

News from around UIT

NODE 4

December 2013



Taunya Dressler (above) and Ryan Hines (right) during a process session



3D printing at Marriott

Knowledge Commons now offers 3D printing to students and staff at a price you won't find anywhere off campus.

.05



Pop quiz: Where is this?

Thousands of people walk by the UOnline center every day without knowing it exists. Learn about what it does.

.11

Business process work: It's not like 'Office Space'

Analysis helps departments build the proper framework to achieve their goals before seeking a technology solution

Just about every time UIT's business process analysis team meets with a new group, it has to put to rest the same negative stereotype.

"We're not the Bobs from 'Office Space,'" says Jim Urry, one of four business process analysts in the Strategic Planning and Communication department.

For comedy's sake, the two clueless "efficiency experts" known as the Bobs in the 1999 film are a brilliant depiction of everything wrong with the practice. But Cary Lopez, Jan Lovett, Ryan Hines and Urry aim to show that in reality, there's enormous value in uncovering nuances in "the way we do things" that no one in an organization is truly able to see until it's laid bare in front of them — usually on a wall full of brightly colored sticky notes.

"We go through a lot of sticky notes," acknowledges Hines, "hundreds, sometimes thousands on a job."

A business process is a specific action that begins with a triggering event, may follow a meandering path through several functional units, and ends with a specific result. Something like enrolling a student, for example. To be

See process,
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Governance decisions



At a glance

Support Services

Oct. 16 • Pat Hanna was nominated co-chair. New Dean of Students Lori McDonald also joins the group. The OITC must approve the nominees to make them official. Several subcommittees discussed their reviews of the UIT project/request list to prioritize requests. The committee voted not to stop any projects that can be completed by December.

Infrastructure

Oct. 24 • The hospital will be fully compliant with payment card industry standards by December. Mandatory password expiration and multi-factor authentication will be deployed on a targeted basis, applying to those with administrative privileges to sensitive data. The recommendation was made that any budget for buildings donated to the university must have appropriate consideration for IT needs. Unified Communications was approved to seek funding for the Box cloud storage solution.

Faculty IT Advisory

Nov. 15 • The Faculty IT Advisory Committee was given an update on the process landscape of the university, which was presented by Paul Burrows. The group then discussed its role. The FITAC voiced a desire to ensure IT governance communication is structured in such a way as to be open and transparent.

Find portfolio membership, agendas and summaries at cio.utah.edu.

Plan, then build and run

Plan. Build. Run.

It's a mantra that University Information Technology staff will hear a lot more in the coming months. It sounds simple, but inherent in these three words is an important concept that will guide UIT's customer service philosophy for years to come. As we embrace this approach and align the organization to build strength in each of those areas, we will move from being asked to do more with less to being able to do more with more.

The Plan-Build-Run approach shifts the emphasis from individual, separately supported IT functions to developing, deploying, and operating solutions that meet the evolving needs of our customers.

UIT is making initial progress towards implementing this strategy by taking the first steps to separate the build and run portions of the Common Infrastructure Services area. With the recent announcement of the formation of the Solutions Planning and Design (SPD) unit, we now have a UIT unit dedicated to the planning aspect.

With the close collaboration of the cognizant architects and engineering group, the SPD team will work directly with the customer through every step of the planning process — from initial request, to basic concept, through consideration by IT governance, into brass-tacks details, and finally, to the delivery of complete, build-ready specifications bundled for specific releases. Thoughtful planning will help the build team obtain more information up front and help them to manage releases more efficiently. For example, USS delivered hundreds of releases last year. With the better planning, we intend to reduce the number of releases significantly. We also anticipate that planning will help us build better solutions, which will help the Run team. Finally, feedback from the Build and Run processes will help us Plan better.

The IT governance portfolios agree that the maintenance of existing UIT services over time has risen to a level that hinders the University's ability to grow and adapt its technologies to meet ever-changing needs. They have urged UIT to find ways to reduce the amount of resources spent on maintaining existing platforms and shift them toward the development of new services. Effective planning has the potential to free up staff hours on maintenance and reduce project costs and resource allocation across the lifespan of a product. This improvement will go a long way toward balancing the effort expended on the each plan-build-run component.

UIT always has created solutions that help the University fulfill its diverse missions. We believe this emphasis on the planning, building, and running phases will allow UIT to be even more instrumental in meeting the needs of the University community.



Paula Millington
Director, Solution
Planning & Design

Joe Taylor becomes CIO at BYU-Idaho

University Support Services director has seen campus transition from mainframe to cloud-based technology

For a guy who all but forgot he even applied for a job at the University of Utah, it's been a pretty incredible 18 years.

