

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

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

1. Key Items for Faculty and Staff Meetings

- *Network maintenance scheduled for March 7:* On Saturday, March 7, EITS will be conducting maintenance on the University network. This maintenance is part of EITS' ongoing efforts to enhance infrastructure in support of business continuity operations and will improve infrastructure redundancy between both data centers and the Internet. As a result, there will be intermittent outages of campus Internet access and campus information systems. Because these outages will be unpredictable, the community should assume that network services will be unavailable the entire day. For more information, contact Jeff Farese at Jeffrey.Farese@uga.edu.
- *OneUSG Connect unavailable during Georgia Tech migration:* Georgia Tech will complete their migration to the OneUSG Connect platform on March 22. Similar to UGA in December 2018, this migration requires substantial effort to convert and verify employee payroll data. During this transition, USG will periodically restrict access to the OneUSG Connect platform during March. As this occurs, the system will not be available for use by UGA faculty, staff, and student employees. The downtimes will be Friday, March 13, at 6 p.m. through Wednesday, March 18, at 7 a.m., and Friday, March 27, at 6 p.m. through Tuesday, March 31, at 7 a.m. During these periodic downtimes, biweekly employees will need to record work time manually. Employees taking leave will also need to enter requests outside of these times. Supervisors will also need to approve time and absences outside of these times. For additional details and the latest information regarding these downtimes and upgrades, please see the [OneSource website](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to oneusgsupport@uga.edu.
- *Spring cybersecurity and ethics training required by April 30:* University System of Georgia employees must complete spring cybersecurity awareness training by April 30. This required training takes place twice a year in April and October per USG policy and directive by the executive order of Governor Brian Kemp. The cybersecurity training takes about 20 minutes to complete and will be available through the Professional Education Portal (PEP) later in March. Cybersecurity awareness training is a critical tool in the University System's efforts to help keep critical data and sensitive information safe and secure. Faculty, staff, and student employees who have questions about accessing the USG Cybersecurity Awareness Training in PEP should contact the Human Resources Service Desk at (706) 542-2222 or e-mail at hrweb@uga.edu. For more information, contact Ben Myers at bmyers@uga.edu.
- *Survey of UGA Technology Services to be administered:* The Vice President for Information Technology will administer the TechQual+ customer satisfaction survey for UGA students, faculty, and staff this semester. The campus-wide survey is available to a random sampling of students and employees. They may note the effectiveness of many technology services at the University, such as network connectivity, websites, administrative systems, and wireless service. The results for the TechQual+ survey guide future IT initiatives at the University. For more information, please contact Lynn Wilson at llatimer@uga.edu.

- *Weekly Webinars Continue:* OneSource Weekly Status Calls (webinars) will be continued through the end of June to ensure communication for fiscal year-end processes. If there are colleagues who you feel may benefit from receiving HR and Finance news and updates, please forward the GoToMeeting [registration](#). For colleagues who do not attend the call, recordings and presentations post to the [OneSource website](#). The recordings are available on Monday of the following week. For feedback on needed improvements, topic requests, or other suggestions, please e-mail onesource@uga.edu.

2. Services for Students

- *Recent enhancements to Banner student systems:* EITS is constantly working to improve the security and user experience for our student systems. In the last few months, we have improved the security posture of various student systems, including Banner Self Service (Athena), Banner Administrative Pages, Touchnet, Campus Logic, and DegreeWorks, by transitioning to the UGA SSO authentication protocol. DegreeWorks, the web-based tool used to monitor a student's progress toward degree completion, was upgraded to version 5.0.1, which is a major upgrade that incorporates new infrastructure and improvements at the application and database level. We also implemented Banner Quarter 3 Feature Releases for Accounts Receivable, Banner Student and Financial Aid modules and deployed the latest federally mandated upgrades to calculate tax forms 1098T for 46,141 students correctly. The student systems operational data store (ODS) now provides improved stability and supportability, much reduced operational costs, and greatly enhanced reporting performance. For more information about these recent improvements, please contact Ilir Hasko at ihasko@uga.edu.
- *EITS working to improve Banner/Athena performance:* EITS continues several ongoing initiatives in response to Banner/Athena system performance issues experienced during the November 2019 early class registration window. After over a month of intensive investigation and troubleshooting, EITS completed several initiatives which ensured the January drop/add period was not affected by the same issues. These major ongoing initiatives include regularly scheduled Banner/Athena load testing for detailed review of system performance, multiple database and application configuration improvements, creation of temporary and log data purge methodology, adjustment and implementation of a flexible process for building time ticketing schedules that lessens the load on the system, and collaboration with other large institutions facing similar issues. The next Banner/Athena load testing will occur on Saturday, March 14, and Saturday, March 21. This load test will allow for further fine-tuning before the April 2020 ticketed registration for Fall 2020 classes. For more information, please contact Ilir Hasko at ihasko@uga.edu.
- *Wireless upgrades and expansions continue in the new year:* EITS is committed to continually improving the wireless coverage and performance at the University of Georgia. Since February, our technicians have installed more than 125 additional wireless access points. Many of these installations were replacements for aging equipment, but additional units are now available in some areas of University Village and at One Press Place, the new downtown office of UGA Development and Alumni Relations. Upgrades will continue throughout the year. For more information, please contact Jeff Teasley at jteasley@uga.edu.
- *Upgraded student computing services in MLC:* Student computing devices available in the Miller Learning Center (MLC) are due for a refresh over the coming months by Client

