1996

UA8 Information Technology Update

WKU Information Technology

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Introducing WKUNET

Western's campus-wide computer network, WKUNET, is now in use by over 700 faculty and staff members, some 200 student computer lab work stations, and over 100 students connected from their residence hall rooms.

The network is expected to grow to over 1,200 faculty and staff as the campus wiring is completed. WKUNET is an aggregation of all campus computing resources, Internet, e-mail, the library, and mainframe services, through an easy-to-use graphical front end. Graphical interfaces have also been developed for Windows users for the library, financial and student information systems and for CD-ROM access.

Senior programmer analyst, Kerry Moorman, has written the WKUNET interfaces providing much of the convenience inherent in the network.

"The key is what you deliver and how you can access those services," said Dr. Charles Anderson.

Users can access most services by using a mouse.

See WKUNET/Page 4

Guide to icons:
- cc:Mail - communicate and share information using electronic mail
- Organizer - manage appointments, addresses and other personal information
- Applications - productivity software, Word Perfect and Lotus Smart Suite
- Libraries - search library catalogs such as TOPCAT, Library of Congress, access CD-ROMs
- Mainframes - access campus mainframe host computers such as VAX and the IBM for FRS. and SIS.
- Internet - direct access to a world-wide network of computers providing hypermedia, programs and data
- Western Online - access schedule bulletin, phone books, campus news and the College Heights Herald
- Tutorials - learn to use campus standard software

Computer courses

For those people who aren't sure if they're ready to drive on the superhighway of Internet, or those who need more information about Lotus 123 spreadsheets — never fear, computer training is near.

The following classes for faculty and staff will be offered by the Microcomputing Support Center. All classes begin at 1 p.m. in Room 313 WAB; call 745-5382 to reserve a seat.

Beginning Level
Introduction to WKUNET - 3 hours. Nov. 3, 10, 17, 21. An introductory course that covers the usage of the WKUNET interface with strong emphasis on cc:Mail, and the Internet. Designed to have new users fully trained in one session.

Advanced Level
1. Lotus 123 - 2 hours. Nov. 1, 2. Designed to offer experienced Lotus users tips and techniques for WKU office applications.
2. Internet 1.5 hours. Nov. 6, 7, 8, 9. Making the most of features available in Netscape for Internet usage.
WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY NEWS

WKU is driving on the superhighway

Robert August has assumed the duties of director of Administrative Computing and Programs at the Computer Center at Western Kentucky University. He holds a bachelor's degree in business management and computer science from the University of Maryland, a master's degree in management and computer science from the University of Kentucky, and a Ph.D. in information systems from Regis University.

Robert August

After delays, campus is now being wired

Yes, we planned to have the campus networking complete by the beginning of the fall semester. That goal was announced two years ago, and we expect the networking to be substantially complete during the fall semester of 1995. A contract was awarded to Johnson Controls in May to wire six buildings by September 1. They projected the completion of some of the buildings by July 1. Not one building was complete by the deadline.

However, as of this writing, three contractors are at work on completion of the networking project. In addition to the Johnson Controls project, Pomery Computer Resources, Inc., is completing the fiber and coaxial backbone, and a contract has been awarded to the Fisheal Company to wire the eight remaining buildings — L.T. Smith, Diddle, Tate Page, Science and Technology Hall, Hale, Creevers, the Kentucky Building, and Jones-Jaggers. Those buildings will be wired in that order with WKUNET connections established for faculty and staff as soon as individual buildings are finished. By designing the network ourselves, we have realized substantial savings, avoiding engineering fees and the time required to get a firm bid from the state.

Dave Beckley, Data Communications Supervisor, has been responsible for much of the design work with the assistance of television chief engineer Jeff Martin on the video component. University Architect Paul Morgan has had overall responsibility for the design and supervision of the project for the University.

Robert August

Interactive television expands this fall

The university's interactive television network has expanded to a total of 11 classrooms this fall. Three new university-owned and operated rooms are available at Glasgow, Owensboro, and Russellville as a result of partnerships between the university and the Taylor County Board of Education (Taylor County High School), the Russell County Board of Education (Russell County High School), and the Elizabethtown Independent School System (Elizabeth-town High School).

These "students" learned new computer skills this summer during classes offered by the Microcomputing Support Program at WKU.

Radio, TV: One director

Dave Wilkinson was appointed to the position of Director of Public Broadcasting and Educational Television Services effective July 1, 1995. He has managed the Public Radio Service since 1980, and had served for the past year as Interim Director of Educational Television. By combining the overall management of the two services, we can continue to maximize economies of scale and synergies between these two groups," said Dr. Charles Anderson, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Administration. "This is all the more appropriate in view of impending cuts in public broadcasting funding." Jane Moore has been promoted to Assistant Director for Public Radio and Jerry Barnsly has been named as Interim Assistant Director for Educational Television.
Public radio celebrates 15 years

Western's public radio service is celebrating 15 years of broadcasting this year.

The flagship station, WKYU-FM, went on the air in November, 1980. Since then the university has added three transmitters: WDCL-FM in Somerset signed on in 1985, and in 1990, WKB-P FM in Henderson and WKUE-FM in Elizabethtown began broadcasting. These four stations now cover almost 60% of Kentucky and portions of Tennessee and Indiana.

Collectively known as Western's Public Radio, this network provides listeners with programming not found on commercial stations — classical music, in-depth news and public affairs, jazz and Kentucky's own bluegrass music.

The news department annually receives state and national awards for excellence in reporting. One reason it has been so successful is its access to faculty and staff here at Western.

WKUNET: Use mouse to point, click

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to point to a graphic and click without having to type a long series of commands.

WKUNET is unique in that the system was designed in-house from the ground up.

WKUNET supports both Microsoft Windows and Macintosh platforms. The interface programs were written at Western so they could be completely customized.

“The interface is dynamic — it will change from time to time to offer new features,” said Margaret Cline, Microcomputing Support Director.

On-campus users can use the WKUNET as a way of “surfing” the Internet. They can also access, with the proper clearances, data stored on Western's mainframe computers, such as budget information and student records. Electronic mail, or e-mail, allows users to communicate with others on campus as well as anyone in the world with an e-mail address.

Other services available on the WKUNET include event calendars, class schedule bulletins, the College Heights Herald student newspaper, telephone directories, a campus tour, weather forecasts and other campus information.

Faculty, staff and students with a computer connection in their offices or residence hall rooms can now plug their computers into WKUNET. Western provides the necessary software and network connection.

Keeping Connected

Linda Johnson, Finance and CIS Assistant Professor, uses the WKUNET connection in her office.

Photo by Amethyst Paret-Sewell

TOPLINE helps with registration

By pressing keys on a touch-tone telephone from any location, students can now register for classes or drop/add classes.

A pilot touch-tone registration program, called TOPLINE, was implemented in mid-October for advance registration for the spring '96 semester. This involves about 25% of the student population.

“This is a popular form of registration around the country,” said Registrar Freda Eggleston.

The primary goal of telephone registration is to provide convenience to students. Students will not be restricted to regular office hours, nor endure long lines to register or to drop/add courses.

When a student dials in, he or she will be prompted to enter data at specific times; therefore, no training is needed. Complete instructions are included in the schedule bulletin. The system uses data in the Student Information System (SIS) to determine who is eligible to register.

The system will permit eligible students to register on their assigned day or thereafter. Students with hold flags will not be permitted to register until the holds are cleared.

Future enhancements will include:
- Payment fees by credit card
- Bulletin board service
- Ability to access grades at the end of the semester.