networking into the 21st century

important changes... please read!

As the large and growing number of resident students connecting directly to the University network attests, “the Net” is where it’s at. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) is committed to monitoring and upgrading our network technologies in a never-ending quest to serve the computing needs of our campus constituents. Several big changes are in progress to increase our network speed, reliability, and security. See the OIT web site HOT! news page for more details on all these changes, at www.philau.edu/oit/hotnews.

proxy server

For students, faculty, and staff on campus. By this Friday, September 24, your web browser must be configured with our proxy information, or you will not be able to view web pages from the internet. Windows computers with Internet Explorer may configure automatically; others require a change by YOU! See specific directions for your web browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) on the HOT! news page as listed above.

security certificate

For all students and off-campus faculty and staff. Remember to use Outlook Web Access (OWA) for e-mail. OIT does not recommend Outlook Express, Netscape Mail, Eudora or other “POP mail clients.” OWA allows you to access your email from any computer on the web—from a cybercafé, a networked library, a friend’s AOL dial-up, or from Mom’s office. All you need to do is type our OWA web address and log in.

One new requirement is that you accept our “security certificate” the first time you access your email from the web. This should be a simple click or two on a “continue” button and allows us to add the long-awaited feature of changing your network password from the web.

VPN client

For off-campus students, faculty, and staff using a dial-up service and requiring access to home directories or library databases. (Off-campus users who need web and email access only do not need this service.) Finally we have a solution for accessing the restricted library databases from off campus. Installing Virtual Private Network (VPN) software on your home computer will allow you to log onto the University network while you’re dialed-up to the 'net via your ISP.

dial-up service

All faculty, staff, and students who need network access from off campus should contract with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) for dial-up service—and now some are free! See our HOT! news page for the story. The limited inbound modem pool cannot meet the needs of our campus due to technical restrictions on East Falls phone line service. Of course, access to our local network resources, including home directories and restricted library databases, will still be available (see VPN, above).
computer labs on campus

OIT maintains five high-end Windows NT labs, four in Search Hall and one at our Bucks County campus. In addition, we contribute to the upkeep of 16 specialized departmental labs on the main campus. See what’s been happening this summer:

academic labs

307 Search and the Bucks County Windows lab have both been upgraded with all-new Pentium III computers, running at 450MHz, with 128Mb RAM and 12Gb hard drives. Video capture cards and Macromedia Director video editing software at the Bucks lab create a multimedia learning environment.

graphic design “fab lab”

Graphic Design majors rejoice! The despised “scab lab” is no more, replaced with the 15 fastest computers on campus: Macintosh G3s running at 450MHz, with 128Mb RAM and 6Gb hard drives (except the scanning station, which weighs in with 256Mb RAM and a 12Gb drive). Keith Czaban, OIT’s newest staff member and a recent University grad, has taken over the maintenance of the graphic design labs. Keith reports that no other computers on campus can touch the speed of the new Macs, as proved by their performance with the SETI@home software (see top of next column for info on SETI).

learning center math lab

The outdated Mac LCs in the Math Lab have been replaced with eight Pentium computers running Maple and FunctionProbe, with a shared laser printer.

industrial design lab

Three brand-new computers (two Pentium IIIs and one Macintosh G3) and a color laser printer have been added to the InD lab in Smith House. The most eclectic lab on campus, InD provides a mixture of Silicon Graphics (Unix), Windows, and Macintosh computers for its majors.

digital studio

The School of Architecture & Design and Professor Rob Fleming have created a new space for 4th-year elective students with six new Pentium III computers running Windows NT, AutoCAD 14, AccuRender, 3D StudioViz, and more. Peripherals include scanners and digital cameras.

office 2000 software

OIT plans to upgrade the academic labs from Office 97 to Office 2000 between semesters this year. All the Office 2000 applications, with the exception of the database product Access, are backward compatible, which means you can continue to share files between Office 2000 in the labs and Office 97 on your home machine. Of course, if you do a lot of database work, you may want to put Office 2000 on your holiday wish list (available at academic pricing from the campus store).

groovy services from OIT

Don’t forget our standard services, yours for the asking:

- create your own web site with up to 10Mb of data storage (see what students are up to at http://student.philau.edu).
- save your files from any networked computer to your home directory (up to 50Mb)
- check your email from any computer on the web with Outlook Web Access
- laser printing is still free in the academic labs in Search Hall
- now you can change your network password from Outlook Web Access

help us find intelligent life!

The University has become a significant player in the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. SETI@home, a scientific experiment hosted by UC Berkeley, coordinates thousands of individuals and organizations that contribute processing power from personal computers to analyze radio signals from space.

The Office of Information Technology urges you to consider joining in this historic cooperative effort. Do you have a powerful computer with access to the internet? Download the SETI@home software and soon you’ll be contributing to the cause.

With your help, Philadelphia University could break the Top 100 list of SETI searchers by November. Join the over one million world citizens who are currently seeking extraterrestrial life! See the OIT web site for more info and intriguing statistics.

telecom updates

(See www.philau.edu/telecom for more details.)

new cable carrier and channel line-up

Resident students have gained an expanded channel line-up from our new cable supplier, Time Warner. Our Telecom web site also gives information on how to sign up for premium channels, like HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, etc.

lower long-distance phone rate

OIT now offers resident students a great new rate on long-distance calls. (Unfortunately, IP residents are unable to use a University’s PIN this semester). Students get 9.9¢/minute calling both state-to-state and instate with no monthly fee or surcharge! (Compare that to 25¢-45¢ instate from many commercial services.) STC, our new billing agent, offers automated account info at x2628.

ten-digit dialing

Just one more reminder that our area now requires 10-digit dialing for all local-area calls—long distance still requires 1 + area code + number. Remember this means that if you use a dial-up Internet Service Provider, you will have to reconfigure your dialing software to dial the area code.