



UNC
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

School of Government
IT Division Report
2008–2009

School of Government IT Division Report 2008–2009



Georgia Allen

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IT Division Provides Support for School Initiatives

This proved to be another challenging and successful year for the IT Division. In addition to fulfilling the core responsibilities related to supporting the School's technological infrastructure, we completed several strategic initiatives this year. Migration of one of our most critical technologies—e-mail—from several of our servers to the ITS Exchange environment was achieved. This move saved the School thousands of dollars in server replacement costs, provided access to a greater number of support resources, and still gives us the control and flexibility needed to provide effective messaging services (see *Joining the UNC-Chapel Hill Campus E-mail System*, page 4).

The IT Division developed and implemented internal support for distance learning initiatives for both live events and on-demand trainings (see *Online Instruction Provides Expanded Learning Opportunities*, page 5). Of the 443 courses and meetings conducted last fiscal year, approximately 300 required some form of technology support, provided by the IT Division. In addition, the implementation of an online backup for all laptop and desktop computers allowed valuable data to be protected, facilitating the resolution of issues and support.

For the 2009–2010 fiscal year, the IT Division is focused on improving access to information resources by implementing a content management system that will make it easier for information on the web to be updated quickly and consistently. The IT Division is working toward the following additional goals as well:

- Tightly integrating networking and helpdesk support services to create redundancy and support depth (see *Network Evaluation*, page 6)
- Expanding online learning efforts by providing a standard tool set of production services and offering classroom capture opportunities
- Implementing the accounts payable aspect of the financial system (NetSuite) to support a growing business structure
- Expanding the financial reporting options to help with strategic decisions
- Developing a responsive foundation of support in anticipation of increased revenue generating efforts at the School.

The IT Division provides an information technology environment that delivers a ubiquitous and stable technological infrastructure to support learning, scholarship, resource creation, and other School of Government initiatives. Maintaining stewardship in technology through teamwork, collaboration, and a commitment to the School's mission is our focus. If there are questions about technology or the services IT can provide, please feel free to contact me or anyone on the IT Division team. We look forward to working with you in the coming year.



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Information Technology Division Team

The IT Division is divided into four functional areas to focus our work and services.

Helpdesk: The Helpdesk and A/V Services group provides technology support for desktop/laptop computers, computer labs, classrooms, and off-site programs.



James Balfour
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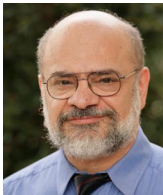


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Helpdesk Support
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Random Gott
A/V Technician
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Networking: Our LAN administrator maintains, upgrades, and secures the hardware and software that carry data within and outside the School. Support includes managing data ports and wireless access points, providing backup and recovery data, maintaining application servers, and coordinating the messaging environments.



John Gullo
Networking Manager
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Web Applications: The Web Applications group develops and maintains the School's online presence, including web development in the area of course design, the SOG website, custom application development, and website analysis. They also provide business systems support for accounts receivable, publications, registration, and financial reporting.



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Teaching and Learning Support: The Teaching and Learning Support (TLS) group provides instructional design and production services for webinars, online modules, informational and community blogs, training programs, and other teaching and learning technologies used at the School.



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Joining the UNC-Chapel Hill Campus E-mail System

In an effort to consolidate resources, reduce infrastructure costs, and provide a more stable messaging environment, the School migrated the management and maintenance of our Exchange e-mail system to central UNC-Chapel Hill campus systems (ITS). For more than a decade, the School of Government had purchased, supported, and maintained its own e-mail services because the campus did not provide an integrated, collaborative, or feature-rich environment as well as we could through Microsoft Exchange. ITS now offers an enterprise-level, collaborative environment around MS Exchange that it is available to campus units at no cost.

An enterprise-level design means the system can handle large volumes of e-mail and has greater redundancy to decrease downtime and increase the ability to restore should any issues occur. There are also more ITS staff members dedicated to the central system than we could offer at the School, and they provide constant monitoring of the servers. This move saved the School more than \$10,000 per year, including more than \$20,000 in upfront server replacement expenses next year, and the new system provides additional features, such as improved spam control, better server response time, and easier collaboration with other campus organizations.