As Joe Taylor winds down his career at the University of Utah and sets his sights on the challenge of being the Chief Information Officer at Brigham Young University – Idaho, he can look back at an impressive run.

It was almost a whim that Taylor, then working at space shuttle rocket manufacturer Thiokol, put in his resume for the assistant director of information management post in 1995. It took so long for anyone to get back to him that he had “almost just written it off” as not meant to be.

Both Taylor and the university are glad that wasn't the case.

Since 1998, Taylor has led the University Support Services group and has been instrumental in leading the University of Utah through some of the most exciting and revolutionary times higher education has ever seen.

“When I started here, we were still on the IBM mainframe,” he said. “This was pre-PeopleSoft, pre-client server, pre-everything on the Web. One of the things that's been really interesting has been the speed with which the technology we have changes generations.”

Taylor is quick to point out, though, that technology is a conduit for education, not a driver of it.

“On one side you have to stay up to date on technology and stay



Joe Taylor

aware of what's going on, but on the other side you can't make changes to your institutional strategy based on the changes the technology is making,” he said. “That has been and always will be one of the challenges of our industry and IT, is to make sure we are not letting the innovation in the IT industry drive the change in the higher education institution.”

Deputy Chief Information Officer Steve Corbató thinks Taylor has done

just that.

“I consider Joe Taylor to be one of the most consummate campus IT leaders that I've encountered. He has kept the mission of the university foremost while building both deep collaborations across campus and a very supportive environment for his team.”

Taylor is quick to praise his staff for their efforts.

“What I've really appreciated the
[See Taylor, pg. 4](#)

“I can honestly say that Joe is one of the best leaders that I have ever had the privilege to work with. He is smart, focused, and fair.”

— Rene Eborn,

USS Associate Director of Product Management

Taylor (continued from pg. 4)

most — and this is what I’ll miss and hopefully what I’ll find in my new opportunity — is uniformly a dedication to just work hard and get the job done. That doesn’t mean everyone is always in agreement or we’ve had nothing but unity and harmony around here, or within UIT or around the campus. The people at this university care about the University of Utah, and they ultimately come together with their differences of opinion and make it work.”

Those who have worked closely with Taylor over the years credit him with making USS a place where people could feel comfortable challenging and being challenged, growing at a pace as rapid as the technology they were implementing.

“Joe takes the time to listen to ideas, help formulate action plans based on those ideas and then support them,” said Jeff Hassett. “As one of his associate directors, I felt confident that if I had an issue and came with a viable solution, he would assist in developing a plan and make it happen. He basically allowed me to do what I needed to be successful.”

Despite a sometimes “rough exterior,” Taylor puts people first.

“Joe is an awesome person — he sincerely cares about everyone on the team and gets to know each person,” said Debbie Rakhsha, who will take over as interim director in Taylor’s stead.

Rene Eborn agreed.

“I can honestly say that Joe has been one of the best leaders that I have ever had the privilege to work with. He is smart, focused, and fair,” she said. “Over the years, he has been a change agent and has been the person that campus has looked to for so many solutions.”

That’s something Chief Information Officer Eric Denna also recognizes in Taylor.

“Over the past 2½ years he has been a change agent in UIT, demonstrating that a strong leader truly can improve the services, processes, structure, and culture of an organization,” Denna said.

Now Taylor wants to build upon that success in Rexburg.

“What’s exciting me about BYU-Idaho is the ability to offer education with creative business models, creative models of delivery, to diverse groups that may not have even had the opportunity to receive an education in the past,” he said.

Thanks to technology, schools can now enable those students to reach for their dreams.

“We have the ability to reach outside the classroom now and really find those people who desire education, desire a degree, desire to learn — and deliver that to them. Although many higher education institutions are focusing on that, BYU has a specific focus on that area, and that’s something I’m really excited about.”

A.D. Debbie Rakhsha named interim director

With Joe Taylor’s departure, Debbie Rakhsha has been named interim director of University Support Services.

Rakhsha has spent the past year as an associate director under Taylor, and will take the helm Dec. 16.

She has led the establishment of the Content & Usability team, which focuses on content management, design, and user experience for colleges, departments, and programs on campus.



Prior to joining USS she worked in Media Solutions for a year as the Web Solutions Manager, leading her team’s efforts to migrate more than 100 websites into OmniUpdate’s content management system.

