Vice President for Information Technology
Status and Activity Report for December 2023

Prepared by Timothy M. Chester, Vice President for Information Technology (VPIT)

1. <u>Key Items for Faculty and Staff Meetings</u>

   - *Improvements to curriculum management to further student success under way:* EITS and the offices of the Registrar and Student Financial Aid have embarked on a multi-year initiative aimed at furthering student success by improving the curriculum management process and systematically supporting federal financial aid requirements that funds students for courses that are listed under their program of study. This initiative supports students with a clear path to graduate in four years and significantly enhances the time to degree completion. Moreover, the initiative benefits faculty, schools, colleges, advisors, and administration by providing valuable data for strategic enrollment planning and introducing a streamlined online curriculum revision process. Students, in turn, gain access to up-to-date and accurate degree requirements, eliminating hidden prerequisites and reducing the need for substitutions. Students and advisors are already benefiting from major milestones completed in 2023 that include a new user-friendly interface in the DegreeWorks degree audit system that is mobile responsive and provides clear and easy-to-understand degree requirements. The project team has also developed an automated curriculum revision process which will support all academic departments in managing curriculum revisions for their respective programs starting in 2024. Additional milestones for 2024 include processing and approval of all revisions submitted with academic departments, reprogramming of DegreeWorks to accommodate such revisions and incorporate graduate programs which are currently not being supported under DegreeWorks. For more information on the project, contact Ilir Hasko at ihasko@uga.edu.

   - *2023 State of Technology highlights improvements in research IT, academics and student digital life:* Students, faculty and staff at the University of Georgia can expect continued improvements in the areas of research IT, academics and digital student life, and at the university system level, a new unified enterprise resource planning system is on the horizon, Dr. Timothy M. Chester said during his annual State of Technology address. Chester, Vice President for Information Technology at UGA, gave his address to about 250 people over Zoom on November 15, speaking about progress toward the IT strategic goals and the University System of Georgia's planning for a new unified ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system. Chester also shared results of the 2023 TechQual survey, which measures satisfaction with central IT services on campus. For more information, read the story on the EITS website*: https://eits.uga.edu/stories/2023_stateofit_recap/.*

   - *Microsoft Office 365 Upgrade Scheduled for December 1-3*: Starting at 7 p.m. on December 1, EITS personnel will migrate active student and employee Microsoft Office 365 licenses from their current licensing level, known as A3, to an upgraded version, known as A5. Work is scheduled to conclude by 10 p.m. on December 3. Moving to this new license level will provide more collaboration tools such as Power BI Pro. This upgrade will also allow EITS to eventually migrate UGA's existing telephone system to Teams Phone, which will serve as the next generation telephone system for UGA. More information about the Teams Phone transition will be shared in early 2024. For more information about this upgrade, please contact Justin Sackett (justin.sackett@uga.edu).

2. Services for Students

- *Work continues on more than $1M in campus wireless upgrades:* Work is underway on more wireless upgrades in academic buildings and student housing across the Athens, Buckhead, and Griffin campuses. These upgrades are part of EITS's work to continuously improve Wi-Fi connectivity and coverage to support teaching, learning, and student life. The $1.2 million a year project, funded by Student Technology Fees, includes wireless refreshments and redesigns in many buildings. Wireless upgrades in the Physics building, Hardman Hall, the Army ROTC building and several Veterinary Medicine buildings have been completed. Technicians are also working on more improvements to other buildings and wireless spaces across campus; work for phase three is under way and expected to be completed next summer. For more information, contact David Stewart at stewart@uga.edu.

- *EITS continuously working to improve housing wireless:* EITS understands the importance of fast and reliable internet in UGA residence halls for online course work, research, and leisure activities such as gaming and streaming entertainment. Since the reports of degraded wireless performance earlier this fall, EITS personnel have worked aggressively to resolve the issues, incorporate vendor provided fixes, and return performance to normal levels. For questions, please contact Ashley Henry at ashenry@uga.edu.

3. Services for Teaching Faculty

- *GACRC teaching cluster available for spring:* A small high-performance computing cluster devoted exclusively to teaching duties is available for use during the Spring 2023 semester. The cluster, which is supported by the Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center, was also in use during the fall. Faculty members interested in discussing the capabilities of the teaching cluster and how it might integrate with their coursework should contact Dr. Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu.

- *Planning begins to move campus to 200GB connectivity:* Work is under way to increase the campus bandwidth from 40GPS to 200GPS, providing greater data transfer speeds for researchers and increased internet speed for the entire campus community. Preliminary work by the University System is expected to be completed by February 2024. The increased speed should make it easier for researchers to move large amounts of data between institutions. For more information, contact Ashley Henry at ashenry@uga.edu.

4. Other General Services

- *Duo Mobile App dropping support for iOS14, Android 10 operating systems:* Effective February 2024, Duo, the vendor behind UGA's ArchPass two-step login solution, will drop support for its mobile app on phones running Android 10 or older operating systems and phones running iOS14 or older operating systems. Phones that run on these operating systems will still be able to use the Duo Mobile App, but they will not receive the latest updates, and will not be able to install or reinstall the Duo Mobile App. Users who want to continue to use the Duo Mobile App to authenticate should update to Android 11 or iOS15 before February 2024. Users with older phones who cannot update to new operating systems can always choose to authenticate via a phone call or a passcode sent via SMS text

messaging, regardless of operating system. For questions, contact Lance Peiper at lpeiper@uga.edu.