During the six week process of planning and implementation, the IT Division staff moved approximately 196 mailboxes and more than 110GB of data without experiencing any significant data loss. The project was divided into three major and one minor move, with time between each move to allow a higher level of individual support and to resolve problems or issues that occurred at each stage. This strategy proved to be successful, and by the time we moved the final and largest group, all major challenges were resolved.

Classroom Construction and Enhancements Provide Flexibility

Thanks to a generous contribution from the Knapp Foundation, the computer training classroom in Room 1300 is now complete. This multi-use classroom can serve as a computer training lab or a standard classroom with minimal transition effort.

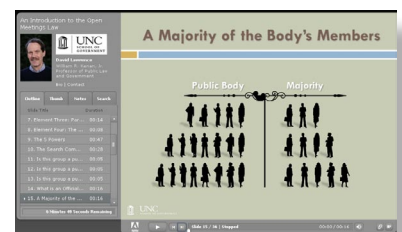
The unique desktop furniture offers the flexibility of being both a conventional piece of furniture in one configuration, and a computer station in a second configuration through a recessing and stow-away system. Part of the day's instruction can include hands-on computer training, with the computer accessible at each workstation, while the rest of the day can be devoted to a lecture format, once the computers have been stowed—all without students having to change classrooms. This full multimedia classroom is equipped with a front screen, 20 student PCs, a DVD player, VCR, laptop connectivity, data projector, document camera, network access, auxiliary AV inputs, and touch-panel controls. A wall panel allows easy device control for the projector system.



There are several more upgrades planned this year to continue expanding our technology-enabled classrooms where lectures and presentations can be recorded. The rooms scheduled for this enhancement are 2601, 2603, 2401, 2402, and 2403.

Online Instruction Provides Expanded Learning Opportunities

The School's use of online instruction increased significantly this past year and continues to grow. Live webinars have allowed our clients in off-site locations to ask questions, participate in polls, and see and hear the presenter and course materials. Most webinars have included one to two-hour sessions with 50 to 150 participants. We have also hosted several multi-day live conferences.



In addition to live online programs, the IT Division staff has helped faculty develop more than 40 on-demand training modules that give clients 24/7 access to instructional programs. These instructional materials range from modules capturing key presentations throughout the year from both our faculty and visiting presenters to more in-depth modules that include quizzes, printable handouts, and learning activities to help clients achieve their learning goals. Modules prepared for use in the Municipal and County Government course have been intentionally designed to be applicable in multiple contexts, from stand-alone presentations to components of a variety of programs and presentations. This approach shows promise for maximizing use of developed materials, as well as a potential source for increased revenue.

Network Evaluation

In the coming year, the network and helpdesk groups will conduct a review of our critical and non-critical systems with the goal of identifying opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce cost. Each system will be evaluated for its service value, consolidation options, and hardware warranty schedule. During this process, we will create extensive documentation on the systems and develop a disaster recovery plan. This process will allow us to take advantage of the ITS campus infrastructure support services for some of our networking needs, while reducing the total cost of ownership associated with in-house operations. A combined effort involving both the helpdesk and networking groups will also provide the School with redundancy in network support.

ITD Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who responded to the 2009 IT Division Survey. Your responses have helped us identify areas for improvement and will inform our support strategy for the next year.

Satisfaction with the level of service:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Extremely Poor	Total Responses
AV Support	39	3	0	0	0	42
Helpdesk	36	12	1	0	0	49
E-mail/Calendar	18	21	4	2	0	45
Website Updates and Support	17	17	2	1	1	38
NetSuite	14	4	2	0	0	20
Teaching and Learning with Technology	6	12	8	5	0	31
Initial Response Time	30	15	5	0	0	50
Final Resolution Time	25	18	5	0	1	49
IT Division Overall	29	17	4	0	0	50



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Respondent roles:

Faculty	18	39%
EPA Professional	10	22%
Staff	18	39%
Total	46	100%

Contact the Information Technology Division

To request assistance with an IT project or to learn more about how the IT Division can help you, contact Georgia Allen at allen@sog.unc.edu, or visit www.sog.unc.edu/itd.