

Vice President for Information Technology Status and Activity Report for February 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:* The need to continually upgrade the University network necessitates planned downtime on March 7. During this time, there will be sporadic interruptions across both the wireless and wired networks. These unpredictable outages will affect all University IT systems and services such as Athena, eLearning Commons (eLC), UGA Financial Management System, UGAJobs, UGAmart, OneUSG Connect, and OneUSG Connect Benefits. Individuals off-campus may also experience sporadic outages of services such as web-based UGAMail, websites hosted by UGA, the Virtual Private Network (VPN), ArchPass, and information systems hosted by EITS. Additional details and progress reports will be posted at status.uga.edu and on the EITS Twitter feed (@uga_eits). For more information, contact Jeff Farese at Jeffrey.Farese@uga.edu.
- *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.
- *OneUSG Connect unavailable during March 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 time manually. Employees taking leave will need to enter requests outside of these times, and supervisors will 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.
- *Test of UGAAlert on February 5:* There will be a test of UGA's emergency mass notification system, UGAAlert, on February 5. UGA students, faculty, and staff with a valid MyID can register up to three telephone numbers and two email addresses to receive emergency alerts via text, phone call, or email. The fastest way to receive an alert

is via text message, with the second-fastest being the desktop application. Emergency messages are posted on the @universityofga, @ugaoep, and @ugaalert Twitter accounts, as well as at www.uga.edu and emergency.uga.edu. Before the test on February 5, you should review your contact information in the system here: <https://emergency.uga.edu/ugaalert/>, and download the UGAAlert desktop application by visiting software.uga.edu. As of January 9, there are 67,390 people enrolled in UGAAlert. Enrolling in this emergency communication system will ensure that you're notified quickly in the event of an actual emergency. The system is available for Athens, Tifton, Griffin, Gwinnett, and Skidaway campuses.

- *Meetings between VPIT and IT leadership of the Schools and Colleges planned:* 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 more 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.

2. Services for Students

- *Units awarded STF One-Time Funds for instructional enhancements:* In December, units across UGA were awarded approximately \$4 million as part of the FY20 STF One-Time Funding process. Some of the units receiving significant funding include the Center for Teaching and Learning, the College of Environment and Design, the Griffin campus, the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, and the College of Engineering. The student-led committee awarded funds to support improvements to classroom technology and enhancements to student computing resources, as well as to provide new tools for faculty-student and student-student collaboration. For more information, contact Toby Graham at tgraham@uga.edu.
- *Wireless upgrades and expansions continue:* EITS is committed to continually improving the wireless coverage and performance at the University of Georgia. During the Fall 2019 semester, technicians installed more than 80 new access points in buildings across campus, including Brooks Hall, Forestry Bldg. #4, Riverbend South, the Science Library, the Chicopee Complex, the Hodgson Oil Building, and the University Health Center. More upgrades are underway. 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. The new Dell Wise clients for vLAB will provide a more streamlined experience for accessing and using UGA's virtual computing lab. 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. Deployment of this new equipment is occurring incrementally over the spring semester to ensure minimal disruption to students. The Student Technology Fee is providing funding for these improvements. If you have any questions, please contact Tommy Jones at tomjones@uga.edu.

3. Support for Teaching Faculty

- *Mathematica now available to all students, faculty, and staff:* Effective with the new year, Mathematica is available to all active faculty, staff, and students. Wolfram's Mathematica is a modern technical computing database spanning most areas of technical computing, including neural networks, machine learning, image processing, geometry, data science, visualizations, and more. Requests for a user account (both students and faculty) may be submitted through Team Dynamix [here](#). For more information, visit software.uga.edu.
- *Plans underway for new, improved classroom scheduling software:* The Office of the Registrar and EITS are collaborating on an RFP to identify next-generation classroom scheduling software. The current software product, Ad Astra, is beyond its current shelf-life, and there is a considerable desire among university departments to identify a successor product. The product space for products in the higher education market is limited, though a formal RFP is required to determine the best product that meets the University's needs. The Provost of the University and the Vice President for Information Technology are jointly funding this initiative. As a product is selected, more news will be forthcoming, including a project timeline.