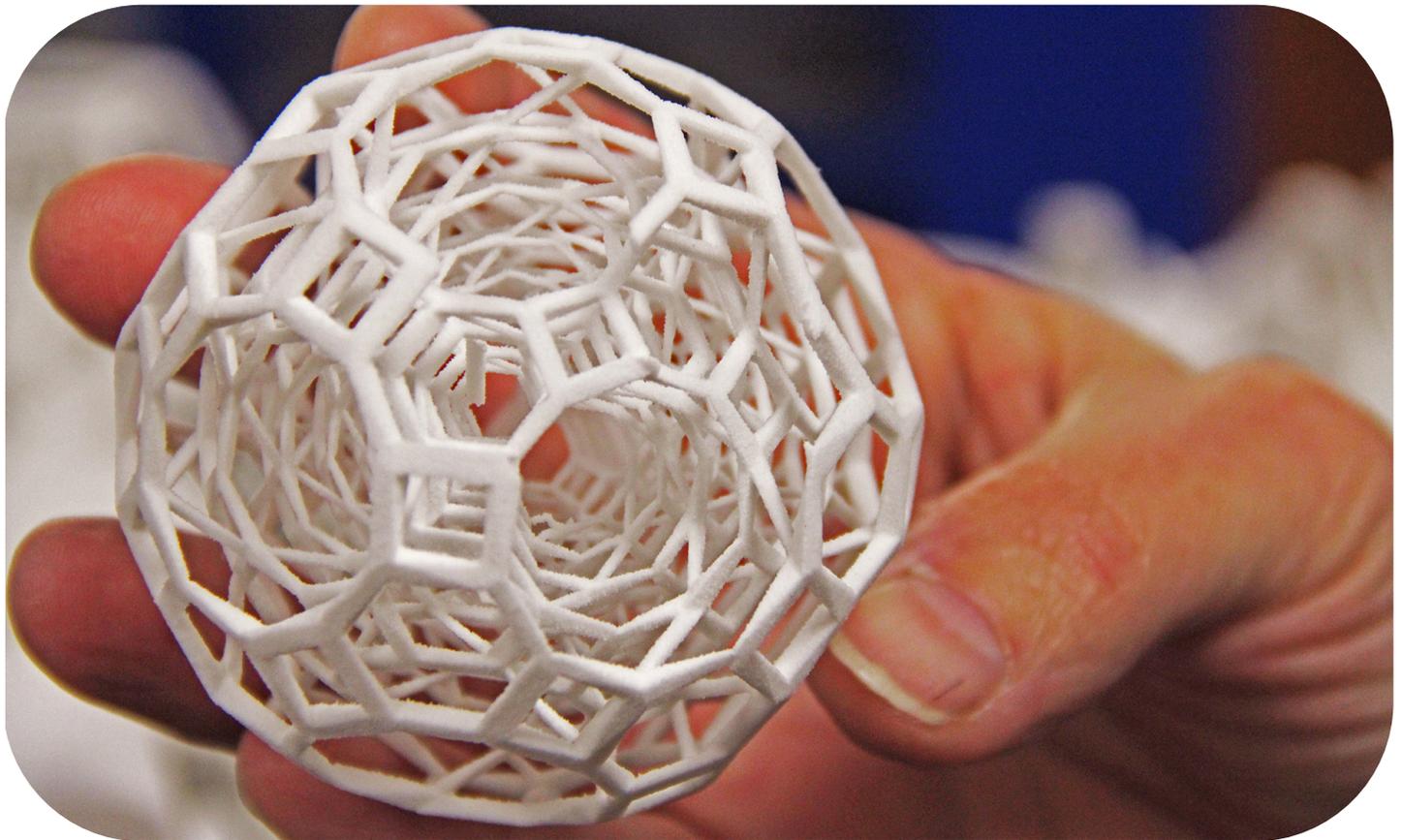
The migration enabled the strategic retirement of Vignette, HumIS, and other systems to consolidate and share resources. Before joining UIT, Debbie was Department Head of Application Development in IT Services at the Marriott Library.

During her 11 years at Marriott she worked in a variety of roles, including as the programming lead for database, desktop, and web applications. She led an integrated library system migration project that combined the catalog database records, image collections, and online journal subscriptions for all four of the University of Utah libraries.

Originally from Philadelphia, Rakhsha earned a BS in Education from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, and a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Utah.

A position opening for a permanent director will be posted soon, open to internal and external candidates.

