



Issue 17 | September 2013 • TRU's Quarterly Update on Information Technology



Media Services Open House

Media Services has moved to the Human Resources Building.

We are located at **HR145** for your AV loan out needs.

Please stop by HR145 on **Wednesday OCTOBER 9** between 2:30–4:00pm to say *hello to our media services team, check out the new space and enjoy a slice of cake.*



A New Website for TRU – Matthew Tarzwell

Thompson Rivers University is giving its website a visual, structural, and technical makeover in an effort to refresh its main student recruitment and retention tool.

Included in this refresh is a newly designed information architecture supported by a new look and content. Also featured is robust search functionality which enables *site-wide emergency notifications, a better news, event and social media integration, the use of Google Translate for non-English visitors and a responsive design.*

The responsive design was built to automatically respond to any size of device. *Visitors will get an optimal experience whether they are using desktop computer, tablet, or a smartphone* and site administrators no longer have to maintain a separate mobile website.

This three year project is being led by Matthew Tarzwell, Web Strategy Manager in Marketing. IT staff were critical to the success of the project. Ruth Hughes has been a key member of the redesign team since the inception of the project. Lea Baxter and Rick Gunnyon updated dozens of online forms and the website is running on a new server setup by Network and Technical Services staff. IT Services has also graciously afforded some temporary work space to two of the project members, Matthew and Oliver.

When the new website is complete, many hands will have made it a success and *over 6000 pages* will have been migrated from the old site to the new.



THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

Information Technology Services

www.tru.ca/its

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www.beetagg.com



Integration of iPads for Student Learning

Lois Peters, Christina Cederlof, Saskia Stinson,
& Leanne Mihalicz, Educational Skills Training Program (ESTR)

In the fall and winter semesters of 2012/2013, the Education Skills Training Program, ESTR, utilized fourteen iPads for students and faculty in classroom and lab settings. ESTR is an employment program for adults with cognitive disabilities that have four certificate streams that include: *Career Exploration, Kitchen Assistant, Retail Worker and Automotive Assistant*. Thirty-one students participated in assignments and projects that included: portable lectures through the Internet, Web Quest assignments for research, task analysis using internet as well as iPad video/camera, and the creation of digital stories incorporating iPad video/camera, audio and Microsoft PowerPoint.

One of many significant benefits of the integration of iPads for student learning is the ease with which our students learned to use this technology. Most of our students often experience multiple barriers in their learning because of their poor handwriting, low literacy and low numeracy. Students developed more confidence and greater independence in a short period of time using the touch screen to access free apps and a built-in camera/video on these lightweight, portable devices. As a result, our students were able to focus on the assignments and projects, rather than struggling with learning how to use new technology. *One of the greatest benefits was that the iPads allowed faculty to integrate technology more easily during class time without having to book a computer lab.* Some of the challenges in integrating iPads into the ESTR classes and labs include the need for faculty to become competent as well as comfortable in using the technology. Also, students experienced difficulties with accessing the internet using their myTRU student accounts.

The integration of this technology supports student-centered, experiential learning as well as student engagement. Our students were often very motivated using iPads and they took the initiative in searching for information. They also enjoyed taking pictures and video clips as part of their projects. *The use of iPads has added a new lens for student learning that supports our faculty in facilitating and guiding students through their learning.*

Upcoming IT Training Sessions

Information Security Awareness Essentials I

OL 249 (BCCOL Building)

Tuesday, October 22	10:00am–11:00am
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Information Security Awareness Essentials II

OL 249 (BCCOL Building)

Wednesday, October 23	10:00am–11:00am
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Information Security Awareness Essentials III

OL 249 (BCCOL Building)

Thursday, October 24	10:00am–11:00am
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Outlook Training

OL249 (BCCOL Building)

Tuesday, October 8	1:30pm–3:30pm
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Thursday, October 10	10:00am–noon
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Tuesday, October 15	1:30pm–3:30pm
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Thursday, October 17	10:00pm–noon
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Tuesday, October 22	1:30pm–3:30pm
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Tuesday, October 29	10:00am–noon
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Thursday, October 31	10:00am–noon
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Optimizing Campus Space

This is a multiyear project which includes exam scheduling, course scheduling and campus facilities scheduling. The first deliverable is *Campus Exam Scheduling* expected to be delivered to faculty and students in the middle of October 2013.

