



THOMPSON RIVERS
UNIVERSITY

TRU QUARTERLY UPDATE
ON INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

project SAGE

Banner Implementation



Student Admissions Goes Live!

On Wednesday, November 25, 2009, TRU took the first step on the long journey to get student registrations into the new Banner system for June 2010. To mark this event, a celebration lunch was held for the Student Services department and Student Project Team. During the celebration, Peter Hilton, Vice Provost, Students, mentioned the goals of having the best student services available for TRU students and how the project fit with that vision.

While student applications have been put into the new Banner system since mid October, yesterday marked the first time fully automated student applications were processed from the PASBC.ca directly to TRU's Banner system. Payment is also automated in this process. The Project SAGE Student Team is ready for the challenges ahead. "With Admissions going-live we are committed to the success of the student project. The pressure is on," said Marion Hannaford, Associate Registrar. Over the next few months the Project Team, along with consultants from Millennium and SunGard, will be implementing DegreeWorks, training staff on the use of FlexReg, preparing the CE module and building the fall 2010 schedule into the new system.



Marion Hannaford and Dawn Lamore capture the moment when the first application went into production!

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*The Project SAGE Student Team
takes some time out to celebrate*

The Project Technical Team will continue to focus on data conversion activities and the unique requirements of TRU tutors, exam scheduling, and level one integrating FlexReg with WinPrism, TRU's Book Store application.

"No matter how daunting the task ahead, the truly exciting thing about this project is that all areas of TRU are working together to make the best services available to students", said Leena Niemela, Manager, Admissions and Advising – Open Learning.

Project Management at TRU - by Abby Sereda, Coordinator, IT Project Management Office

Project Management Institute's National Congress – North America

In October, I had the opportunity to attend the Project Management Institute National Congress. I gained a lot, aside from the usual conference sessions and tracks. Networking with all the Project Managers and Project Management Office professionals with different backgrounds brought something new and unique to every conversation.

I'd like to share some of the more interesting lessons and advice I've returned with on the topics of...



A Clear Project Objective

A clear project objective should be 25 words or less. Generally, the skeleton to build one should look like this: "To _(action)_ by _(date)_ within a cost of _(amount)_." Keep it simple.

Project Success Contributors

- Get leadership buy-in
- Get organized early
- Establish team rapport
- Set clear expectations
- Identify your stakeholders
- Ensure there is leadership in the project
- Determine roles and responsibilities
- Identify risks early on
- Ensure the project fits with strategic plans and goals
- Agree upon communication processes
- Establish deliverables, timelines, and milestones
- Agree on definitions
- Use lessons learned from past and similar projects
- Create an information repository or share common "tools"
- Get SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) involved

Presentation Skills

Visually divide your audience up into a tic-tac-toe grid. During your presentation, you should aim to make eye contact with each section. By focusing on one forehead in each section, several people within that section will be under the impression you are speaking directly at them.

RFPs: What Drives the Disconnect in Solutions Provided?

- Vendors understand their products more than the buyer's needs
- Requirements are either unclear or unachievable
- Requirements for schedules are unrealistic
- Technology requested is unavailable or prohibitive
- The budget is unrealistic

Best Practices in Negotiating

- Never believe opening claims
- Cast a big shadow
- Your time invested promotes resolution
- Reveal nothing
- Get their attention
- Get multiple options
- Know your opposition's desires
- Work towards win-win if you can
- Always have a partner with you for support (especially for working out big deals so you do not get overwhelmed with details)
- Negotiate in private if you can (limits risk of peer pressure and face-saving behaviours)

Meet IT Services!

If you have technical problems or questions, contact us

By Phone:
250-852-6800,

Or email:
ITServiceDesk@tru.ca



What's This?



You wouldn't expect IT Services to deal with just paper, would you? Download Bee-tag Reader and view this newsletter on the web!

<http://www.beetag.com/>

TRU ITS Supports UBC on the REMUS Disaster Recovery Project

Remus is a project from the Networks, Systems and Security (NSS) lab at UBC. The work uses virtualization to provide transparent disaster recovery for unmodified software. The researchers at UBC have set up a pair of physical computers, one in Vancouver and one at TRU in Kamloops, connected over a dark fiber link provided by BC.net. Software running in a virtual machine on one of these computers is continuously replicated to the other location, and in the event of a failure (such as a complete power or connectivity cut to Vancouver, the backup machine becomes active and takes over where the original left off. A recent demo showed that the failover happens so quickly that, even with BGP updates to move the IP address of the server 350 kilometres across BC, software continues to run without even dropping TCP sessions. Users are completely unaware that the servers they are working on have teleported across the province.