Library offers inexpensive 3D printing

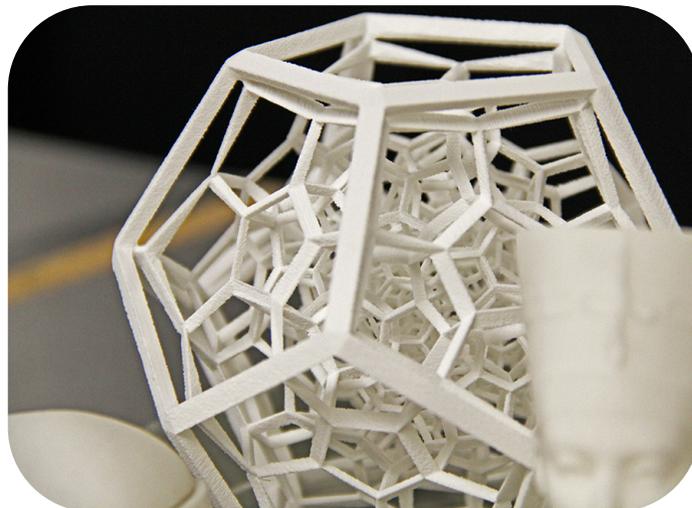


TJ Ferrill holds the off-white geometric shape in his palm, a 3D patchwork of increasingly larger layers connected by thin poles emanating from the center. It sort of resembles a soccer ball, though kicking it wouldn't work out so well.

Ferrill, a Student Computing Services supervisor, printed the piece on the Marriott Library's new ProJet 160, a 3D printer that binds a fine powder together to create innumerable objects of amazing intricacy. The final output is still brittle, but Ferrill "infiltrates" it with one of several hardeners he has tested to improve durability.

"This is really hard, and we were curious. So we just dropped it to see what happens," he said.

And the hardener worked?



"Well no, it broke," he says, laughing.

There's still a lot to learn about the technology, but head of Student Computing Services Matt Irsik is

excited about opening up the capability to students, staff, and faculty for a reasonable price.

"Say you're in engineering, and

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Above: TJ Ferrill holds an object printed on the Marriott Library's ProJet 160

Left: An object with layers of pentagonal cells

3D (continued from pg. 5)

you have an assignment and you actually have to show proof of a project," he says, twisting a 3D-printed ring that glides along 3D-printed bearings. "Something like this here, it operates."

Anyone can bring an STL file to Ferrill and Irsik to print off their piece. There's a \$10 setup fee per project, and then a \$5 charge per cubic inch of powder used in the final product.

The ProJet 160 prints in micro layers, laying a dusting of powder across the 9-by-5-by-7-inch build box and then squirting bonding agent from an inkjet print head wherever there should be a section of object. The process takes about an hour per vertical inch, Ferrill says. After the printing finishes, the whole block of powder is transferred to a secondary unit, where the unbonded powder is blown off and vacuumed away to be used in another project.

This isn't the first 3D printer on campus, but others are more or less specific to certain faculty members or departments.

"It makes sense for an organization like the library to take on a project like this because we're interdisciplinary," Ferrill says.

The \$20,000 package was



Right: Matt Irsik explains the weak points in a printed piece
Bottom left: TJ Ferrill uses a program to set up the printer



funded by student computing fees after attempts for grant money proved unsuccessful.

"Generally grants like to fund things that are new and innovative, and the 3D printer has established itself on campuses as a thing that is not innovative any more, but still necessary," Ferrill says. "So you're out of the realm of grant funding, but suddenly into the realm of campus is willing to pitch in."

Adds Irsik: "We're also thinking

that this is probably not our final 3D printer. The goal is to get interest, create some kind of flow, and create a pricing structure for future service operations. I get a feeling in another three years or five years this is going to change so greatly we'll want to get new technology."



Check it out
For information about 3D printing at the Marriott Library, visit the Knowledge Commons section of the Marriot Library website at www.lib.utah.edu.

*Process,
From Page 1*

effective, you have to look at the process through the eyes of the

“customer,” the entity that activates the initial trigger and expects the end result.

So how can outsiders – with little to no knowledge of what a group does – come in with a pile of sticky notes and rolls of paper to help those who do the work walk away with a better understanding of their job?

“We’re not here to tell you how to run your business,” Urry says. “I’m not necessarily an expert in providing benefits. But I am an expert in telling you how to lay out your business process and look for inefficiencies.”

To do that, the team employs the methods of Alec Sharp, a world-renowned guru in the facilitation of process analysis who believes the most effective and powerful way to improve the business is to enlist the help of the front-line employees who actually do the work.

He stresses convening a broad range of workers in a blame-free environment where they are empowered to talk about what really goes on in the business and can be essential in creating a better future for it.

