

Technology News-April 2010

IT Service Desk-- Now Apple Certified Support Professionals!



Certified Support Professional 10.5

Over the past few years, the Mac presence on campus has grown steadily. As the number of Macs increased, it became evident that the IT support staff needed to rapidly increase their knowledge and skills on supporting and troubleshooting this platform. Each consultant has both a Mac and a PC in order to provide support for the campus and several training initiatives have been conducted in the past targeting the development of Mac support skills. However, during the summer of 2009, 8 individuals embarked on a dedicated training endeavor in order to expand that knowledgebase even further.

The group of Help Desk staff and Field Support technicians met every other week to review the curriculum for the Apple 10.5 certification. Each individual took turns presenting a chapter from the curriculum and all developed sample questions and scenarios to test their knowledge.

All 8 members successfully completed the exam and earned their Apple certification! Congratulations to the following IT employees on this great accomplishment: Barb Dietz, Janet Asberry, Gina Conklin, Rickey Harding, Paul Tubb, John Blank, Jesus Martinez and Jim Jaeger.

The Service Desk team is dedicated to providing exception technical support to the campus community. We are confident that this latest training endeavor will help us provide enhanced support to the Mac community. Plans are currently underway for a similar training endeavor for Windows 7.

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CELEBRATE NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK
with Central University Libraries staff

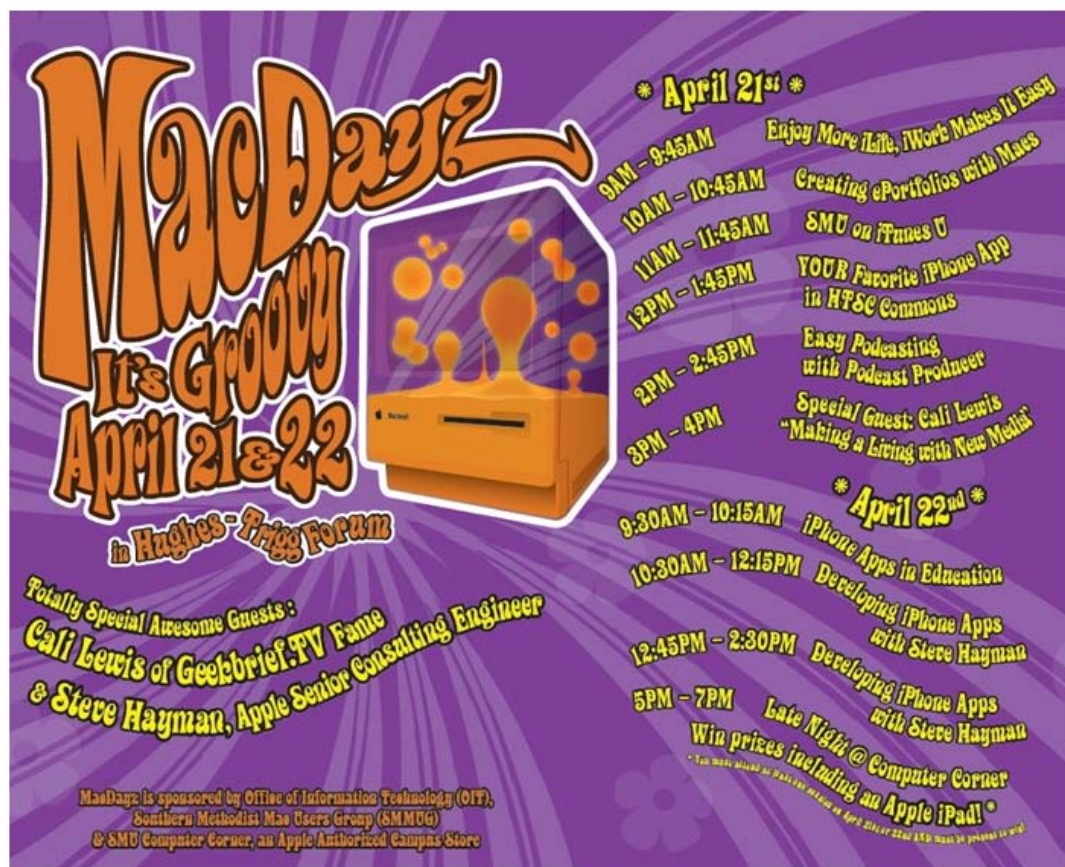
3RD ANNUAL COOKOUT

Wednesday, April 14th & Thursday, April 15th
Fondren Library Center West Courtyard
11 AM - 2 PM

Come on over for free all beef hot dogs, fresh popcorn, cold drinks
customized bookbag tags & demos of SMU Libraries new
discovery service. Visit the OIT tent for cookies & giveaways!