Technology Services (CTS). The new Dell Wyse clients for vLab will provide a more streamlined experience for accessing and using UGA's virtual computer lab. Two MLC classrooms have already received similar upgrades. Other enhancements to the MLC include 50 additional 24-inch monitors that students will be able to use with their laptops or tablets via HDMI or USB-C connections. CTS is currently working on refreshing the 4th floor East wing and has deployed guest computers that comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). CTS expects to have all refreshes done by the end of February. If you have any questions, please contact Tommy Jones at tomjones@uga.edu.

3. Support for Teaching Faculty

- *Zoom/Kaltura integration planning underway:* Kaltura will soon integrate with Zoom, an online video conferencing tool. While Zoom can save the recording of your meeting, storage can add up fast, and a long list of recordings quickly becomes difficult to manage. The Kaltura media storage and streaming platform provides a solution for managing your Zoom recordings long-term. Planning is underway to enable the Zoom/Kaltura integration in summer 2020. Once the integration goes live, recordings from Zoom appear for each user under their "My Media Library" at kaltura.uga.edu. For questions or more information, please contact George Matthews at gmatthew@uga.edu.

4. Support for Researchers

- *New home storage tier put into production:* During the Georgia Advanced Computing Resources Center (GACRC) January maintenance window, GACRC staff placed in full production a new storage appliance, replacing a legacy appliance that was more than five years old. Serving more than 1,200 user accounts on the GACRC's Sapelo2 cluster, the new storage appliance delivers 300TB of usable capacity for researchers. The new storage appliance is designed with an increased level of resiliency through an internal three-way replication while being externally backed-up daily. With this additional capacity in place, each GACRC user now has access to 200GB each in their home directory. For more information, contact Dr. Guy Cormier at gcormier@uga.edu.
- *Research Data Management efforts underway:* The UGA Libraries, the Office of Research, and EITS have formed a Research Data Management Working Group to gain a better understanding of research data management needs on campus. A focus group with the IT Managers Forum occurred on February 6, and other focus groups around specific research data management topics are scheduled for later this spring. Findings from these discovery efforts will help develop a strategic plan for research data management for the University, in coordination with the 2020-2025 IT Strategic Plan. For more information, please contact Toby Graham at tgraham@uga.edu.

5. Support for Staff and Administrators

- *UGAmart Update in April:* The UGAmart 20.1 update will be available on Monday, April 6. The system will be unavailable beginning Friday evening, April 3 through Sunday, April 5, at approximately noon. The upgrade includes usability and user interface enhancements. A comprehensive description of the changes posted to the UGAmart Homepage under "UGAmart System Changes" after the completion of the upgrade.
- *Annual state-mandated verification of Banner, OneSource access begins March 23:* Each year, the University of Georgia is required by state rules to reaffirm the necessity of user

access to core information systems. The State of Georgia annually audits UGA's compliance with this policy, and results are reported to the Board of Regents each year. In preparation for the FY20 audit, EITS will conduct a verification of user accounts on several systems containing financial data to ensure that the user access continues to be necessary for regular job duties. Individuals with access to Banner, UGA Financial Management System, UGA Budget Management System (Hyperion), UGAJobs, and certain functionalities within OneUSG Connect will need to justify their continued access during this process. Supervisors must review these justifications and approve them. This process will commence on March 23 and will conclude by April 30. Those who do not respond may lose their access to these systems on April 30. For more information about the user verification process, please contact Lynn Wilson at llatimer@uga.edu.