“I’ve worked with a lot of different methodologies,” says Lopez, who joined the University of Utah with a wealth of experience in business



Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski shares a thought during a process session

process work. “His methodology, I was kind of skeptical at the beginning, honestly, because it seems so simple – Really? Sticky notes and big sheets of paper? – but there is a brilliance in doing it that way.”

In each session, a group will follow a process from beginning to end, typically answering the question “who gets the work next?” It’s a deceptively simple query that forces people to really examine their workflow. (Person B has the next

task in line after Person A, but does Person A actually send the work through inter-office mail, which takes it back to a central processing area to be sorted before being routed back to Person B, adding 36 hours of delay into the process?)

“Everybody is operating under the best of intentions,” Lopez says. “But without understanding both how you impact somebody else and how their work impacts you, your best of intentions might actually be harming them and harming the end customer.”

To understand that workflow, dozens or hundreds of sticky notes labeled with steps in the process are placed on a long, large sheet of paper in a “swim lane diagram,” where each actor in the process gets a row.

“When you actually diagram something and put it up on a wall so it’s visual,” Lovett says, “people understand

where maybe they aren’t equipped to fulfill a service, or they’re not staffed correctly to fulfill a service.”

That understanding drives home the reasons why change is needed.

“Process analysis work is a powerful tool for examining how work is done across different functional silos. In doing this, we get a holistic view of what the customers experience as they navigate our various services from start to finish and across various functions,”

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*Process,
From Page 7*

says Paula Millington, director of Solution Planning and Design. “This exercise generally reveals a lot of

specific ideas for improving the customer experience – and the improvements are pretty obvious to all who participate.”

According to Sharp, there are six enabling areas to any business process: workflow, information technology, human resources, metrics and measurements, policies, and facilities. Deficiencies in any of those areas can make it more difficult to fulfill the mission and vision of an institution, and yet many times people believe an IT solution will make up for problems in the other areas.

“We have been learning for years that if an organization focuses first on technology, the likelihood is high that the technology will fail,” says University of Utah Chief Information Officer Eric Denna. “If the focus is



Ryan Hines and Cary Lopez add another layer to the process chart

first on process, then on technology, there is a much higher likelihood that the technology will succeed.”

Technology doesn’t fix a bad business process – it just makes it happen faster. By first identifying the best business practice, then adopting technology that supports that model, organizations can better address the needs of customers, employees, and stakeholders.

So it makes sense for UIT to be invested in helping to identify those practices before trying to wrap a new technology around an outdated way of doing things. That can lead to its own problems, says Lopez.

“There’s an assumption when we walk in that if something is found in the ‘dream state’ that is IT – we need this new system, we need this, we need that – that because they’re talking to us they’re going to get it, because we’re IT.”

The process work really just allows those involved to go forward with a request for IT resources knowing that they are asking for the right solution that will truly enhance the service they provide.

A typical session

A lot happens before the process team helps a group identify its “dream state.”

“I think we typically start with resistance at all levels,” says Urry. “We’ve got to go in there and get some buy in and sell it to them.”

Lopez agrees: “Almost every single session will begin with kind of a curmudgeonly, ‘Why am I here? I’m being ordered to be here,’ and by the end, the result is usually a camaraderie and, ‘Wow, I didn’t realize it was that complex.’”

The work starts by inviting whoever will be able to bring valuable, on-the-ground information from various areas pertinent to the discussion, which may or may not include managers or directors.

“I think it’s very important for the stakeholders to be either in the sessions or understand what happens in order to understand the outcome,” says Hines.

The team then starts identifying various steps in the



Tim Ebner discusses process

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process, writing each step on a sticky note, and putting it up on a large sheet of paper where the group traces the process's lineage. For this step they only dig into the level of "who is 'holding' the work," and not down to the level of "what do you do in this step?" That keeps the session's progress at a comfortable pace, and helps maintain a blame-free atmosphere.

"There's something magical in that physical act of writing on stickies," Lopez says of Sharp's method. "I've never seen it done in any other process work. Somehow, it objectifies it enough that they don't feel threatened, that it does make it a safe environment. You start one of those sessions and people are like, 'Well I don't like working with her,' or 'I've never talked to that person, I don't see how we're related at all.' But by the end of it, these people who were seeing themselves as different groups or their work was unrelated, they're working together to collaborate on an overall solution."

For this reason, Sharp calls process work "social work." The metaphorical breaking of bread around a common table allows people with different backgrounds and expertise to come together for a cause that they soon learn affects them all in some way.

"Processes don't fit neatly within an organizational boundary," Denna says.