Look for the CUL Cookout on Facebook & invite your SMU friends

Mac Dayz will be held on April 21 & 22

A vibrant purple poster for 'Mac Dayz' featuring a large orange 'Mac Dayz' title with a stylized 'z' that incorporates a Mac Mini. Below the title, it says 'It's Groovy April 21 & 22 in Hughes-Trigg Forum'. The poster lists a schedule of events for both days, including topics like iLife, iWork, ePortfolios, iTunes U, iPhone Apps, and Podcasting. It also mentions special guests Cali Lewis and Steve Hayman. At the bottom, it states the event is sponsored by the Office of Information Technology (OIT), Southern Methodist Mac Users Group (SMNUG), and SMU Computer Corner. A small note at the bottom right says 'Win prizes including an Apple iPad!'.

Mac Dayz
It's Groovy
April 21 & 22
in Hughes-Trigg Forum

Totally Special Awesome Guests:
Cali Lewis of Geekbrief.TV Fame
& Steve Hayman, Apple Senior Consulting Engineer

*** April 21st ***
9AM - 9:45AM Enjoy More iLife: iWork Makes It Easy
10AM - 10:45AM Creating ePortfolios with Macs
11AM - 11:45AM SMU on iTunes U
12PM - 1:45PM YOUR Favorite iPhone App in HTSC Commons
2PM - 2:45PM Easy Podcasting with Podcast Producer
3PM - 4PM Special Guest: Cali Lewis "Making a Living with New Media"

*** April 22nd ***
9:30AM - 10:15AM iPhone Apps in Education
10:30AM - 12:15PM Developing iPhone Apps with Steve Hayman
12:45PM - 2:30PM Developing iPhone Apps with Steve Hayman
5PM - 7PM Late Night @ Computer Corner
Win prizes including an Apple iPad! *
* You must attend at least one event on April 21st or 22nd AND must be present to win *

Mac Dayz is sponsored by Office of Information Technology (OIT),
Southern Methodist Mac Users Group (SMNUG)
& SMU Computer Corner, an Apple Authorized Campus Store

Come and join us for Mac Dayz on April 21st and 22nd. There will be a number of incredible presentations by IT staff, Apple Staff and a special appearance from Cali Lewis of Geekbrief.TV. All events will be held in the Hughes Trigg Forum. Mac Dayz is open for all SMU faculty, staff and students.

April 21

- 9:00-9:45 Enjoy more iLife- iWorks makes it easy
- 10:00-10:45 Creating ePortfolios
- 11:00-11:45 SMU on iTunes
- 12:00-1:45 Your Favorite iPhone App in Hughes Trigg Commons
- 2:00-2:45 Easy Podcasting with Podcast Producer
- 3:00-4:00 Cali Lewis-- Making a living with new media

April 22

- 9:30-10:15 iPhone Apps in Education
- 10:30-12:15 Developing iPhone Apps with Steve Hayman (Apple Senior Consulting Engineer)
- 12:45-2:30 Developing iPhone Apps with Steve Hayman
- 5:00 - 7:00pm Late Night at the Computer Corner

We will also be giving away an Apple iPad! Simply attend one of the events to get your ticket. The drawing will be held at the Computer Corner on April 22. You must be present to win!

Exchange 2010: Coming this Summer!

Microsoft is releasing a new version of Exchange-- the software that powers the campus email service. Exchange 2010 provides a number of great new features for the system administrators as well as the email users! OIT plans to upgrade the campus email servers during the summer months.

