Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2008 Connect!

With a new year right around the corner, this issue features an exciting array of articles about technology services and training in support of instruction and research (see pages 5, 8, 16, 17, 25); the use of quantitative tools in health research and other disciplines (pages 11, 15); and a new supercomputer, Cardiac, and the cross-disciplinary collaboration in heart research that it will be supporting (page 2).

In this issue, we also tell you about several new and improved services for the storage, management, and sharing of files and data of varying sorts. These articles highlight a few of a diverse palette of services that we hope will provide a good match to your particular academic, instructional, research, or administrative work at NYU (see pages 8, 16, 19 and 22, and the afterword on the inside back cover). For example, you may want to use Files 2.0 service for the storing and sharing of individual files, while Webspace and Interwoven Worksite MP — the enterprise document management system described on page 22 — provide better choices for managing documents in your program or department. This is a dynamic and evolving service area for NYU and ITS, and we plan to continue to feature articles on the topic in future issues of Connect.

— Marilyn A. McMillan
Associate Provost & Chief Information Technology Officer

About Connect

Connect: Information Technology at NYU is edited and published by Information Technology Services (ITS). Its scope includes information about computing, networking, and telecommunications across NYU’s various schools, departments, and administrative units, as well as developments in information technology outside the University.

Print copies of Connect are available at the ITS Faculty Technology Services Center, the ITS computer labs, the ITS Client Services Center, the NYU Welcome Center, and most graduate school offices. Copies are mailed to full-time University faculty, staff, administrators, and researchers, based on mailing lists administered by the Human Resources Division. Current and past issues of Connect, as well as a podcast, are also available on the web at www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect.

If you are a full-time faculty member and do not receive a copy, please notify your dean’s office; full-time staff should notify their human resources representative. If you are not among these groups but would like a free subscription, please send an email to its.connect@nyu.edu.

We welcome your comments about the articles in this issue, as well as suggestions for future issues. Contributions are invited for consideration by the editor.

Opinions expressed in the articles in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Information Technology Services or of New York University.
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Afterword: Files, Data & Documents — Storing, Managing, Sharing
Cardiac, a high-tech supercomputer, is the newest addition to NYU’s High Performance Computing (HPC) Center. Suggested by Professor Charles S. Peskin (Dept. of Mathematics, CIMS), the name “Cardiac” is both a playful tribute to ENIAC, the famed supercomputer of the early ages of computing, and a reference to the new system’s principal research application — the study of the heart.

Cardiac will be used by Professor Peskin, along with NYU researchers Boyce Griffith and David McQueen, as a vital tool in their effort to construct a functional computer model of the beating human heart. “This model,” writes Professor Peskin, “includes representations of the electrical system that coordinates and controls the heartbeat, the fiber architecture of the muscular heart walls and the delicate heart valve leaflets, and the fluid mechanics of blood in the cardiac chambers. The model formulation employs the immersed boundary (IB) method as a unified mathematical and computational framework for this coupled electromechanical and fluid-structure interaction problem.”

Applications of such a virtual heart are considerable. Computer-assisted design of prosthetic cardiac valves, computational optimization of cardiac resynchronization therapy, as well as computer simulation of diseases affecting the heart and its valves, with the goal of improving diagnosis and treatment, are among the areas of research that would benefit from work being done on the Cardiac supercomputer. In addition, “long range goals of the project include the development of patient specific virtual heart models for the individualization of patient care, and the computer simulation of cardiac remodeling as it occurs during the embryonic development of the heart, in disease states, and also in response to therapy.”

Cardiac’s three-rack system offers a computational density that was impossible until recently. It is built around a Sun Microsystems, Inc. 8000p Blade Center, with 80 Sun Microsystem X8440 Blade Servers interconnected by Voltaire, Inc.’s low-latency Infiniband switching technology. With a total of 1,280 computational cores, each of the Sun Blade servers employs four CPU sockets populated with Barcelona 8356 processors from Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), Inc. These quad-core processors run at 2.3GHz clock speed and offer four floating points per cycle.