"When the focus is within a particular function, we break up the flow of work. What UIT provides is a service that focuses on the process, looking past the organizational boundaries, so we don't arbitrarily break up processes."

Urry recalls a session where "I don't know of one person that we interviewed who actually knew this process from beginning to end. They knew their piece of it, or they thought they knew everything, but none of them knew the whole thing. They come out the other side of that and they go, 'Wow, that really is worthwhile.'"

"We're looked at to be experts," Lopez says. "But at the same time, this is their process. You're trying to elicit the information needed to help them craft a solution. But they're also looking to you to help guide them toward that solution."

"When we help our partners think through the process, we make our own life easier," Denna says. "Good process work tends to reduce the complexity of the technology tools we provide and makes it easier and faster to develop and deploy the technology."

Urry has seen attitudes shift once the work is complete, and hopes that people who have a positive experience share that with others who are unfamiliar with UIT's business process analysts.

"We're trying to get to a model where there's a pull, where people want us there," he says. "We want to show enough value with business process work that people want us to come."

"What UIT provides is a service that focuses on the process, looking past the organizational boundaries, so we don't arbitrarily break up the processes."

— Eric Denna, U of U
Chief Information Officer

'What we do': Mapping the U's process landscape

Delving into a particular business process is daunting, but try to identify all the business processes throughout the University of Utah. That was the task given to Paul Burrows in December of last year.

"Once they pulled out the smelling salts and picked me up off the floor," he said, "it got to the point of determining how I was going to go about figuring out the content of the process landscape for the university."

It first helped to define the narrow scope of the project: simply identifying the processes without examining them.

"When you look at a process landscape, that's a different magnitude from when someone starts to look at individual processes," Burrows said.

President David W. Pershing's inauguration essentially painted a starting line for Burrows' work.

"His particular inaugural address was rich with a lot of mission perspectives and objectives about the University of Utah. You can't just start looking at what we do without asking, 'Well, what is the University of Utah and what is its mission?'"

Burrows identified four core missions: education, research, community, and health care. As the depth of the university's undertakings unfolded, Burrows found six key supporting areas, 42 process families, 200 processes, and 700 sub-processes.

By happenstance, he already was working to implement the Google Search Appliance across the university, which dovetailed perfectly into the process work. While fine tuning the parameters, he gained valuable insight into about 68 million documents related to the U.

"If you look at departments' webpages, you're going to find out a lot about what they're doing, or what they think they're doing. So that was really invaluable to this whole process," he said. "If two comets could collide in space and then have a parallel path ... that was ordained. Nobody planned it, but it certainly turned out for the benefit of everyone."

The result is a rich, surprisingly readable snapshot. See the process landscape of the university at cio.utah.edu/plu.

Kudos & Congrats

Dear **Joe Taylor**: News of your impending departure from the University of Utah leaves me with mixed emotions - disappointment at the prospect of losing you, tempered by great admiration as you step into your new leadership position as Chief Information Officer at Brigham Young University-Idaho. They are very fortunate to have you joining their university community. Congratulations!

I also wanted to thank you for the 18 years of service and leadership you have provided the University's information technology operations. Your vision, talent, and breadth of knowledge and experience has been indispensable as we have dealt with IT issues across our campus. We will miss you and wish you all the best in your new endeavor.

~David W. Pershing

When you're multi-talented and great with customers, you get pulled in many directions. Kudos to **Adam Stewart** for adapting and thriving in an ever-changing organization. ~ Dave Adams

Rob Birkinshaw took time to help UEN with emergency assistance with their Oracle DB. They were greatly

appreciative, and it's always great to see our UIT professionals assist other groups with immediate help.

~Jeff Hassett

Thanks to **Jennifer Aldrich** for taking the lead in putting together a much needed New Construction Project questionnaire, benefiting UIT and providing a better overall customer experience.

~Jan Lovett

Many thanks to **Jeanne Krogen** for creating accounting order out of chaos. Your talent and resilience keep our complicated organization running smoothly.

~ Dave Adams

On many occasions, UIT Help Desk staff member **Cody Exon** has worked extra hard to provide helpful, thorough, friendly, and fast support and information to our IT colleagues. Thank you, Cody.

~Cassandra Van Buren

Gary Vandertoolen has been instrumental in an improved network design for IP security cameras. This will not only benefit the Facilities C-Cure group but will also ensure a more secure network. ~Jan Lovett

How to submit to Kudos & Congrats

Anyone can submit Kudos & Congrats. Email praise for your colleagues to scott.sherman@utah.edu. The people you recognize will be put into a drawing to win gift cards, event tickets, merchandise and more. Those who submit entries will be put in a drawing for more prizes.*

*Directors and associate/assistant directors not eligible.

