

Vice President for Information Technology Status and Activity Report for December 2020

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

1. Key Items for Faculty and Staff Meetings

- *Spring network maintenance scheduled for March 6:* EITS plans to conduct a network maintenance on March 6, 2021. 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. We typically conduct large network maintenances twice a year, during which campus Internet and campus information systems are usually inaccessible. For questions, contact Jeff Farese at jeffrey.farese@uga.edu.
- *Zoom Best Practices for virtual special events:* In order to help decrease the risk of Zoom bombing, UGA faculty, staff and students are strongly encouraged to set up the following measures for any virtual special events, especially those which include individuals outside the university:
 - Ensure the Meeting ID is automatically generated, and that the meeting has a password.
 - Do not publicly post the Meeting ID and password. This includes posting to the UGA Master Calendar, which is public.
 - Use the waiting room function to control when participants can join the meeting. Beginning November 30, the waiting room function is required for any participants who do not have a UGA MyID.
 - Designate multiple hosts who will help manage the waiting room and eject participants who disrupt the meeting.
 - Disable the “join before host” feature and limit screen sharing to the host.
 - Consider requiring MyID authentication for the meeting, so only those with UGA MyID accounts can attend.

Additional details, including a short video on how to set up these measures, are available at zoom.uga.edu.

2. Services for Students

- *Fall network maintenance improves network flexibility, resiliency:* On October 24, the EITS networking team completed their fall network maintenance. During this maintenance, staff updated device configurations, upgraded device software, improved the data center network architecture, and conducted several test failure scenarios and network performance tests. As a result of this maintenance, UGA network devices are now compliant with our configuration standards, device software is on par with our upgrade schedule and the data center network is more flexible and highly resilient. The improvements made to the data center architecture allow EITS to be flexible with how we direct traffic and more resilient in the event of a disaster scenario. EITS typically conducts network maintenances twice a year. For more information, contact Jeff Farese at jeffrey.farese@uga.edu.
- *Spring semester prep, updates to Banner and reporting tools:* EITS has worked closely with Student Administrative offices to prepare for the spring semester. Updates include increasing the time between classes from 15 to 20 minutes, and other student system upgrades to accommodate processing of Student Financial Aid and Accounts receivable.

To view an updated list of class times, visit: <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/daily-class-schedule/>.

- *Load testing in preparation for spring registration:* In preparation for spring class registration, EITS purchased a load testing tool that can be used by any team in EITS to complete a full load testing lifecycle for Athena. Load testing provides a security measure to make sure the system would perform as expected for students. For more information, please contact Ilir Hasko, ihasko@uga.edu.
- *G Suite at UGA available for most faculty, staff, students:* Most active UGA faculty, staff and students now have access to a suite of Google services through their UGA MyID account. G Suite at UGA allows you to securely share and collaborate on your UGA-related documents using four major Google tools: Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Sheets and Google Slides. Visit <http://gdrive.uga.edu> and log in with your MyID, password and ArchPass to access Google tools with your MyID. Employees and students who currently have a Google account registered with their UGAMail address (myid@uga.edu) will be migrated to UGA's instance of G Suite on January 8, 2021. These account owners should expect several communications about transferring personal documents and migrating their account. For more information on G Suite offerings and to promote G Suite in your department, visit google.uga.edu.