- *Biannual UGA SSO upgrade planned for February 16:* Our single sign-on service, UGA SSO, will undergo scheduled maintenance February 16, 2024. This maintenance is necessary to move the service to the latest version and to receive up-to-date security patching. To prepare for this upgrade, application owners will be asked to test their applications in dev and stage to ensure the update does not affect their applications. A dev environment will be available December 8, 2023, and a stage environment will be available for testing January 16, 2024. In preparation, after January 12, EITS will not move any new applications to production UGA SSO until the upgrade is complete in February. EITS applies updates to UGA SSO twice a year, in February and September. For more information, please contact Kristi Wall at kristi.wall@uga.edu.

- *New policy for deleted emails in UGAMail:* Effective February 1, 2024, a new 30-day deletion policy will go into effect for emails placed in your Deleted Items folder in UGAMail. Items put in this folder will be automatically deleted after 30 days, and then will be held in a Recoverable Items folder for 14 days before being permanently deleted. This policy is retroactive, so starting February 1, 2024, any items in your Deleted Items folder that are older than 30 days will be deleted. This new policy is part of EITS' efforts to be good stewards of the university's financial resources and control operating costs. Emails in the Deleted Items folder account for about 25 percent of all email storage across the university. Regularly clearing your Deleted Items folder can help you maximize storage for your individual UGAMail account, as well as increase the amount of storage available to everyone at UGA. For more information, contact Justin Sackett at justin.sackett@uga.edu.

- *New storage limits for Microsoft accounts:* Microsoft has announced new storage limits for its academic customers. In the coming year, owners of departmental, affiliate, applicant and retiree accounts will see changes to their available storage limits. UGAMail and OneDrive for Business storage will be affected. Effective February 1, 2024, OneDrive storage for departmental, affiliate, applicant and retiree accounts will be capped 100 GB. UGAMail mailbox storage will be capped at 25 GB. If your storage goes over these limits, your account will go into read-only mode. You will not be able to add any more files or send or receive new mail until you move or delete old files or mail and bring your account under the storage quota. Please direct any questions about these new limits to Justin Sackett at justin.sackett@uga.edu.

- *New cost recovery web hosting solution coming soon*: The EITS Web and Mobile team is introducing a new centrally hosted cost recovery WordPress solution to replace the existing Omni CMS platform, previously known as OmniUpdate, which has been provided to campus units since 2015. The newly selected vendor for hosting and updating of EITS-supported UGA WordPress websites will be Kaptiv8, an Athens website design and hosting firm. We will begin working with current Omni CMS clients in the coming months to discuss timelines and details for the transition of your Omni CMS web pages into the Kaptiv8 environment and begin working with new clients in 2024. As we work with clients, we will include as part of the discussion the billing process through the new hosting partner. For more information, please feel free to contact me at dave@uga.edu. Additional information will continue to be added to the EITS website.

- *Spring Network Maintenance set for March 3:* The 2024 spring network maintenance will be held on Sunday, March 3; students, faculty and staff should plan for intermittent

outages through the day. Network maintenances are necessary to continue to support the network, allowing EITS to provide ample bandwidth and Internet capacity to the University in the future. For questions, contact Rayid Tartir at rayid@uga.edu.

- *Prepare for Boyd Data Center UPS maintenance activities:* EITS will conduct maintenances on January 13, and January 27 at the Boyd Data Center in efforts for the UPS system replacement. During the January 27 maintenance, building cooling will be shut down and elevator systems will be unavailable for the Boyd Graduate Building, McBay Science Library, and Boyd Data Center from 4:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. There are no power, cooling, or elevator systems interruptions expected during the January 13 maintenance. Information Technology System Owners may elect to shut down non-essential systems in the Boyd Data Center during these maintenances. Additional information is available on the EITS website. Those who have questions should contact either Jeff Teasley at jteasley@uga.edu or Chris Fleming at cfleming@uga.edu.

- *Wikis to be retired from Teams:* Microsoft will retire wikis from Teams starting January 2024. Microsoft now offers note taking capabilities within Teams channels using the included OneNote notebook provided for each team. Users have an option to export their wiki content to OneNote notebooks in their Teams channel. After exporting, users can go to the Notes tab to collaborate using OneNote. Wikis will be read only after exporting. Teams users who have wikis with content they wish to keep should export that wiki to OneNote before January 2024. After this date, wikis will no longer be available. EITS began sending targeted notices to wiki owners last month to remind them of this change. For more information, contact Justin Sackett at justin.sackett@uga.edu.

- *Decommission of web standard hosting set for 2024:* Web Standard Hosting, the free web hosting service for UGA-affiliated departments and student organizations will be sunset in 2023 and decommissioned in 2024. **Accounts that were unresponsive during this process and have been inactive for 2 or more years were deactivated on December 1.** Over the next months, the Systems Engineering team will continue to work with users who still use Web Standard Hosting as their primary web hosting service to determine next steps. For more information, contact Ashley Henry at ashenry@uga.edu.

5. Did You Know

- *Fresh look and feel coming to EITS Help Desk Service Catalog:* In December, EITS will migrate our service catalog, where our help desk ticket forms are hosted, to a new client portal at eitshelpdesk.uga.edu. This is the same client portal that hosts the EITS Knowledge Base, which was launched in the spring. This migration includes a clean-up of old and unused ticket forms and an update to the look and feel of the service catalog and the ticket form email template. The migration also gives EITS the ability to link knowledge base articles to service catalog ticket forms, to better assist students, faculty, and staff in finding the answers they need. Any units who have links on their websites to the old service catalog forms are advised to update links after December 20. After the migration, students, faculty, and staff will also still be able to put in tickets via email at helpdesk@uga.edu or by calling 706-542-3106. For more information contact Michael Jacobson at michael.jacobson@uga.edu.

University of Georgia students, faculty, and staff, as well as interested others, may subscribe to this monthly report by sending an email to listserv@listserv.uga.edu with the phrase subscribe vpit-news as the body of the message.