We would like to recognize **Mike Anderson** and **Matt Leatham** for their hard work moving some LDAP instances to VM's. They were able to increase speed and reliability while decreasing maintenance costs!

~ Trevor Long

I nominate **Cary Lopez** and **Ryan Hines** for the great work they have done on the Kualu Student process meetings. With this work, we have made great steps to improving the student experience at the U!

~ Jill Brinton

Kudos to **Tyler Higgins** for his willingness to work closely with the Facilities C-Cure group in retrofitting old buildings with security cameras as well as implementing the new order process.

~Jan Lovett

We all know that our admin assistants are the ***real*** bosses. Special thanks to **Cindy Hanson** and **Judy Yeates** for always knowing the answers and for sharing them with smiles and humor.

~ Dave Adams

Hearty thanks to CIS's Downtown Data Center Manager **Glen Cameron**, who devoted time to explain very interesting tech term history (the term "white space" in an IT context) to curious co-workers. Glen is a natural educator and a generous individual - two qualities that are a big benefit to our organization.

~ Cassandra Van Buren

Thanks to **Chris Pfeiffer** and **Shellie Eide** for always being willing to lend guidance and direction in our current fulfillment project. Makes my job much easier.

~Jan Lovett

Congratulations to the winners from last month's entries

The names of last month's eligible nominees and nominators were put into a random drawing for prizes. **Jake Johansen** of the Information Security Office won several free meals at the Crimson View restaurant courtesy of Chartwells. **Chris Pfeiffer** of Strategic Planning and Communication won a piece of university-themed canvas art courtesy of Auxiliary Services. In addition, CIS' **Elliott Fenech** and Finance's **Peter Panos** received some football and men's basketball tickets courtesy of Athletics, which wishes to remind you that many events offer free admission for university staff.

UOnline: Secure tests, instant results

More than 70,000 proctored exams have been taken in a space that was until recently a storeroom in the library

It may be the busiest place on campus that almost no one knows about.

Chances are if you've been in the J. Willard Marriott Library in the past year you've walked right by it and had no idea. But more than 70,000 proctored exams have been given in UIT's Teaching and Learning Technologies UOnline exam center since it opened in February.

The 110-seat space allows students taking online courses to take their exams in a monitored, comfortable environment at a time that works for their schedule.

"It helps us to maintain the integrity of the testing environment and the assessments for those classes," said TLT Executive Director Cory Stokes. "We're able to start moving away from paper testing and Scantron sheets and No. 2 pencils, and into more computerized testing."

The spacious UOnline facility is tucked away in the Faculty Center, across from the Gould Auditorium

See UOnline, pg. 12

"We're able to start moving away from paper testing and Scantron sheets and No. 2 pencils, and into more computerized testing."

— Cory Stokes,
executive director of
UIT's Teaching and
Learning Technologies



The UOnline exam center's workstations are all connected and centrally managed

UOnline (continued from pg. 11)

near the library's first-floor entrance. The area is a reclaimed storage room, and while the overhaul is not entirely complete — “We're trying to get some artwork on the walls so it isn't so hospital-room sterile,” said Stanford Clements, UOnline Center/exam services manager — it boasts an impressive array of desktop machines, all interconnected and monitored via a single screen just outside.

During exams, the center staffs one proctor for every 25 students, providing more eyes to dissuade cheating than many instructors could even offer in their own classrooms.

“I think it's impossible to completely avoid cheating, but I feel we do an exemplary job of deterring it. So far all this year we've probably had four,” Clements said. “When we catch a cheater, we log it, excuse the student, and tell them you need to follow up with your instructor. We sent the proof to the instructor and let the instructor take it from there.”