Course scheduling implementation will be starting at the end of October 2013, with live schedule publication in February of 2015.

The Campus Scheduling Implementation is expected to start in January 2015 with a completion in August 2015.

Welcome to New Staff



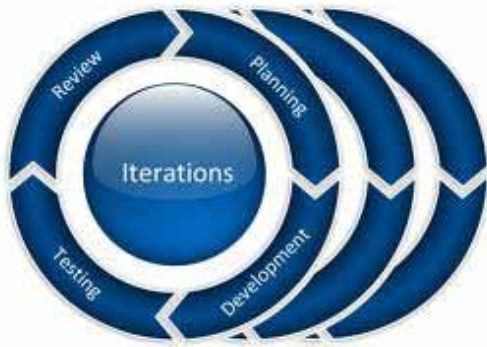
Rod Yokohama
IT Service Desk Analyst



Andrew Adamczyk
IT Service Desk Analyst



Amy Sampson
IT Service Desk Analyst



Project Management IT'S ALL ITERATIVE!

Everything is a work in progress and nowhere is that more evident than with projects. Whether utilized in the traditional waterfall or the nimble agile approach, iteration or repeatable steps lay the foundation for continuous improvement. With constant review and scrutiny, each iteration can inform the next and ultimately the success of the project. *If you put in the steps, review them for measurable effectiveness and then toss out what doesn't work, the project has a greater chance of succeeding.*

An iterative approach handles risk in a proactive and timely manner. Also, it takes some of the pressure off. There is an understanding that not everything is perfect nor needs to be in the early stages. It allows for experimentation, exploration and innovation; be nimble, stay focused and render creative problem solving.

So how does this all apply to the ITS PCO? While the ITS PCO matures and engages with stakeholders on projects, it too employs an iterative approach. There is a commitment to exploration and innovation: getting out there to find what works and how best to serve the TRU community. To that end, this is what's been happening lately.

For support or to provide feedback, please contact Faith Bateman at fbateman@tru.ca / 250.852.7274

What's been happening with the ITS PCO?

I. Welcome to the newly refurbished ITS Project Collaboration website – www.tru.ca/its/pco.html

These webpages are informative and will be filled with resources to bring your project to successful fruition. Check out the ITS 2013 Project List online. It's a work in progress, so please provide your feedback to ensure it meets your needs.

II. Relationship Building

Over the past 4 months, the ITS PCO has continued forging relationships between ITS and the TRU community. Among others, the ITS PCO has supported the Student Services Writing Centre, the Career Education Centre and Institutional Planning & Analysis.

III. Encouraging the Adoption of Process

The ITS PCO is encouraging stakeholders to make use of new process and tools (see the new website) to move projects forward. All new projects require a completed Project Initiation Document (PID) for approval. The MS Outlook project underwent a Lessons Learned session, facilitated by the ITS PCO. More and more project managers are using the Project Charter to capture the project at a high level.

IV. Reporting: How are we doing?

By reporting out on deliverables and measurables, the ITS PCO can determine the health of the project portfolio. Over time, an experience factor will surface. Victories will be identified and areas of improvement will be marked. Now that summer is winding down, the IT Governance committees will meet allowing for further forward movement.

New Lecture Capture System

Media Services, in cooperation with the Centre for Student Engagement and Learning Innovation will deliver a lecture capture proof of concept (POC) in the Winter 2014 Semester. Courses being considered for this POC include ones with high withdrawal or failure rates and a high volume of material (eg. biology and math).

A committee made up of Media Services, Open Learning, Centre for Student Engagement and Learning Innovation, and the Dean of Science will work on this evaluation. More information on this initiative will be forthcoming in the near future.

