ADMISSION MOVING TO PEOPLESOF
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resh off the launch of redesigned recruiting materials, including the university website, the Office of Admission is now preparing to move Puget Sound’s admission process to PeopleSoft. The timeline for implementation will run from December 2013 to scheduled go-live in November 2014, just in time for the class of 2019’s early decision process.

This is not the first time Admission has implemented a new system, having transitioned four years ago to Ruffalo-CODY’s Enrollment Manager from a cobbled of the university’s Cascade system and Oracle’s customer relationship management (CRM) software.

“At the time, it was pretty clear Admission, and by extension Puget Sound, was operating at a market disadvantage in terms of recruiting students,” explains Director of Admission Fumio Sugihara. “The analytics and reporting deficits in Cascade were considerable, and no immediate solution was on the horizon.”

The move to vendor-provided software designed specifically for admission efforts provided multiple benefits.

“Enrollment Manager enabled us to segment communications as well as empower counselors to contact students within their territories,” notes Sugihara. “The opportunities for outreach, as well as the ability to monitor the efficacy of these efforts, increased considerably. We were able to be more responsive to prospective students as the market destabilized through the housing loan bubble collapse and ensuing recession.”

So why make the shift from Enrollment Manager to PeopleSoft?

“With the recent implementation of PeopleSoft as our enterprise resource planning (ERP) system here at Puget Sound, it makes sense for Admission to move under the same roof,” explains Alexis Greenwood, business analyst in Technology Services. “We’ll be able to take advantage of the opportunity to have one large system-of-record that is well-integrated with other university data.”

“The benefit of one system-of-record is twofold,” asserts Sugihara. “Data integrity is easier to monitor since there’s not a secondary system requiring us to move data back and forth which inherently results in the duplication of errors or other issues.

“Having one system has the added benefit of speed,” he continues. “Being able to respond to students with information in real-time fashion is not only helpful but, more importantly, it’s becoming the expectation. This is a basic customer service concept that goes a long way.”

Sugihara expresses confidence the planned implementation will position the university well as it continues to engage in what has become the rapidly-changing, competitive field of higher education.

“PeopleSoft is designed to grow and adapt with new technologies and business practices, so scalability is a significant piece of what we’ll get from the product,” he notes. “There will be opportunities to reframe the way we approach our work and better meet the demands of an enrollment marketplace that requires more personal contact more quickly.”

Visit pugetsound.edu/admission to learn more about how Puget Sound is reaching out to prospective students.

A NEW LOOK FOR PUGET SOUND, AND TECHNEWS!

In keeping with efforts by the Office of Communications to strengthen and streamline the university’s brand, we’ve updated the look and feel of TechNews. We’ve added the new college logo, used more maroon, and included preferred fonts. If you’re producing communication materials in any format for a campus department or group, you’ll find an array of helpful tools and resources at pugetsound.edu/communications. For assistance, don’t hesitate to contact the good folks in the Office of Communications at 253.879.2673 or communications@pugetsound.edu. They’ll be glad to help!
CASTING TECHNOLOGY’S ROLE IN THE CLASSROOM
by Lauren Nicandri, Educational Technologist for the Social Sciences

How do you teach a teacher to teach? For Professor Terry Beck, a classically trained educator in the School of Education, technology can play a role in answering that question.

For two consecutive spring terms, Beck’s students in his Education 419: Schools in American Society course have created podcasts that require them to select, research, interpret, and discuss a specific education issue.

Podcasts are audio broadcasts on any topic for any audience, playable on demand by streaming or downloading from a website. These broadcasts can be individual segments or part of a series, providing the listener access to a range of information.

Beck uses an assignment framework created by Suzanne Holland, a professor in the Department of Religion.

“I attended a Wednesday at Four session where Suzanne presented her experience using podcasts,” Beck recalls. “As I listened, it seemed to me this format was made for one of my courses. Suzanne provided her assignment along with permission to borrow freely, so I was able to avoid many of the pitfalls of starting from scratch.”

Beck also called upon Educational Technology, my group in Technology Services, to instruct his students on the basics of creating podcasts.