The acquisition of Cardiac, which was made possible by a generous grant from St. Jude Medical to Dr. Larry Chinitz, head of Cardiac Electrophysiology, and Dr. Glenn I. Fishman, Director of the Division of Cardiology at the NYU Langone Medical Center, along with a smaller contribution from ITS, represents a three-way part-
At right, the flow pattern from one of the model heart computations. In the figure, blood on the left side of the heart (oxygen-enriched) is colored red, blood on the right side of the heart (oxygen-depleted) is colored blue. The blood markers have small tails which show their recent positions, as an aid to visualizing the flow.

In the heart model itself, muscle fibers are shown in a light brown, valve structures are shown in white.

The figure is actually a thin cross-section. Because of the positions of the heart chambers relative to each other and the plane of the cross-section, the figure emphasizes the flow pattern on the left side of the heart.

Heart animations computed by the immersed boundary method can be found at math.nyu.edu/faculty/peskin/myo3D/index.html.
nership among Sun, Voltaire, and NYU. The CIMS researchers and Dr. Fishman have been collaborating for several years on studies involving mathematical and computer modeling of cardiac electrophysiology. As ITS Executive Director for .edu Services, David Ackerman, points out, “Collaborations and cross-disciplinary partnerships provide ongoing opportunities for NYU researchers to utilize the latest and most powerful technologies available for research — technologies they may not be able to afford on their own.”

“We are delighted to have been selected by NYU to contribute to their important research in the area of cardiovascular disease,” notes Asaf Somekh, Vice President of Strategic Alliances at Voltaire. “The Voltaire Grid Director 20 gigabit-per-second switch increases the performance of the computational fluid dynamics applications running on NYU’s system, enabling researchers to build more detailed, higher-resolution heart models resulting in useful predictions and accelerated time to discovery.”

While Voltaire’s partnership with NYU/ITS is relatively new, Sun’s contribution to and collaboration with NYU spans nearly two decades. “Sun appreciates the opportunity to support NYU’s genome, dynamic modeling, and other research efforts with our HPC technology,” writes Chief Sun Engineer, Dr. Hung-Sheng Tsao. “It is gratifying to know that this system can potentially provide Professor Peskin and other NYU researchers the tools necessary to provide life-saving cardiovascular and related solutions to the medical field.”

Standard applications available on Cardiac include MATLAB, Mathematica, Tecplot, R, Octave, Scipy, Numpy, NETCDF, HDF4, and HDF5. ITS has added to Cardiac’s toolbox Totalview, a best-of-breed parallel profiler and debugger, as well as the Compiler Edition of Intel® Cluster Toolkit and Portland Group’s Compiler Suite, to address the computational density issue typical of massively multi-core systems.

While Professor Peskin’s group will be the principal users of Cardiac, the system will also be available to other research groups on a limited basis. If you are a researcher or advanced student engaged in studies with heavy computational requirements, contact the ITS High Performance Computing support staff at hpc@nyu.edu for further information, access, and help.

At the heart of Cardiac is the Voltaire Grid Director™ 2004 switch with 96 ports of 20 Gigabits/sec InfiniBand connectivity providing high bandwidth and I/O throughput between the nodes and very low latency to speed performance of the cluster’s applications.

The Sun Blade Center 8000p chassis packs ten blades, two management modules, one Ethernet module, and one InfiniBand module in each chassis unit. Theoretical performance of the cluster is estimated at around 12 teraflops.
In the fall of 2002, NYU introduced Blackboard as the University’s learning management system (LMS). Today, more than 45,000 NYU faculty members and students use Blackboard in their classes each semester. This past summer, ITS began implementing an upgrade of Blackboard to a newer version. Pending successful performance testing, Blackboard 8.0 will be available for the Spring 2009 semester, providing NYU community members an LMS with greater functionality and improved performance.