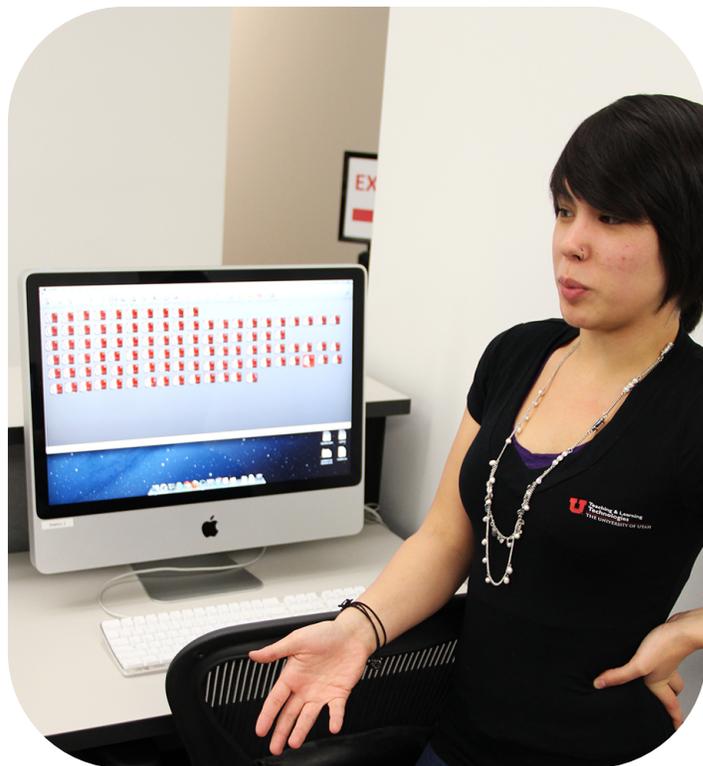
All 110 machines are situated on a subnet and are controlled from a master seat up front, where each screen appears as a thumbnail in LanSchool.

“We can remote-control their computer, freeze their computer, take snapshots, and send a message,” said Sydney McCann, a student manager at the center. “We can also limit the web through this program.”

Clements sings the praises of McCann and Keara Webster, the center's other student manager.

“They do a fantastic job communicating with faculty,” he said. “Faculty have told me they look at them as valuable resources. So really the success of this center focuses on the two of them.”

Slow days may see a few dozen students, but around midterms and finals there are hundreds of students cycling through the UOnline center. On top of handling



Sydney McCann

the coordination and oversight of the testing, the staff also acts as the front-line help desk for all Canvas-related issues on campus.

Currently, the center is funded through the fees students pay to take an online course and with the help of Charles H. Atwood, a chemical education professor whose work is geared toward improving chemistry instruction in large class settings. Clements hopes in the future that instructors will be able to use a hybrid approach to learning and rely on the UOnline center for testing.

“It gives them the time that they would spend proctoring their own exams back to them for classroom time,” he said, adding that there's another bonus both for students and teachers. “When we convert an exam over to the Canvas examination process, you get results instantly. Canvas takes care of the grading for you.”

While the number of students taking exams for online courses continues to grow, Clements would like to find other ways to utilize the space during off-peak times, and he is open to hearing ideas from groups around campus.

“We would like to expand out,” he said, “maybe do student orientations or other group trainings.”

Anyone with ideas or suggestions can contact him at stan.clements@utah.edu.



Stanford Clements

USS selects team to work on Kualif project

Staff will be heavily involved in Kualif Student development, implementation



University Support Services has chosen the initial engineering team that will help develop and code the Kualif Student module.

Kualif is a community-sourced software suite founded by higher education institutions. It aims to develop tools for the higher education community in a way that allows schools to “keep their money in their mission.”

The University of Utah is a founding member of Kualif Student, which gives it significant input into the direction of the development and functionality of the end product.

The Kualif engineering team will be overseen by manager Doug Kenner.

Kenner is joined by four full-time software engineers: Matt Edgren, Michael Morris-Pearce, Srinivas Peddola, and Jeremy Gillen. Student software engineer Sam Olds rounds out the team.

On the agenda



December

Wednesday, Dec. 11
IT professionals holiday party •
 Noon, Officers Club, Fort Douglas,
 150 S. Fort Douglas Blvd.

Thursday, Dec. 12
Recognition of departing USS
Director Joe Taylor •UIT will hold
 a farewell event, from 3 to 5 p.m. at
 the Alumni House, Tanner Dining
 Room.

Friday, Dec. 13
Classes end •Second session
 classes come to a close, and finals
 week begins the following Monday.

Dec. 25-27
University Closure Days •
 Christmas and the two days following
 have been designated university
 closure days this year. Check with
 your supervisor to ensure all critical
 areas are covered.

Editor's note

Due to the holiday break, Node 4 will not publish a January issue.

However, please look for new podcasts throughout the months of December and January on Node 4's website, cio.utah.edu/node4.

You can still submit gifts in the form of story ideas, as well as tidings and good cheer in the form of kudos for your colleagues, for inclusion in the February edition of Node 4.

Thanks for reading.

Node 4 is a monthly newsletter produced by the Office of the CIO. Contact communications specialist Scott Sherman at scott.sherman@utah.edu for information or to offer feedback and content ideas.