“The addition of technology means students need instruction in the use of the technology itself,” Beck notes. “It helps to take the time for students to meet and learn from the educational technologist, because then they have a source for help if the technology is frustrating them—a source that isn’t me.”

Beck harnesses the educational potential of podcast development, employing it to facilitate a powerful learning experience that meets many teaching goals at once.

“The assignment engages students in reading and making sense of social science research and then forces them to translate social science ideas to an audience in a way that is both accurate and understandable,” explains Beck. “I’m also working to socialize students to ways of working they hopefully will encounter in schools, so it’s a project that requires both contributing to a group effort and individual accountability.”

Acknowledging the unique nature of the assignment, Beck sets various due dates for drafts and provides extensive feedback, two practices he believes results in stronger final products. He notes student engagement in the assignment is heightened by allowing extensive choice of topics and requiring public performance.

In addition to creating a positive classroom experience, Beck considers the assignment a success on several other fronts.

“I’m always amazed at how students gush over the assignment and talk about how much they enjoyed it and how much they learned,” he reflects. “For me, these assignments are fun to evaluate, as they tend to be short, well-researched, and interesting.”

Professor Beck has two suggestions for anyone considering the use of podcasts or other technology in their teaching.

“Don’t recreate the wheel;” he advises. “There are models out there of well-crafted assignments that increase the chances of success. And give up on the notion that there is only one way to learn and to demonstrate learning. My students never complain the assignment is too easy or that they don’t learn a lot from it.”

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GOOD NEWS ON THE NETWORK
by Kat Leitzmann ’15, TS Student Staff Member

Have you had trouble connecting to the campus wireless or heard of students dealing with slow connection speeds in residence halls?

This fall saw a spike in the number of wireless devices on campus, including laptops, tablets, smart phones, printers, and game consoles. This trend, known as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), is not unique to Puget Sound but is happening across the country as universities try to meet the ever-growing demand for access that is fast and reliable.

In response, Technology Services (TS) has worked to upgrade the wireless network, particularly in high traffic areas such as Oppenheimer Café, Diversions Café, Marshall Hall, Collins Memorial Library, and Jones Hall. Wireless upgrades are also happening in Todd/Phibbs, Harrington, Schiff, and Seward halls.

In addition, TS has been able to double the bandwidth on the residential Internet connection from 250 Mbps to 500 Mbps. Previously this connection often hit its limit, creating slow service and lots of frustration. With the increase in bandwidth, students are seeing greatly improved performance in campus residences.

TS is also implementing new software to identify and disable “rogue” access points and routers connected to the university network, since such devices impair service for all users.

For questions or assistance, please contact the Technology Service Desk at 253.879.8585 or servicedesk@pugetsound.edu.

IN TRANSITION: OPTIMIZE TO MAXIMIZE
by Travis Nation, Deputy CIO for Enterprise Information Services/Network and Server Systems

As project manager for Optimize Puget Sound, I’ve had a close-up view into the major transition occurring in our campus administrative systems. We’ve had good days, like when we see something happen for the first time in the new system, and also days filled with challenges, or what I try to think of as “opportunities.” Fortunately, we have a great community here that is able to work together and find creative solutions when needed.

If you’ve been busy with other things and missed hearing about Optimize, here’s a quick recap: Optimize Puget Sound is a two-year project that launched in January 2012 to replace the core administrative systems on campus, including Banner and Cascade, with Oracle’s PeopleSoft. Officially, Optimize will end this month, and while we’ve implemented the three core PeopleSoft modules (Financials, Human Resources, and Campus Solutions), there is still a great deal left to do.

For most of us, Cascade was the only system we’d known, and it worked well in many regards. A group of very talented people designed and built Cascade over many years, and we’re finding it hard to replace in just 24 months. However, the team has been working diligently and making significant progress. We’ve seen that PeopleSoft does offer some features we never had before (e.g., shopping cart for registration), yet some functionality remains to be built (e.g., the orientation process).

Fortunately, PeopleSoft delivers a platform where the same great people who built Cascade can add the functionality we need. As you can imagine, though, this is not an overnight process, and in some ways we are in the most difficult part of this transition. Many of us use multiple applications in our work, but the things we need aren’t easy to access or even fully developed yet.

