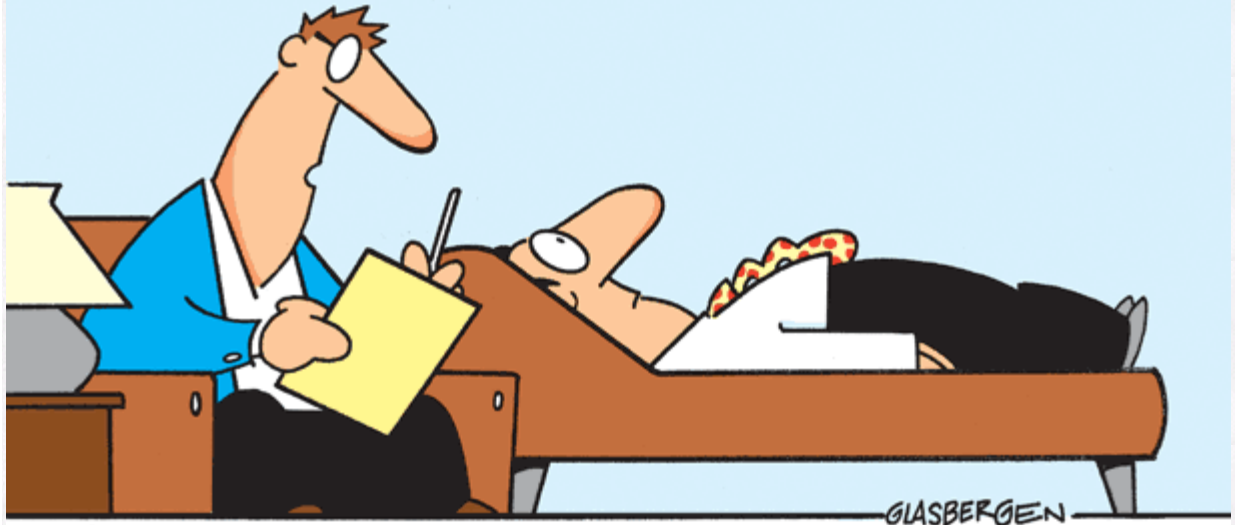Subscribe to Benchmarks *Online*

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"Of course you have a purpose in life. You pay taxes, don't you?"

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Return to top

Benchmarks Online

Don't Forget Our Monthly Columns!

By Claudia Lynch, *Benchmarks Online* **Editor**

In addition to our feature articles, *Benchmarks Online* publishes monthly columns that are focused on specific aspects of computing here at UNT (and beyond, in some cases). Check out what is waiting for you this month:

- **By the Numbers** - Not really a column, rather a feature, giving you a glimpse behind the scenes of the volumes of data, spam, etc. processed, managed, and otherwise handled here at UNT.

- **RSS Matters** - "RSS Matters" is the monthly column written by the Research and Statistical Support Group in Academic Computing Services. Their articles focus on topics of a statistical and/or research methods nature. **This month Patrick McLeod clues you in on "Data Mining Options for the UNT Community." Read all about it!**

- **The Network Connection** - "The Network Connection" may well be the longest running column in computer publishing history. Certainly in University of North Texas computer publishing history.

  This month, Dr. Baczewski's column is entitled "All in a Twitter." Click on the Network Connection link to see what the fuss is all about.

- **Link of the Month** - As it says on the top of the "Link of the Month" page, "Each month we highlight an online mailing list or website. Frequently the link is associated with UNT." **This month's link is to "Office of Sustainability." Click on the link above and check it out!**

- **Helpdesk FYI** - A new monthly feature from the CITC Helpdesk. Each month they will tackle a topic that has been of particular interest to callers/visitors to the Helpdesk. **This month Richard Sanzone, continues the EagleConnect conversation with "Creating an Appointment in EagleConnect." Click on the link above for more information.**

- **Short Courses** - Every semester, Academic Computing Services (ACS) offers short courses on computer-related topics, many of them having to do with statistical research. This column keeps you up-to-date on what is being offered and when as well as other training opportunities.