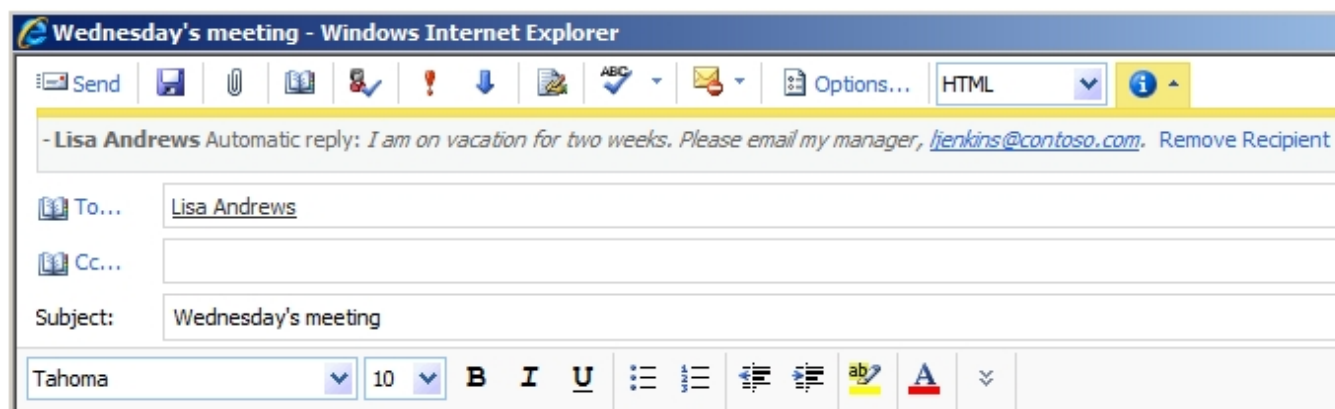
Although there are a number of changes "behind the scenes" that will help provide improved system redundancy, reliability and availability, there are several key changes that will benefit the campus community.

One of the major changes is the ability to use the full webmail client using Safari, Firefox or Internet Explorer. Currently, the full webmail client is available for only Internet Explorer. The Lite client currently in use by other browsers is fairly limited. The Premium client (or full client) allows for drag and drop functionality, easier navigation among folders, more robust calendaring options, spell check, and other useful features. With the new web client, users will also have the ability to scroll through all messages rather than navigating between pages of messages. This new web client will perhaps be the most noticeable (and most appreciated) change for the user community with the upgrade!



Another new feature offered in Exchange 2010 is the conversation view. Messages can be grouped by "conversation" and will appear collapsed with all related messages hidden underneath the most recent email in that thread. This makes it easier to manage an ongoing thread of communications and avoid inbox overload! There's also an icon to "ignore" the conversation. Be careful with this one! That will automatically route all related email for that email thread to the deleted items folder! It does give you a quick way to opt out of an email thread that you don't need to be a part of!

A new MailTips feature is incorporated to help alert users to possible email blunders such as inadvertently sending a message to a large group of individuals or individuals outside of an organization. If someone is out of the office and has their out of office message configured, that will appear when you type their name/address in the To field. This can help alert you that someone is out of the office before you even send your message!



Over the next several weeks, IT will be outlining the schedule and project plan for the Exchange 2010 upgrade. Additional correspondence will be sent at that time.

Office 2010-- Sneak Peek!

Microsoft will be releasing the new version of Office later this summer. Office 2010 is for the Windows platform only. The new Mac office is scheduled to be released in 2011. For customers already using Office 2007, this new version provides some new features as well as corrects some of the "unloved" features of the 2007 version. It will be a fairly easy transition for current Office 2007 users.

The following article highlights some of the key changes or new features coming with Office 2010.

All Office Applications

The first thing you will notice is that the Office button is gone and the FILE menu is back! The *File* tab has the usual commands: *Save*, *Save As*, *Open*, *Close*, *Recent*, *New*, and *Print* as well as *Options* and *Exit* which had also been on the Office button.

The Print Preview window has been redesigned. You'll now see a preview of your document alongside the various printer setup options. So you can quickly change margins, orientation, paper size etc and immediately view the document with those changes.