With time running out on Optimize, the President’s Cabinet wanted to ensure we maintain momentum and continue to refine and enhance our new system so it works well for us. To that end, they have endorsed Optimize Puget Sound as the next phase of the project so the needed improvements will continue at an accelerated pace. Currently the ERP Steering Committee is compiling an inventory of remaining needs and assigning priorities. It will take time, but we are determined to complete the work we’ve started, and I believe as we do, we’ll finally begin to realize the full benefits of our new system.

In the meantime, we want to increase your visibility into this work. We’ll be communicating details about Maximize and related projects by campus email and on the Technology Services Project Management Office website at pugetsound.edu/pmo. If you have questions or suggestions regarding system enhancements, please contact the Technology Service Desk at servicedesk@pugetsound.edu.

A large system implementation is an extremely difficult undertaking for any institution, and often overlooked is the heroic effort put forth by many of those involved, often behind the scenes. I’ve seen a number of folks across campus go above and beyond the call of duty without fanfare. We held an event November 7 to express our appreciation to these colleagues and the many, many campus members who have demonstrated great patience during this transition. To all, I extend a heartfelt “Thank you!” and I look forward to continuing the work we have begun.

Photo by Ross Mulhausen

Human Resources’ Chandler Fox, Nancy Nieraeth, and Erin Ruff partake in the Optimize event held November 7.
COLLINS LIBRARY PREPARES FOR MAJOR MIGRATION
By Wade Guidry, Library Applications Administrator

The library recently began planning for a major Integrated Library System (ILS) migration, with a go-live date of June 2014. The library’s current ILS system, which provides cataloging, acquisitions, inventory, circulation, and discovery functionality, has been in place for 20 years. The existing system has served the library well but has not kept pace with the changing needs of academic libraries. Faced with the imminent need to upgrade, the library has chosen a more collaborative vision of library service.

In partnership with other Orbis Cascade Alliance consortium members (orbsiscascade.org), the library has embarked on a two-year effort that will ultimately see all 37 member libraries migrated to a single, shared ILS platform. The first cohort of member libraries migrating to the new platform, including the University of Washington and Willamette University, went live in June 2013. Three additional cohorts of libraries will follow, going live in January 2014, June 2014 (including Puget Sound), and January 2015. This large-scale endeavor, a first-of-its-kind shared library platform migration, has garnered widespread attention throughout the worldwide library community (see tinyurl.com/cvsfwdw).

Ex Libris Alma + Primo, the next-generation platform chosen by the Alliance, runs as a multi-tenancy, cloud-based service built upon Oracle SQL, Web Services architecture, and open standards. It also provides a rich, unified discovery layer for library patrons. The new shared platform will cost individual Alliance members no more, and in many cases less, than the previous, stand-alone systems it replaces. In addition, the new shared environment enables more extensive collaboration among Alliance members, most noticeably in the areas of materials acquisition and sharing, inventory management, electronic resource management, and discovery. The platform will also allow a new, shared approach to common library work that previously occurred on a library-by-library basis.

For members of the Puget Sound community, the new platform will offer more seamless borrowing from Alliance partners, a richer, more unified discovery interface with access to the combined collections of all 37 member libraries, and a local library able to leverage its platform partnership with 36 other institutions of higher education to provide even better service.

The library will report on its migration progress as the project proceeds. For a preview of what the new catalog interface will look like, you can visit the already migrated libraries at Pacific University (pacifcu.edu/library/) and Willamette University (library.willamette.edu). For additional information, please contact wguidry@pugetsound.edu.

THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES GOES DIGITAL

Collins Memorial Library recently completed the digitization of large portions of its student newspaper, alumni magazine, university historical texts, and historical film collections. Among the materials now available online are The Trail student newspaper (from the 1890s to the present) and recently digitized historical films. These films, shot from the 1920s to the 1970s, provide a glimpse into campus life of the times, including special events, athletics, and academics. Collins Memorial Library welcomes all visitors to enjoy these milestone collections, publicly available at Sound Ideas (soundideas.pugetsound.edu/ups_archives). The site is full-text searchable and can be browsed by collection, publication, or decade. For additional information, contact archives@pugetsound.edu.

– Wade Guidry, Library Applications Administrator