What Students Want in Technology

– from Academia Group

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported recently on the technology that students wished their instructors used in class either more or less. *Students overwhelmingly wished their professors would more often record their lectures to be viewed or listened to at a later date (71.5%).* Students would also like to see more course- or learning-management tools such as *Blackboard*, and more integrated *use of laptops in class*. Students wished their classes required fewer e-portfolios, e-books or textbooks, and were fairly neutral when it came to simulator or educational games, and integrated use of smartphones in class. The survey data was collected from February to April 2013 from 112,585 students in 251 institutions.

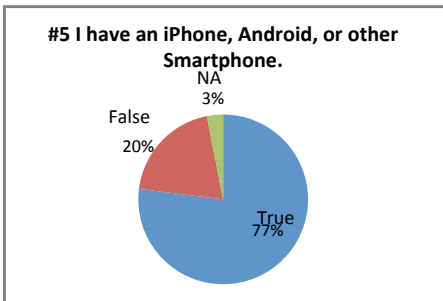
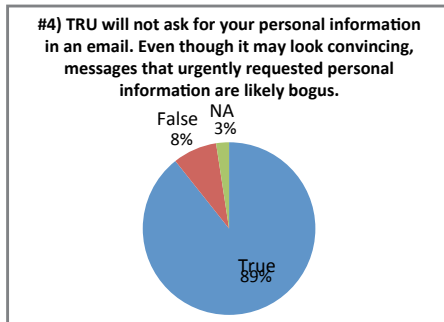
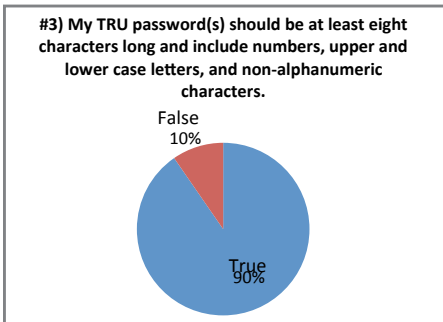
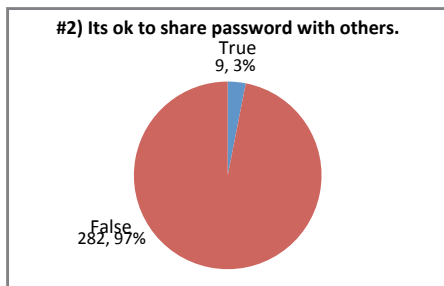
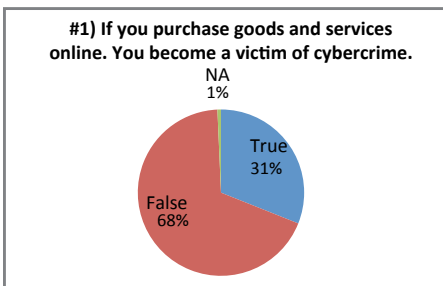
Welcome Back BBQ



On the left: Tanya Sehgal, IT Coop Student;
Middle: The IT Pirates G. Lalli, T. Sehgal, and F. Bateman;
On the right: B. Mackay, CIO awards K. Woo, the IT Security Quiz winner with a bookies gift card.

The IT Security table saw a record number of students stop by this year. Over 300 students filled out a survey and learned a little about piracy, password security and phishing. Meanwhile, the IT Pirates had a great time welcoming all the students back to campus while promoting information security awareness.

Congratulations to Katie Woo, winner of the IT Security Awareness Quiz draw. Katie won herself a \$100 gift card to our campus bookstore just for stopping by the IT Booth and filing out a quiz.



Even though only three percent of students thought it would be OK to share their passwords with others, when we asked 191 students to give us a password in exchange for a chocolate bar, 8.6% complied.

Conclusion, security is important to many but not as important as chocolate to everyone.

TRU 2013 Welcome Back BBQ Security Quiz Results

During the 2013 Welcome Back BBQ the IT Security Office ran a five question quiz. Two hundred and ninety-one students participated.

What we learned:

- Students are concerned about the risk of purchasing products on-line
- They aren't very willing to share their passwords
- They generally recognize strong password standards
- They mostly know that TRU does not ask for login information by email
- 77% of our students carry a smartphone