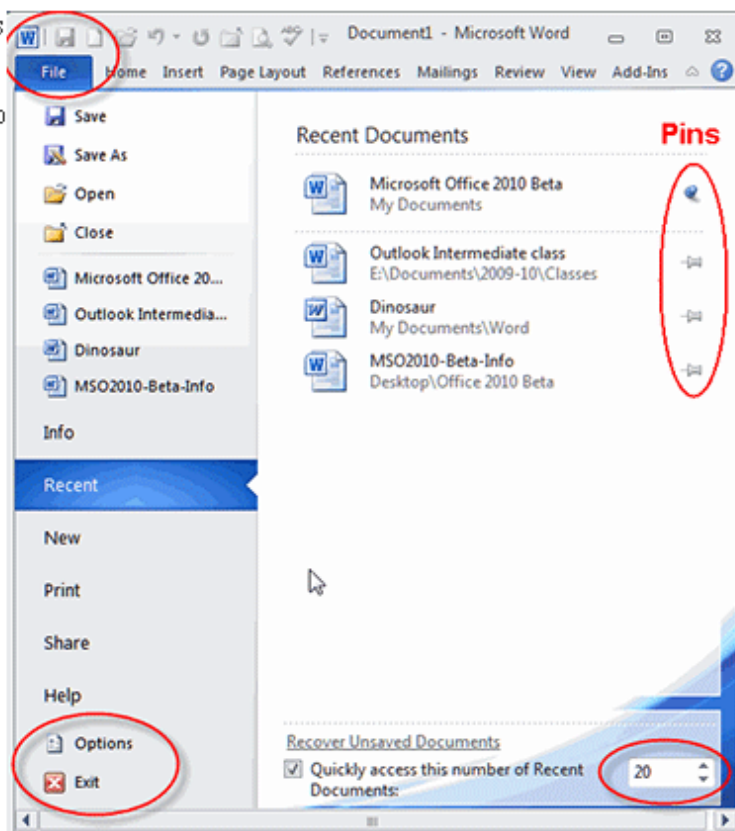
The *Quick Access Toolbar* is still available. However, Office 2010 now give syou the ability to create your own *personal custom tab*. You can create groups of functions and add those features that you use most often. You can select which tabs you want to appear and even arrange the order of the Tabs.

The other area of enhancement is in graphics, charts and themes. Microsoft spent a lot of time improving the tools to edit, enhance and apply more sophisticated effects to graphics, text and charts. They've added new Smart Art templates, themes and various editing tools.

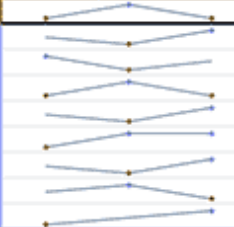
Word 2010

In **Word 2010** there is a new *Navigation Pane* which can be used with text formatted as *Heading Style*. All *Headings* will be displayed in the *Navigation Pane* on the left side of the screen. Click on a *Heading* in the *Navigation Pane* and it will display the page with that *Heading* on the right side of the screen. In the *Navigation Pane* there is also a *Thumbnails* choice, click on the *Thumbnail* for a page and the page will be displayed on the right side of the screen.

There's also a *Screen Shot* feature built in and avilable on the *Insert* ribbon. Once you click on the *Screen Shot* icon, your desktop appears. you can then highligh a window or portion of your desktop and the image will automatically be placed into your document.



Excel 2010

Exam 1	Exam 2	Exam 3	Sparkline
85	90	85	
95	90	100	
100	85	95	
90	95	90	
80	75	85	
70	75	75	
80	75	85	
75	80	70	
85	90	95	

New in **Excel 2010** are *Sparklines*! Sparklines are tiny line or column graphs that are in the background of a cell. They can be used to show a trend or high and low amounts. The figure shows a line graph with three data points.

If you are a big fan of pivot tables, the new version offers some great enhancements including a new slicer feature. This allows you to filter the data in a pivot table more quickly.

Excel 2010 has new charting limits. In Excel 2007, 2-D charts were limited to 32,000 data points. In the new version of Excel, you are only limited by the

available memory. **Excel 2010** now includes built-in *Equation Tools* that make it easier to create and edit equations inside a text box on a worksheet.