  Short courses are over for this semester, but will be back this

summer.

Need some research/statistical training? *Special classes* can always be arranged with the RSS staff, and they are always available for consultation. **Click on the Short Courses link above for information about classes likely to be offered next semester and/or other training resources.**

- **IRC News** - As their Webpage says, "the IRC is an advisory and oversight body created to foster communication and cooperation between and among UNT information resources providers and users." We publish the minutes of the IRC meetings each month, when they are available. **There were no minutes published this month.**

- **Staff Activities** - This column focuses on new employees, people who are no longer employed at the Computing and Information Technology Center, awards and recognitions and other items of interest are featured here.

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Return to top

Benchmarks Online

Network Connection

By **Dr. Philip Baczewski**, Director of Academic Computing and User Services

All in a Twitter

It seems that the latest unavoidable Internet service is Twitter. Everyone wants you to follow their Twitter post, from friends, to celebrities, and even news organizations. It seems that no tweet should go unnoticed.

But, let's pause a bit to explain what we are discussing here. Twitter is an Internet service started in 2006 that can be described as a micro-blogging site. By now, we all know that a blog (short for web log), is an Internet site where those with nothing to say can do so in hundreds or thousands of words. Or, if you are less cynical, you could define blogs as the ultimate democratization of observation and expression on line. Twitter distills that concept down to posts of a maximum of 140 characters at a time, called "tweets", so that it's possible to report significant information like what you had for breakfast or what the weather is to an audience who obviously can't get more than enough information about the goings on in your life.

To me, Twitter seems like the Internet equivalent of passing notes in class, which may explain its appeal to the younger segment of the population. But, the Twitter bug has apparently hit world wide and spans all segments of society.[*] When you sign up for the Twitter service, you are invited to follow the tweets of sports celebrities, musicians, and others of the celebrity class. You can also follow news organizations that might be national or local in order to keep up with important breaking stories, like the reported appearance of the Virgin Mary on a pancake. But that's not all. You can read a novel 140 characters at a time, or even possibly pursue your college degree.

Can you stand the heat if your tweet mistreats?

But Twitter may not be without its hazards or complications. Beware of what you tweet, or you, like Courtney Love, could be subject to a libel suit if your tweet mistreats. Likewise, if you repeat a tweet, you might get some heat, because a tweet, like a blog, may be subject to copyright. That topic was broached by Dallas's own NBA owner, dot-com billionaire, and cartoon star Mark Cuban. He poses the question as to whether a tweet is private communication amongst a limited circle, or a publication subject to copyright. Of course, this is complicated by Cuban's celebrity status, and the question as to whether his tweet is a comment between "friends" or a statement in a public forum.

So the next time someone offers you a tweet, you'll know that that is not a misspoken offer of dessert. It is an entree to a new level of understanding among people. For example, what can lend more authenticity to celebrity tweets, than the fact that they may be virtually

penned by ghost writers? But, wait a second -- isn't Twitter like the teacher intercepting your note and reading it aloud to the entire class? It's obvious that this whole Twitter phenomenon needs much more philosophical consideration as long as its done if 140 characters or less. Oh, and if you're wondering, cereal and it looks like the rain has stopped for a while.

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* Follow UNT on Twitter at http://Twitter.com/UNTnews

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Return to top

Benchmarks Online

- Page One
- **Campus Computing News**
- **UNT Computing Goes Green!**
- **How Green is Our Learning?**
- **Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade**
- **Eaglemail to be shut down in May**
- **Today's Cartoon**
- **RSS Matters**
- **The Network Connection**
- Link of the Month
- **Helpdesk FYI**
- **Short Courses**
- **IRC News**
- **Staff Activities**

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Link of the Month

Each month we highlight an online mailing list or website. Frequently the link is associated with UNT.

Office of Sustainability

The new Office of Sustainability, created in early 2009, has a website (still under construction), and big plans. As noted on the website, "UNT President Gretchen Bataille signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in January 2008. The ACUPCC requires UNT to:

- Complete a greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

- Within two years, set a target date and interim milestone for becoming climate neutral.