Faculty will continue to have access to four semesters’ worth of their course content, starting with Fall 2007. Access to the current version of Blackboard will be retired at the close of the Fall 2008 term. To help faculty members prepare for this transition, and to help ensure that content from previous semesters is archived, ITS is offering preview sessions and hands-on training in the use of the new Blackboard system.

Transition Assistance
ITS will archive all Fall 2008 courses and make their content available by the end of January 2009. One way to ensure that your course content is successfully migrated to the new version of Blackboard is to use the Course Health Check tool (see page 7). Available on your Course Control Panel, the Course Health Check identifies and repairs certain errors in the course’s content. Though it isn’t necessary to use the Course Health Check, it will help prepare your content for migration and ensure that your course is ready to be archived. If you plan on using the Course Health Check, keep in mind that the process must be completed by December 23rd, 2008.

To make the transition to the new version of Blackboard as smooth as possible, ITS is using a multifaceted approach to sharing information related to the upgrade. Regularly scheduled Blackboard 8.0 preview sessions (walk-ins are welcome) began in early October and will continue through January 30, 2009. Hands-on training sessions (registration is required) will be held mid-November through the end of February. Blackboard users should visit the ITS Blackboard Training page at www.nyu.edu/its/classes/blackboard to view the full schedule of classes and register for hands-on training.

In addition to these preview and hands-on training sessions, more Blackboard 8.0 support materials can be found through the AskITS knowledge base (AskITS.nyu.edu). ITS has also created an ITS Blackboard Upgrade blog (blogs.nyu.edu/its/blackboard/news); interested

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The new Blackboard Announcements screen.
readers can subscribe to the RSS feed or register to receive new blog posts via email.

NYU community members interested in more particular information regarding Blackboard may also wish to join the ITS Blackboard Users group. On this self-moderated forum, people from the NYU community share ideas and tips on using Blackboard and provide feedback on some of the new features introduced in the upgrade. Those interested in participating in this forum should send email with their name and preferred email address to blackboard.users@nyu.edu.

What to Expect
The process for most common activities will remain largely unchanged in Blackboard 8.0, though some incremental enhancements, such as bug fixes and faster, more reliable system performance, should be noticeable. Instructors who upload and display content, communicate with students using email and announcements, and assess student work with assignments, tests, and surveys will find that the methods are mostly identical in the new Blackboard.

The two major exceptions to this are the Grade Center (previously the Gradebook) and the Discussion Board. The Grade Center will have several new enhancements, giving faculty a more flexible and extensible grade-tracking experience. Among these improvements are:

- Individual assignments graded by response instead of student.
- Feedback to students sent via email directly from the Grade Center.
- Use of preferred grading practices within the Grade Center.
- Interim grades no longer calculated with not-as-yet-submitted assignments.

It is important to remember that Blackboard grades are not grades of record. ITS is collaborating with the Office of the University Registrar to develop a web-based grade submission system.

The Discussion Board will retain much of its previous functionality for moderated threaded discussions, but its interface will be improved. It will also allow students and instructors to subscribe to individual forums or threads in order to receive automatic alerts about new posts, and to rate posts with an easy-to-use star system. In addition, it will give instructors the ability to grade discussion board posts.

Additional Functionality
Blackboard 8.0 is compatible with Internet Explorer 6 and 7, Firefox 2.0 (on both PCs and Macs), and Safari. In the currently used version of Blackboard, pages display information in these browsers, but not all functionality is available. After the upgrade, all features will be fully functional in these three browsers.

Instructors will also have the ability to embed multimedia directly into Blackboard pages, rather than having to include such files as attachments. Additionally, tools can be added directly to content areas. For instance, instructors can add a discussion board forum directly underneath a particular piece of course material, so that students can post to the discussion board without leaving the content area.
The Adaptive Release feature permits course instructors to limit what each student sees based on pre-established criteria. For example, students working on different group assignments can access materials related to their projects and only their projects; likewise, course instructors can limit access to resources until earlier materials have been downloaded by the student, or limit access based on a particular grade.