4. Support for Researchers

- *Research Institutional File Storage expansion underway:* In 2016, EITS partnered with ITMF to identify service gaps for the research community at UGA. Out of that partnership, EITS launched a new service for the research community to store backups of their research data: Research IFS. Since that time, campus usage for the service has grown at a rapid pace, more than doubling in storage capacity each year. To keep up with the growing demand, and to best serve the future needs of the research community, EITS Systems Engineering engineered and launched an upgraded Research IFS service. This service was piloted with Franklin College OIT in Fall 2019 and is now live for the broader UGA research community. We will be working directly with current Research IFS customers to step them through migrating into the new Research IFS architecture. The new service is a hybrid cloud solution that allows for faster storage and greater scalability.
- *Solution for Project Encumbrances related to payroll installed:* Specific to grant accounting; there has been a previously known issue related to payroll encumbrances running until the end of the fiscal year. This issue has had the result of reducing the availability of operating funds in certain grant accounts. A solution to stop the payroll encumbrance at the grant budget end date, rather than the project end date, was introduced in January 2020. More information on this solution is available in this [communication](#).

5. Support for Staff and Administrators

- *Training on account management February 27:* Since 2013, The University System of Georgia (USG) has imposed standards for the management of user accounts for information systems containing restricted or sensitive data. Online training on these standards will be available Thursday, February 27, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. via [Collaborate](#). This training is of particular relevance to those who are data stewards, designees of data

stewards, or those who are responsible for provisioning and removing employee user accounts.

- *UGA Factbook now available:* The Fall 2019 UGA Factbook is now available. Copies are available on the OIR website at oir.uga.edu/factbook. This book is an essential record of UGA history with previous entries going back to 1968. The Factbook contains vital statistics on critical admission information, enrollment trends, employment metrics, financial metrics, and student outcome data. Previous Factbook copies also are available on the OIR website. For more information, contact Paul Klute at pklute@uga.edu.
- *Continual enhancements for OneSource and OneUSG Connect:* Numerous system and process improvements continually are being introduced to both the OneSource and OneUSG Connect platforms. A new [Enhancements Roadmap](#) is available to track recent advances and those in progress. This roadmap includes clickable graphics and keyword search functionality. If you have an idea that can improve processes or reduce burden, please contact the service desk at onesource@uga.edu.
- *Improvements in the timeliness of hiring via UGAJobs and OneUSG Connect:* Human Resources created a dedicated structure to improve processing times associated with the hiring process. This new structure includes teams of individuals dedicated to helping major units and departments. The average processing times for filling vacancies peaked in May at more than 20 days. With these improvements, there has been a significant decrease in processing times, even as volume increased in late summer. Processing times have trended under 11 days for the past four months, averaging 2.1 days in Central HR and 8.6 days in the background investigation, when applicable.

6. Other General Services

- *Installation of next-generation University wireless kicks off soon:* The Vice President for Information Technology has pledged to support a new \$5 million investment to install a next-generation wireless Internet system for the University. The implementation of this new system occurs on a rolling timeline taking place over the next five years. During this time, technicians will be replacing and refreshing more than 8,000 access points across our Athens campus and our extended campuses. These upgrades will provide more consistent performance and improved bandwidth capacity, as well as help us meet the growing need for robust wireless coverage. Over the last five years, the number of registered wireless devices has grown by 122.8%. This project commences this month, with technicians replacing access points across the Family Housing residence halls. For more information, contact Jeff Teasley at jteasley@uga.edu.
- *All apps must move to UGA SSO by March 6:* Protecting the integrity, confidentiality, and privacy of the information assets of the University of Georgia is the most critical mission for EITS. The new UGA SSO helps us to improve our information security posture continually. All applications using the legacy version of the University's authentication service (CAS, CAS2, LDS, IDP, IDP2F) must transition to our new production CAS environment, UGA SSO, by March 6. Applications that do not transition will be rendered unavailable for user access. As of January, about 280 apps had moved to UGA SSO, including Athena, eLC, and OneSource systems. For more information, please contact Shannon Marable at shannon.marable@uga.edu.

7. Did You Know

- *Learn how to install your free copy of Office 365:* All eligible UGA students, faculty, and staff have access to Office 365. Visit eits.uga.edu/stories for a short video on how to download the software package, which includes Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, OneDrive, Teams, and more. Office 365 is installable on up to 10 devices, including your phone, laptop, and tablet with either Windows, Apple or Android operating systems. Visit office365.uga.edu to learn more. If you need additional assistance downloading Office 365, reach out to the EITS Help Desk at helpdesk@uga.edu or call 706-542-3106.
- *UGA's information security protections constantly stopping malware in its tracks:* UGA's information security team operates multiple layers of network and computer protections to prevent the downloading of malware or stop it in its tracks should it reach the desktop. In a typical month, 1,020,000 individual pieces of malware are screened out by our network defenses. These defenses block approximately 20,750 more in UGAMail, and another 200 unique pieces are rendered useless on the desktop before they can spread. The team is continuously adjusting these defenses, as well as adding additional layers to protect the University's vast and diverse technological environments.