- Take immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by choosing from a list of short term actions.

- Integrating sustainability into the curriculum and make it part of the educational experience.

- Making the action plan, inventory and progress reports publicly available."

Check out the sustainability website:

http://www.sustainable.unt.edu/

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Return to top

Benchmarks Online

Helpdesk FYI

By Richard Sanzone, User Services Manager
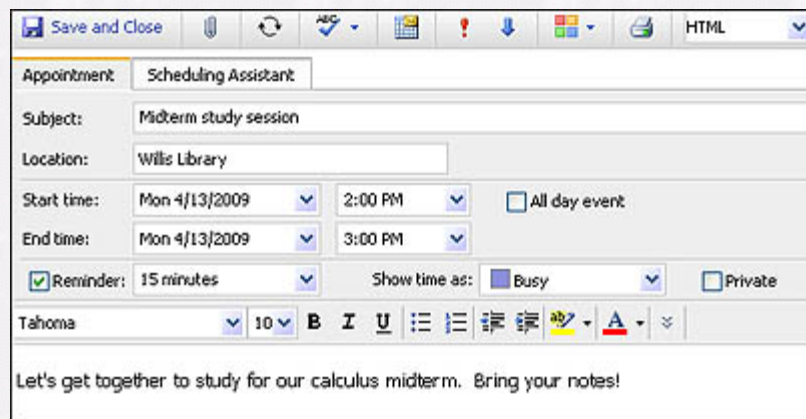
Creating an Appointment in EagleConnect

The EagleConnect system has an appointment feature that allows you to create and send appointments that will appear on your calendar.
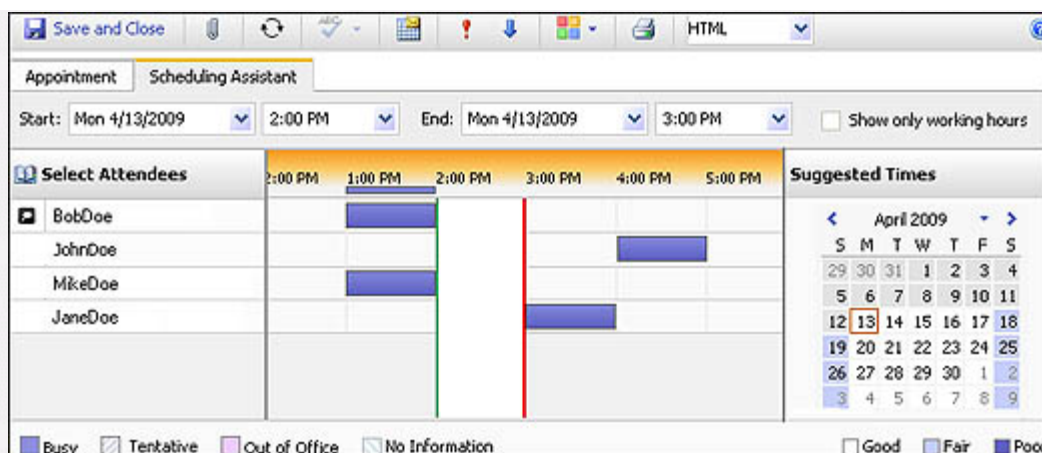
Create an Appointment

Login to EagleConnect. Click the arrow next to the "New" button and select "Appointment".
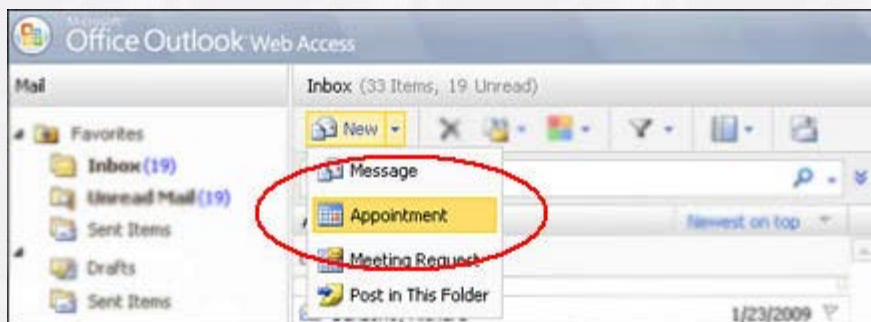
The appointment composition window will appear:

Enter the appointment details, including Subject, Location, Date and Time, and a Summary. Click the "Scheduling Assistant" tab.