Paste in Excel has been enhanced with the addition of many new icons to select from. You can still access "Paste Special" if you prefer a Menu to numerous icons.

For those of you that rely heavily on Excel, the 64 Bit version will be able to manipulate datasets greater than the previous 2 GB limit.

PowerPoint 2010

A new feature in **PowerPoint 2010** is *Sections*. You can divide your presentation into *Sections*. You can see *Sections* in the *Normal* view and in *Slide Sorter* view. Use sections to organize your presentation. You name, print, and apply effects to an entire *Section*.

The best news – in **PowerPoint 2010**, when you insert videos into your presentations, they become part of the presentation file. No more missing video files as you move your presentations around!! It will support *QuickTime* (.mov, .mp4) and *Adobe Flash* (.swf) files when you have installed the *QuickTime* and *Adobe Flash* players. You can trim your videos, add synchronized overlay text, poster frames (frame that shows before playing), bookmarks, and fades to your videos. And, as you can do with pictures, you can also apply a border, shadow, reflection, glow, soft edges, 3-d rotation, bevels, and other designer effects to your videos.

You can now use your mouse as a laser pointer during a presentation with this new version.

Outlook 2010

Outlook 2010 now features the "ribbon" interface throughout the application. One of the biggest changes is an improved *Conversation* view which is enabled by default. This groups all related emails together allowing you to capture the whole email thread as well as minimize inbox overload.

The *Quick Steps* gallery includes creating buttons for combining frequent actions. These include forwarding a message to your supervisor (with one easy click), filing a message in a particular folder, creating a new message to a frequently used distribution group etc.

A few other new additions include:

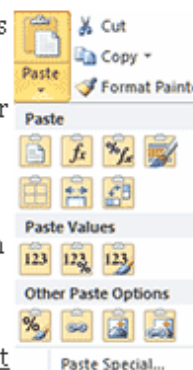
- the ability to configure multiple exchange accounts within the same profile
- reply to a message with a *Meeting Reply* and include all the message recipients easily in the *Meeting Reply*
- New calendar options for viewing multiple calendars
- New *Outlook Social Connector* that connects you to the business networks that you use, such as SharePoint and Windows Live.

One Note 2010

OneNote will also feature the ribbon interface with better organization and customization options. There is now a full page history and audit trail of changes for shared notebooks. In addition, you can easily dock one note to the side of your screen and take notes alongside an word document, website etc. OneNote will link those notes to the source allowing you to quickly return to that source at any time.

Office 2010 Deployment Information

Once the new version is available, IT will provide details to the campus on obtaining the new software. Copies will also be available at the Computer Corner for personal use under our campus license agreement with special pricing.



Online Course Evaluation Use Is Expanding

The Use of Blackboard for Online Course Evaluations is on the Rise at SMU

As our students and faculty begin to wind down the spring 2010 semester, some of us here in IT are just getting wound up to begin another round of online course evaluations. Well, that's not exactly true. We have already been doing online course evaluations this semester for the Cox School of Business. Their graduate programs run in modules - mini terms - and the first group of courses - Mod A - have already come and gone as well as their course evaluations. But, with the lion's share of courses coming to a close in late April, our work really begins now.

Piloting OCE at Meadows School of the Arts

For those of you who may not know, we are using the survey tool in our Blackboard Learning Management System as a mechanism for collecting all of the online course evaluation data. This tool is the same one faculty can use in their own classes and it works very well and provides the high level of accuracy and anonymity required for conducting course evaluations. We started using this system in 2008, when we evaluated some 500 courses online in the Meadows School of the Arts as a pilot project. Since that time, we have continuously made improvements to the system and expanded its use to include additional schools and departments. By the Fall 2009 semester, our pilot project had expanded to include a total number of 1716 courses in Meadows, Cox School of Business, Dedman College, and several departments in the Simmons School of Education. For the Spring 2010 semester that expansion has continued as we add all of the courses from the Perkins School of Theology and two departments in the Lyle School of Engineering to the mix. No word yet from the remaining departments in Education, but we are still hopeful to get them on board soon.