3. Support for Teaching Faculty

- *Classroom technology enhancements planned for Spring Semester:* In preparation for the Spring Semester, 31 classrooms will have additional cameras and microphones installed to support synchronous instruction. The videoconferencing kits will allow more effective collaboration among those participating in-person and online. These enhancements are being funded from Student Technology Fees. For additional information, please contact Bill Vencill at wvencill@uga.edu.
- *Blackboard Collaborate to be decommissioned, replaced by Zoom:* Blackboard Collaborate will be decommissioned December 31. After this date, Zoom will be the primary web conferencing solution available to instructors within eLearning Commons (eLC). During the fall 2020 semester, instructors who need to incorporate web conferencing into their courses in eLC may use Zoom or they may continue to use Blackboard Collaborate. After December 31, Blackboard Collaborate will no longer be available and Zoom will be the supported web conferencing tool within eLC. Saved recordings of Blackboard Collaborate sessions will also not be available for viewing or download after December 31. Users are encouraged to download saved recordings from Collaborate and upload them to Kaltura for sharing or long-term storage. For more information and project updates visit our information page: https://eits.uga.edu/learning_and_training/collaborate_decomm/.
- *Updated look and feel coming to Banner, Athena:* UGA uses Banner, launched in 2014, for its Student Information System. Over the next academic year, EITS and Student Administrative Departments will deliver incremental major updates to the system. The changes will include a fresh look and feel, a more streamlined user experience, new modules and feature enhancements. As changes are developed, information will be shared

with the university community, including faculty, staff, students and advisors via the ConnectUGA website, <https://connectuga.uga.edu/>.

4. Support for Researchers

- *GACRC teaching cluster available for spring semester:* A small high-performance computing cluster devoted exclusively to teaching duties is available for use during the Spring 2021 semester. The cluster, which is supported by the Georgia Advanced Computing Resources 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.
- *New Slurm scheduling environment now available to GACRC researchers:* The recent migration of Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center's (GACRC) Sapelo2 cluster to use the Slurm queuing and scheduling environment was concluded October 29. Since then, GACRC staff have been tuning Sapelo2's Slurm configuration based on feedback from the GACRC's user community. This tuning will be ongoing for the near future, as further adjustments are expected to be accomplished with additional feedback. Training opportunities will be available for established users and groups, while new users of the Sapelo2 cluster will be introduced to Sapelo2's Linux environment using Slurm to submit and manage computational jobs. Please contact Dr. Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu for more information.
- *Additional 48 compute nodes added to Sapelo2 cluster:* With funds from the Office of the Vice President of Research, the Georgia Advanced Computing Resource Center has brought to service an additional 48 compute nodes in its Sapelo2 High Performance Computing cluster. This investment of \$350k adds an additional 3,072 processor cores and 6.1Terabytes of memory, bringing the Sapelo2 HPC cluster to a total of 23,280 cores with a total memory footprint of 95.7TB. For the foreseeable future, the 48 new compute nodes will be devoted to processing large-scale computational problems in various fields such as physical oceanography, climate modelling and condensed-matter physics. Please contact Dr. Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu for more information.

5. Support for Staff and Administrators

- *Zoom Webinar integration with Kaltura upcoming:* Zoom webinars will be integrated with Kaltura on December 22. After this date, if your [Zoom unit contact](#) has enabled cloud recording, recorded webinars will automatically be uploaded to the Kaltura account associated with the MyID hosting the Zoom webinar. This integration will be similar to the current integration between Zoom meetings and Kaltura which makes the unlimited storage and captioning services offered by Kaltura available to those using Zoom webinars. For more information, contact David Crouch at dave@uga.edu.
- *Upgrade to listserv services expected in 2021:* EITS is in the planning stages of upgrading the university's listserv service. Once the upgrade is completed in summer 2021, list owners can expect changes to the look, feel and features of the listserv service. More details will be available at a later date.
- *Prepare for UGA SSO biannual maintenance and upgrade:* Our single sign-on service, UGA SSO, will undergo a scheduled maintenance February 6, 2021. This maintenance is necessary to move the service to version 6.2.4 to stay supported and 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 to 6.2.4 does not affect their applications. A dev environment is available for testing now, and a stage environment will be available for testing December 14. Once the new stage environment is live on December 14, EITS will not move any new applications to UGA SSO until after the upgrade is complete in February. Moving forward, EITS will apply updates to UGA SSO twice a year, in February and September. For more information, contact Shannon Marable at shannon.marable@uga.edu.