Enter the attendees in the left column. You can type a name in the column to search the address book, or simply type an email address. Check for scheduling conflicts and make any necessary adjustments to the meeting time. The center column will indicate any other scheduled events on each individual's calendar. This feature is available if the recipient is an EagleConnect user or a UNT Exchange (employee) user. Click the "Save and Close" button on the top to send the appointment. The appointment will appear on your calendar.

Appointment Status

Click the "Calendar" tab in the menu on the bottom left of your EagleConnect inbox.
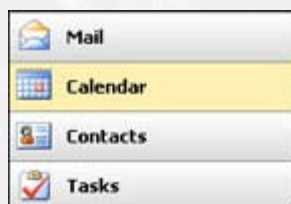
Your calendar will appear with your appointments indicated.

Click an appointment on the calendar.

The appointment details will appear.

Click the "Tracking" tab on the top to view the status of the meeting attendees. Look in the "Response" column to see if an attendee has accepted the appointment.

BOOKMARK

http://www.unt.edu/benchmarks/archives/back.htm as well as consult the UNT Helpdesk - http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/
Questions and comments should be directed to benchmarks@unt.edu

Benchmarks Online

- **Page One**
- **Campus Computing News**
- **UNT Computing Goes Green!**
- **How Green is Our Learning?**
- **Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade**
- **Eaglemail to be shut down in May**
- **Today's Cartoon**
- **RSS Matters**
- **The Network Connection**
- **Link of the Month**
- **Helpdesk FYI**
- **Short Courses**
- **IRC News**
- **Staff Activities**
- **Subscribe to Benchmarks Online**

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.

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* 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.

BOOKMARK

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. The schedule can be found here. All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.

Originally published, April 2009 -- Please note that information published in *Benchmarks Online* is likely to degrade over time, especially links to various Websites. To make sure you have the most current information on a specific topic, it may be best to search the UNT Website - http://www.unt.edu . You can also search **Benchmarks Online** - http://www.unt.edu/benchmarks/archives/back.htm as well as consult the UNT Helpdesk - http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/ Questions and comments should be directed to benchmarks@unt.edu

IRC News

Benchmarks Online

- **Page One**
- **Campus Computing News**
- **UNT Computing Goes Green!**
- **How Green is Our Learning?**
- **Planned Outage to myUNT Portal for Software Upgrade**
- **Eaglemail to be shut down in May**
- **Today's Cartoon**
- **RSS Matters**
- **The Network Connection**
- **Link of the Month**
- **Helpdesk FYI**
- **Short Courses**
- **IRC News**
- **Staff Activities**

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Research and Statistical Support
University of North Texas

RSS Matters

Link to the last RSS article here: Free your research: Open source and other alternatives to cut your costs and improve productivity as a graduate student. - Ed.

Data Mining Options for the UNT Community

By Patrick McLeod, Research and Statistical Support Services Consultant

Even before our economy took the downward turn that we're currently wading through, corporations, institutions and organizations of all kinds were investing non-trivial amounts of resources in improving efficiencies. Whether it's called "reducing churn" or "realizing efficiencies" or some other terminology, the same group of techniques lies at the heart of these ideas: Data mining.

There are several data mining options available to the UNT research community that, depending on your classification (full-time faculty, academic, etc.), might be a good fit for your data mining needs. The two primary data mining tools that I recommend to folks asking for advice here in the office are the SAS suite and Weka.