Analyzing and Reporting Evaluation Responses

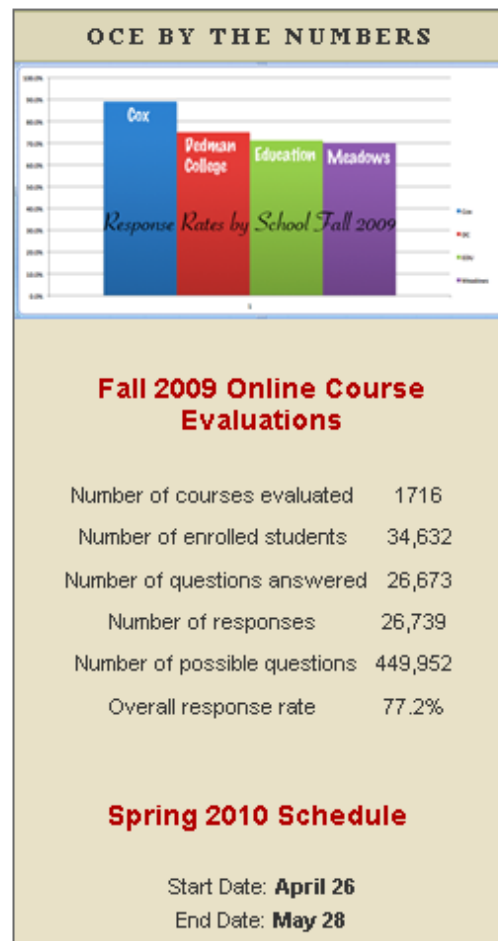
For reporting evaluation results, we are using File Maker Pro, a cross platform database application. Like the Blackboard survey tool used for data collection, File Maker Pro has its limitations too, but it gets the job done. At the end of the evaluation period, we extract a single "blob file"

that contains all of the evaluation responses and related information from an Oracle database. Shirlene Pearson, our resident statistician, then proceeds to verify and analyze all of the data, using a variety of applications, including a suite of specialized tools developed by her on both a Unix and PC platform. She then inputs the final evaluation results in a variety of customized File Maker Pro reports that are distributed to each of the academic units, along with Excel spreadsheets that display higher level summary reports for the deans. Shirlene has also been working this past year with several of the schools to develop and generate even more specialized reports, with some of those customizations eventually making their way into the standard reports as they become more popular. Currently she is working with meadows to develop a special report of some of these data for use in faculty tenure and promotion.

Evaluation Challenges Ahead

Just like any other IT pilot project, problems will arise. While we have expanded to include more courses, departments, and schools over the past two years, new requirements are identified that sometimes result in some very interesting challenges. To accommodate those changes, we sometimes have to improvise a bit; then, we adapt, and given enough time, usually overcome most of the obstacles. Some of the on-going challenges we have yet to adequately overcome include the following:

- Find better ways to automate some of our backend operations,
- Measure and report on response rates in the individual schools during the evaluation periods,
- Evaluate team taught and cross disciplinary courses,
- Automate and target our communications dynamically, based on response rates, and,
- Develop a useful and secure data warehouse to store all OCE data.



Our Biggest Challenge

One of the most pressing challenges we are facing this semester is sagging response rates. When we first began with Meadows over two years ago, they were achieving response rates in the low 90s. Over time, as we expanded the reach of the project and added more schools to the mix, we saw a steady drop in the average response rate into the low 70s. We have made adjustments in some quarters and saw our response rate in the Fall 2009 semester rise to 77%, with Cox leading the way with an impressive 89%. We want to continue that success and get that number even higher this semester. To do that we need help from everyone, including faculty, department heads, deans, and especially, students. Here's what you can do:

- If you are a student, fill out your evaluations. Your views are critically important in helping to ensure we continual improvement in our programs, curriculum, and instruction.
- If you are a faculty member, encourage your own students to fill out your course evaluations, even allowing class time for them to bring in laptops to get it done. Most importantly, remember that all final grade reporting is done through Access.SMU. Do not use Blackboard or email or any other means to report final grades to students. Report all final grades to Access.SMU. If students want to know about their final grades, tell them to fill out the evaluations. Final grades for a course will be released from Access.SMU the moment a student submits his/her evaluation for that course.
- If you are a department head or dean, please convey to your faculty and students the importance of the online course evaluation results as well as the important roles they all play in the data collection process.