- *OneUSG Connect update coming December 8:* OneUSG Connect will undergo a number of changes during the weekend of December 4 beginning at 6:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m. December 8, 2020. Full release notes including a list of expected changes can be found on the University System of Georgia's website. During this downtime, biweekly employees will need to record time manually. Employees taking leave will need to enter requests outside of the hours noted above and supervisors will need to approve time and absences outside of this time. If you have any questions, please reach out to oneusgsupport@uga.edu.
- *Budget Management System transitioning to SSO on December 12:* The Budget Management System will transition to Single Sign-On (SSO) authentication on Saturday, December 12, and will no longer require 02 Restricted VPN for on-campus access. This change was originally planned for September but was postponed for additional testing. If users experience difficulty accessing the system, please ask them to close the browser and retry. This will resolve a known issue that can occur if the user closes the window in a previous budget management session without logging out of the system first.
- *Update your browser to continue using the Microsoft Teams web app:* Effective November 30, the Microsoft Teams web app will no longer support Internet Explorer 11 (IE11). Users who try to access the Teams web app with IE11 will be asked to use the Teams desktop app or access Teams using another web browser. This change does not impact any desktop or mobile Microsoft Teams client, and users will still be able to use the Teams web app with Google Chrome, Safari, Firefox or Microsoft Edge. For more information on Microsoft Teams, visit teams.microsoft.com.

6. Other General Services

- *Endpoint security management audit set for January:* The University System of Georgia (USG) Office of Internal Audit (OIA) will conduct an audit of the university's endpoint security management process in January. This audit will focus specifically on the security of University laptops and desktops. Servers will not be included in the scope of the audit. Auditors will review documentation related to device inventory, configuration management, patch management, antivirus protection, vulnerability management and control of administrator privileges. In addition, UGA Internal Audit Division (IAD) will randomly sample laptops and desktops in select University units and test for basic security controls. For more information, please contact Steven Hofferbert at shoff@uga.edu.
- *Simpler Decommission:* In recent years, there has been a strategic effort to make the UGA Data Warehouse the source for institutional reporting. This strategy will help UGA focus resources to help ensure steady progress in enhancing our reporting infrastructure. As a continuation of this effort, the Simpler/EDU reporting tool will be decommissioned at the end of May 2021 and the UGA Data Warehouse/Tableau reports will replace the functionality provided by Simpler. Numerous discussions and meetings will occur with

Simpler users to identify any remaining gaps and ensure solutions are in place before Simpler is decommissioned.

- *MyID accounts with noncompliant passwords to be reset in December:* As part of the UGA community, it is our duty to have strong passwords for our UGA accounts. Strong passwords keep you and everyone at UGA safer from cyber criminals trying to steal information. The UGA password standard is 10 or more characters, including complex numbers and characters (capital and lower case). About 850 UGA MyID accounts have passwords which do not follow this standard, and another 100 accounts have passwords that are too common or easily guessed. Owners for these accounts will receive several notices this semester asking them to update to a more secure password. Account owners will have until December 21, 2020 to update their password. After this date, any accounts with noncompliant passwords or passwords that are easily guessed will undergo a forced reset. You can also check if your password has been compromised in a data breach here: <https://haveibeenpwned.com/Passwords>. For more information, please contact Lance Peiper at lpeiper@uga.edu.
- *Update to Remote Access VPN coming soon:* On Dec 18, EITS will update the Cisco AnyConnect software on the Remote Access VPN. This change will automatically update a user's computer to the latest version of the AnyConnect software for their computer operating system when they next connect to the VPN. If you are away from the office or do not use the VPN regularly, the update will apply to your computer the next time you connect to the VPN after Dec 18. If you have any issues updating your software, please contact your department's IT Support or visit EITS website where the VPN software is available for download to anyone with a MyID: https://eits.uga.edu/access_and_security/infosec/tools/vpn/

7. Did You Know

- *New Faculty and Staff Technology Guide available:* The 2020-2021 EITS Faculty and Staff Technology Guide is now available on the EITS website at https://eits.uga.edu/faculty_staff/. If you would like hard copies of the guide, please reach out to Kathryn White, skathryn@uga.edu.

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