The SAS suite offers a set of tools that are widely used in the business world for a variety of statistical and analytical needs. The is one particular tool in our SAS suite that pertains to data mining that has the lion's share of the data mining market in the business world: Enterprise Miner. The current version of Enterprise Miner is 5.3. It is available to those users who qualify for the Teaching and Research license for SAS at UNT (full time faculty and staff engaged in academic teaching and research activities and sponsored graduate students). For more information about the qualifications for a sponsored graduate student, please see the following article from the April 2008 edition of *Benchmarks Online*. Enterprise Miner is currently not a part of our Administrative license.

Using Enterprise Miner does come with some non-trivial overhead, though. In order to install Enterprise Miner on a computer, the user (or the user's support staff) will need to install a whole host of SAS services and platforms such as SAS Analytics, SAS Metadata Server, SAS Management Console, etc. All of these services are tied to the user account on your Windows machine and some of them will require administrative level access in order to function properly. I've been supporting SAS at UNT for over six years now and I still run into issues with the web of dependencies that make Enterprise Miner tick. Another thing to

consider with Enterprise Miner is that the current version of it is not compatible with Windows Vista in any version nor is it compatible with Windows XP Pro. You can find out more about installing Enterprise Miner here: http://support.sas.com/documentation/onlinedoc/miner/install53.pdf .

A powerful open source machine learning software that is offers some of the functionality of Enterprise Miner that I am spending more time with and expanding my training on is Weka. Weka is written in Java and is a project of the University of Waikato in New Zealand. Weka has a nice wiki and since it is written in Java, it can be installed on a wide variety of platforms as long as you have the necessary version of Java.

I am in the early stages of using Weka, but at this stage I would say that it is a very effective alternative to machine learning approaches that some researchers might use in SAS Enterprise Miner and without the overhead. I hope that some or all of you have found this rundown of interest and, as always, if you have any questions about Enterprise Miner or Weka, please email me at Patrick.Mcleod@unt.edu. Until next time, happy trails!

BOOKMARK

Return to top

Benchmarks Online

Page One

Campus
 Computing News

UNT Computing
 Goes Green!

How Green is Our
 Learning?

Planned Outage
 to myUNT Portal
 for Software
 Upgrade

Eaglemail to be
 shut down in May

Today's Cartoon

 RSS Matters

The Network
 Connection

Link of the Month

Helpdesk FYI

Short Courses

IRC News

 Staff Activities

Subscribe to
Benchmarks
 Online

Short Courses

By **Claudia Lynch**, *Benchmarks Online* **Editor**

Short courses are over for this semester, but will be back this summer. Surf over to the Short Courses page to see what sort of classes are likely to be taught.

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.**

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses geared to their class needs from ACS. 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 (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 newly re-designed [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.

Tutorials are available from CWS on a variety of [topics](#).

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 WebCT Vista.

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](#).

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)."

BOOKMARK

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[Return to top](#)

Benchmarks Online

Staff Activities

Transitions

New Employees:

- **Cynthia Claiborne,** Programmer Analyst, Financial Aid & Scholarships Systems (AIS).

- **Jessica Tate,** Classroom Support Coordinator, Classroom Support Services.

- **Thomas Miller,** Computer Systems Manager, OS & Directory Services (ESTS).

- **Laura Routon,** Technical Writer, Messaging, ESTS, (part-time).

- **Andrew Wojciechowski,** Computer Equipment Operator, Computer Operations (part-time).

- **Wesley MacKay,** Computer Equipment Operator, Computer Operations (part-time).

- **Joseph Liechty**, Computer Support Specialist, Telecommunications.

No longer working in the Computing and Information Technology Center:

- **Catherine Hardy**, Computer Systems Manager, **retired** March 31 from Academic Computing and User Services.

- **Christian Lee Dovel,** Classroom Support Tech Manager, Classroom Support Services.

- **Mark Evans**, Communications Manager, Data Communications.

- **Golda George,** Programmer, Constituent Relationship Management Development Systems (AIS)

- **Brian Thompson,** Programmer Analyst, Constituent Relationship Management Development Systems (AIS)

- **Kelly McCawley**, Communications Manager, Data Communications.