For Spring 2010

This semester, course evaluation surveys will go online starting the week of April 26 and continue through May 28. Our goal this semester is to achieve a campus-wide response rate of 85-90%. Please help us reach that goal.

Reminder: Account Maintenance Automation Goes Live on April 22

The new Account Maintenance Automation (AMA) process will go live on April 22. This new process will automatically create, modify, and remove IT accounts and permissions based on an individual's status and role within Access.SMU. Information about this new process has been communicated in several newsletter and is available on the IT website ([click here](#)).

This process will have a tremendous impact on the way accounts are created, requested and maintained. The following information highlights some of the major changes you may encounter.

- Basic accounts are created automatically shortly after an SMU ID is generated in Access.SMU. Supervisors will simply need to request additional access for an account. However, employees and students will be able to login to Access.SMU and Email within a few hours after the ID has been generated.
- Initial passwords will no longer be mailed or emailed to individuals. Instead, the initial password will be set via a website after the customer has supplied answers to a few key security questions.
- Password reset procedures will change as a pin number can be generated allowing the user to reset the password via a website. The Help Desk will continue to assist users with the new password reset process.
- The account request forms located at <http://help.smu.edu> have been revised to allow a supervisor to request multiple services with one form. These will be used for anyone needing additional permissions.
- Accounts will be terminated according to a specific set of rules. An email will be sent prior to go-live to all supervisors. It is imperative that supervisors request extensions for accounts in advance of the termination date or contract end date that appears in Access.SMU in order to avoid the termination of an account.

Extensive testing has been conducted to ensure that accounts are modified or deleted appropriately. If there are any issues with accounts once the process is in production, please contact the IT Help Desk immediately.

Spotlight On the IT Field Support Team

In this edition, we'd like to introduce you to the Office of Information Technology Field Support Team. There are 4 individuals who provide desktop support for over 4000 computers on campus! These individuals work closely with the Help Desk team to provide resolution to computer problems, virus and spyware infections, software configuration and installation and peripheral device support. The four individuals are Rickey Harding, John Blank, Paul Tubb and Jesus Martinez. All 4 consultants have recently earned their Apple Support Professional Certification and provide support for both Windows and Macintosh platforms.

Rickey Harding has been working with the Field Support team for over 20 years! His favorite technology gadget is his iPhone. He was once hired as a telemarketer... but only lasted until lunch time! He vowed never to return to that line of work. He loves working with the customers at SMU and helping to solve problems. He is currently serving as the Team Lead for the Field Support Team. One surprising fact about Rickey is that he is a songwriter.

John Blank began working with Support Services back in 1997. He left his position as a high school math instructor to join the SMU staff. He loves working as a Field Support Consultant because he loves helping people. He loves working with technology and helping solve problems. His favorite technology is his smart phone because it can do pretty much everything! The worst job he had was throwing a morning paper route. He had two other interesting job offers including clearing gravel off of the top of warehouses or killing wild hogs on someone's land... but fortunately didn't take either one! John's greatest passion is his faith and he's often considered being a full time missionary.

Paul Tubb began working with Support Services about 2 1/2 years ago. He started as a Help Desk Consultant and then moved to the Field Support team. He loves working with the Macintosh-- and pretty much any type of device or software that Apple releases. His most unusual job was as a club bouncer. He loves working at SMU because of the number of people that he gets to interact with and help on a daily basis. Something you may not know about Paul is he is a human defibrillator. He has a built in defibrillator for a heart problem but insists it contributes to his electrifying personality!

Jesus Martinez is the newest member of the team. He joined the SMU staff about 6 months ago. Jesus enjoys solving various types of computer problems and working alongside his teammates. His strangest job is working a concession stand at Fair Park. Something you may not know about Jesus, is that he'll eat just about anything that is put before him!