Teaching and Learning Professional Development Series

The Centre for Teaching and Learning and the Instructional Development and Support Committee, in collaboration with Information Technology Services and Open Learning, has organized a series of lunchtime professional development presentations. These will be presented by volunteers and cover a wide range of topics, all aimed at teaching techniques to improve student learning.

A major focus of these sessions will be demonstrations of how technology can be integrated into teaching in ways that enhance student engagement. Other sessions will be informal discussions of various teaching and learning strategies that can be used in any discipline.

Faculty who attend five or more sessions over the academic year (sessions will run through to April 13, 2010) will receive a certificate of completion issued by the Centre for Teaching and Learning. This will be suitable for inclusion in an APAR and teaching dossier.

Please mark your calendar for Tuesdays from 11:45 am to 1:00 pm in OL 127 (BCCOL building). Feel free to drop in for just part of the sessions if you are not available for the entire time.

The schedule of session is posted on the Centre for Teaching and Learning Website:



Join us for stimulating discussions of ideas about practical strategies for improving your teaching in ways that will promote student learning. Watch for messages each week about upcoming presentations.

Questions? Contact Gary Hunt in the Centre for Teaching and Learning at 250-828-5461, or gahunt@tru.ca.



Windows 7 at TRU

Windows 7 is the latest operating system offering from Microsoft; it has taken some of the features of Windows Vista and improved upon them. TRU had elected not to implement Windows Vista in the past and has decided to stay with Windows XP. With Windows 7 showing promise we are once again looking at moving forward.

We have a few IT Services technical staff testing Windows 7 and a few issues have been found but so far, we have been able to work around them. We need to do more testing on our existing systems and applications to ensure that they will work in the new operating system, or at least in the "Windows XP Mode" for older applications.

At this time, it is expected that extensive application testing will take place in the summer of 2010 with implementation scheduled for fall 2010. Implementation will begin with new lease replacement computers; it will take up to three years to fully replace all leased computers on campus.

If there are specific needs or requirements to upgrade an existing leased computer to the new operating system, these will be done as time permits.

For those older computers on campus that are not Windows 7 compatible, these computers will continue operating on Windows XP until they are declared at end of life.

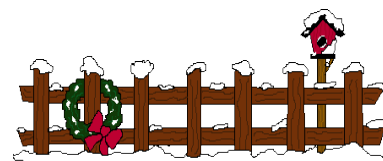
TRU Information Technology Services

PO Box 3010, 900 McGill Road
Kamloops, BC, V2C 5N3
<http://www.tru.ca/its>

Globe & Mail Report Card Results

Measure	Grade 2006	Grade 2007	Grade 2008	Grade 2009
Overall Quality / Availability of Technology	B	B	B+	B+
Up to Date Computers	B+	B+	B+	B+
Technology in Classroom	B	B-	B	B
On Campus Network for Internet / Email	B+	B+	B+	A-
Accessibility of Computer Equipment on Campus	B-	B	B+	B
Access to Course / Teaching Materials Online (f2f)	B	B	B+	B+

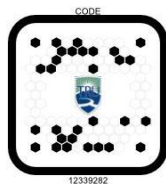
While we continue to make steady improvement with our results, clearly TRU students are requiring improvements to accessibility of computers on campus and classroom technologies. To that end, 2009 saw the installation of more than 20 new media classrooms and improved signage to computer labs. We will continue to work with our Student Advisory Committee to improve our scores.



VcCanada.ca

Schools throughout Canada have video conferencing capabilities but it is often difficult to get connected easily. That problem may be reduced with the VcCanada website.

This application allows colleges and schools like TRU to list their video conferencing end points so educators, researchers and administrators can find video conferencing locations to facilitate connections and collaborations.



Shining a Light on Information Security

As the data collected in October from 134 students' shows, attending Thompson Rivers University raises awareness of information security issues and concepts.

Overall students appear to become better informed for each year of attendance on issues such as a password usage and phishing.

It is hoped that participation in orientation, the ongoing information security poster campaign, and events such as "Shining a Light on Information Security" have had something to do with these results.



Hugh Burley at the October Shining a Light on Information Security event in OM