GoTo Meeting replacement by Zoom: On June 30, the UGA license of GoTo Meeting will expire. The University is no longer renewing this license, given the adoption of the use of the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Zoom is an online meeting tool that allows for video or audio conferencing from desktops or mobile devices. Zoom is the recommended replacement for GoTo Meeting on campus and is available free of charge. Zoom features include video conferencing, desktop sharing and collaboration tools, as well as personalized desktop control. There are also integrations for Outlook and other programs available at Zoom's website. With the decommissioning of GoTo Meeting, users will have until June 30, 2020, to save and store any important information or settings on another location. EITS will be providing repeated communications to specific end-users and the IT community in preparation. If you anticipate needing assistance in transitioning to Zoom, please contact Contracts and Licensing at itcla@uga.edu. Units that want to continue utilizing the GoTo Meeting platform should reach out to their local IT department for assistance.

- *Evaluation of facilities data pending integration with data warehouse:* The Office of Institutional Research is working with Finance and Administration to begin the process of adding facilities data to the UGA Data Warehouse. Many units across UGA create, curate, or consume data about UGA facilities. The first phase of this process is to work with to understand where and how facilities data provides value. The inclusion of facilities data into the Data Warehouse will allow UGA to understand better how the physical infrastructure supports the institution's mission. This assessment will determine the appropriate timelines for the inclusion of this data in the data warehouse.

6. Other General Services

- *Meetings between VPIT and IT leadership of the Schools and Colleges continue:* The Vice President for Information Technology is working with the heads of IT across UGA's schools and colleges to schedule tours and visits for the spring semester. During these official visits, there is a sharing of plans and projects and conversations aimed at better coordination of IT operations across the large and diverse UGA technological environments. Adjustments to the agenda for the meetings will offer distributed IT leaders additional one-one-time with the Vice President. Sessions will conclude with a debriefing with the leadership of the school or college to ensure there is executive influence and support for IT operations and plans. These meetings typically occur during both spring and fall semesters.

- *Annual DNL Audit begins this month:* EITS is conducting an annual audit of Departmental Network Liaisons (DNLs). DNLs are IT professionals within a school, college, or unit who serve as the primary contact with EITS for network and security-related issues. Vice presidents, deans, department heads, and IT directors will receive a memo this month asking them to review the DNLs for their department and make any necessary changes by completing the Departmental Network Liaisons (DNL) form at itsupport.uga.edu. Departments will have until April 6 to complete the audit. In compliance with the University System of Georgia policies, EITS will conduct training sessions for Departmental Network Liaisons (DNLs) in April. For more information, please contact Ben Myers at bmyers@uga.edu.
- *2020-2025 IT Strategic Plan draft:* Last fall, an advisory committee of faculty, staff, and student representatives worked to develop a set of strategic technology goals to support the larger UGA strategic plan for 2020 - 2025. Surveys and focus groups were conducted throughout the campus to obtain input. In January, committee chairs Dean Charles Davis and Associate Provost Toby Graham submitted recommendations to Dr. Chester for goals to be included in the 2020-2025 IT Strategic Plan. This effort would not have been possible without collaboration and participation from faculty, students, and staff from across the University community. A final version of the IT Strategic Plan will be shared later this spring. For more information, contact Stacy Boyles at stacy.boyles@uga.edu.

7. Did You Know

- *Payroll stats show a high success rate with the OneUSG Connect system:* In 2019, UGA payroll distributed 359,687 checks in the new OneUSG Connect system. Due to the dedicated staff in units and colleges, 356,771 (99.2%) were distributed without error, matching similar rates from the use of the University's legacy systems.
- *Completed core compute and storage infrastructure in-house:* In 2019, EITS Systems Engineering undertook and completed a project to completely refresh the storage and servers used to run core University services. The new infrastructure reduced our data center footprint by over 500 percent, while increasing storage performance 1600 percent, storage capacity by 800 percent, network throughput by 800 percent, and network connectivity by 1000 percent. This project also allowed us to build out a more robust BC/DR infrastructure to improve service uptimes in the event of a failure in our core infrastructure, while also allowing for the continued growth of GACRC high-performance computing services.

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