- **Luis Sanchez**, Computer Equipment Operator, Computer Operations.

Changes, Awards, Recognition, Publications, etc.

Baczewski and Herrington selected to receive Provost's Award

The Evaluation of Teaching Committee that included **Dr. Philip Baczewski,** Director of Academic Computing and User Services**,** and **Dr. Richard Herrington,** ACUS Research and Statistical Support Services Consultant, as members, was selected to receive the **Provost's Award for Extraordinary Professional Service to the University of North Texas**. Each committee member will be awarded a framed certificate and a gift certificate at the Provost's Spring Meeting with the faculty on April 16. The committee provided recommendations to the provost regarding the implementation of a University-wide student evaluation of teacher effectiveness.

Presentations, performances

Dr. Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, Assistant Director - Academic Computing and User Services, had her two pieces, *EvenMoreduSt* and *Spellbound* presented in concert at the [American Society for Cybernetics](#) conference at Evergreen State University in Olympia, Washington. Hinkle-Turner also gave a paper, "Scattering Dust." Hinkle-Turner's piece, *EvenMoreduSt*, will be presented Thursday April 16 at the [Society for Electroacoustic Music](#) in the United States annual conference, held this year at the Sweetwater Sound facility in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dr. Richard Anderson, Information Security Coordinator and **Patrick McLeod**, Research and Statistical Support Services Consultant, presented papers at the 2009 meeting of the [Document Academy](#) in Madison, WI on March 29, 2009. Anderson's paper was titled "A Quantitative Model of Ambiguity." If that title intrigues you, you can see an abstract [here](#).

McLeod's paper is titled "Comparative Assessment and Identification of Image Sources" and was co-authored with Melody McCotter. According to McLeod, "The paper evaluated different computational methods for assessing and discriminating between different digital images generated with different devices of a common subject. The goal was to identify methods that would allow for discrimination between the devices generating the images from pixel-level data in the images themselves without using the EXIF metadata attached to the images. The methods examined were RGB histograms, luminance measures, Canny edge detection and Hough transformations."

Congratulations are in order for:

- **Richard Sanzone**, has been promoted to **User Services Manager**, Academic Computing and User Services. See the Campus Computing News [article](#) in this issue of *Benchmarks Online* for further details about this new position as well as Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner's new position that was announced last month.

Soaring Eagles

The following people were recognized as Soaring Eagles in the April/May issue of *[HR Connections](#)*:

- **Jonathan Mac Edwards**, Academic Computing and User Services.

- **Jason Gutierrez**, Messaging.
- **Tracy Hansen**, Imaging.
- **Jason Myre**, Messaging.
- **Bahram Paiani**, Messaging.
- **Ginny Richards**, EIS Tools Support.
- **Richard Sanzone**, Academic Computing and User Services.
- **Scott Seymour**, Imaging.
- **Mike Shirley**, Student Records Systems Development.
- **Craig Terrell**, OS & Directory Services.
- **Larry Vick**, Telecommunications.
- **Yancey Yeargan**, OS & Directory Services.

Outstanding Staff

Look who was honored at the President's Sack Lunch in February!

Administrative Services, CITC, from left: Charlotte Russell, Lin Nesloney, Rhonda Holmes, Donna Holley, Sue Elle Richey, Anna West, Jennifer LaFleur, Patricia Bell.

Employees recognized for years of service to UNT

These CITC employees were recognized in *InHouse* recently:

30 years of service -- **Claudia Lynch**, Computer Systems Manager, Academic Computing and User Services.

10 years of service -- **Stuart Christian**, Communications Manager, Data Communications and **Jason Gutierrez**, Computer Systems Manager, Enterprise Systems Technical Services.

Fun Fact Winners

CITC staff continue to bring home the prizes. Congratulations to **Troy Price,** Programmer Analyst, Constituent Relationship Management Development Systems (AIS), He was a winner in last week's InHouse prizes.

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