

Valdosta State University Information Technology

Description of Resources, Facilities, Infrastructure, and Environment for Computing and Networking 2010-2011 Academic Year

Computing and Networking Facilities

The university operates secure and accessible, state-of-the-art computing and networking facilities to support the mission of instruction, research, and service and associated activities. The facilities include a 1,700 square foot, raised floor data center, constructed in 2008 with the support of the Division of Auxiliary Services, housing over 200 servers for high-performance computing, server clusters, and storage array networks with redundant 140kVA enterprise class uninterruptable power supplies, backup 300kVA electrical power generator, redundant cooling in four 15 ton air conditioning units, a redundant, high-speed campus network core connecting all buildings by gigabit fiber optic cabling and gigabit copper cabling to the desktop for the majority of buildings. This infrastructure services 1225 student computers in 61 computer labs, 2275 faculty and staff desktop and notebook computers, and over 200 smart classrooms utilized in instruction, research, and administration. Internet service to the campus is provided by the University System of Georgia's PeachNet network, providing primary and secondary links with a total of 157mbps of bandwidth, 100mbps of which is dedicated to the public Internet and 50mbps dedicated to internal, PeachNet traffic, such as for Galileo and GIL library resources. Video Conferencing is supported by 5 mbps of prioritized, reserved bandwidth and three dedicated classrooms and several portable units. A separate PeachNet link at 110mbps provides dedicated bandwidth to users of the campus wireless network located in residence halls and academic areas.

A number of core services are supported by the systems server and network infrastructure. The student information system is comprised of the Banner Student Information and Financial Aid modules supporting admissions, registration, and financial aid functions. A recent component, Degree Works, has been added to better support advising and degree audit functions with self-service capabilities for students. The Live@VSTATE system hosted by Microsoft Windows Live@edu services provides email, calendars, document storage, and online office applications for all students, faculty, and staff. The university hosts its own Blackboard Vista 8 learning management system known as BlazeVIEW with the capability to support as many as 1,000 concurrent users and online classroom resources available for every class. Wimba web conferencing services are integrated into the Vista system to provide real time audio, video, chat, and whiteboard conferencing, for these classes. Additional services integrated into the Vista system include Safe Assign plagiarism detection and Turning Technologies student response systems (i.e. clickers). Oracle database systems support all of these services. Finally, an updated and secured Apache web server system provides the public web site, utilizing the Adobe Contribute content management system to allow programs and departments to maintain updated information using a simple workflow for administrative approval and publishing without the need for technical support or specialized knowledge of web authoring.

Employee training for these resources is provided by the Division of Information Technology in coordination with the department Human Resources and Employee Development. Additional Vista and Wimba training is provided to faculty by the eLearning department utilizing the collaborative HUB

teaching cooperative facilities located in the Odum Library. Since 2005, a special, pro-active focus has been applied to information security and awareness with the application of dedicated resources and programs to eliminate the use of social security numbers where appropriate and scanning and monitoring of systems and network resources to discover vulnerabilities and correct them. Regular audits of information security and information technology operations ensure continued progress toward these goals.