The option to communicate with students via email will appear in two new locations. When creating an announcement, the instructor will have the option of having it sent via email to his or her students, eliminating the need for students to log in to the Blackboard course site to read the announcement. Additionally, there will be an option to send email to students directly from the Grade Center.

Perhaps the widest reaching fix, the WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) text editor will now be available in most content and tool areas. Using the text editor, one can customize the appearance and presentation of content pages to a much higher degree, and easily embed multimedia announcements on the front page of a Blackboard course site, as well. Instead of posting a welcome greeting in text, instructors will now be able to greet their students, give instructions, or deliver an entire lecture in a pre-recorded audio file.

The Upgrade and You
While the new version of Blackboard 8.0 will provide many of the same features as past versions, it offers added enhancements and much greater flexibility in communication, multimedia, and the Grade Center. To learn more, please join us at one of the Blackboard 8.0 preview sessions or attend our hands-on training. For additional assistance, visit AskITS.nyu.edu and the Blackboard Upgrade website (www.nyu.edu/its/blackboard/upgrade).

Course Health Check Tool
By using the Course Health check tool in the current version of Blackboard before December 23, 2008, you can help ensure that your course content is successfully migrated to the new version. In the Control Panel for your course, click on the Course Health Check option in the Course Tools area.

In the next screen, you will see the options to check External Links or to complete an Invalid Character Check.

External Link Check:
The external link check will test all URLs in your course site to ensure they are pointing to a valid webpage. After running the External Link Check, you will receive one of two screens. If all URLs are valid, you will see a success screen with a green square. However, if any invalid URLs were detected you will be shown their exact location in your course site. You can then amend the URL in the content area and run the External Link Check again to confirm that the issue was removed.

Invalid Character Check:
The invalid character check will check four main areas of your course site — Announcements, Content, Discussion Board and Staff Information — to see if any of these areas contain characters which might prevent successful archiving of the site.

After running the Invalid Character Check on any of the four areas, you will again receive one of two screens. If no invalid characters were found, you will see a success screen. If any invalid characters are found, you will be notified. You will notice the Fix link for each issue, and Blackboard will automatically fix the invalid characters and display a notification once the operation has been completed.

Once you run the External Link Check and the Invalid Character Check on each of the four areas (and you no longer receive any error reports), your courses should archive successfully and restore in the new version of Blackboard, 8.0. However, if you cannot fix an error, please contact ITS via the NYU Blackboard help form for further assistance (www.nyu.edu/its/blackboard/bbhelpform.php).
ITS Faculty Technology Services has launched a new initiative to increase the community’s awareness of our services, and to enhance our training offerings for faculty. As part of this initiative, ITS and the NYU Libraries have developed a variety of new one-on-one (or small group) training sessions for NYU faculty, designed to assist you in the use of multimedia and information technologies in support of your teaching and research. To accommodate your busy schedule, these sessions are available by request, primarily through the NYU Digital Studio (located on the second floor of Bobst Library).

To request one of the sessions described below, or to reserve any of the multimedia equipment available at the NYU Digital Studio, please complete the Digital Studio Appointment Request Form at www.nyu.edu/its/studio/appointments.

Flatbed Image Scanning
Learn how to scan images and documents, using a flatbed scanner. This one-on-one session will teach you the best practices to use when scanning for the web, for PowerPoint presentations, and for archival use.

The slide and negative scanners make it easy to digitize your collections.

Slide and Film Scanning
Got slides? Learn how to turn your rare slides and photographic film into digital images, using a slide and film scanner. This one-on-one session is tailored to help you produce high-quality reproductions of slides and film, which can then be used in PowerPoint presentations and Adobe Photoshop files, and for archival use.

Turn Print Documents into Digital Files, Using OCR
Want to learn about optical character recognition, also known as OCR? This session will take the mystery out of those intimidating technical terms, and teach you how to take a printed document, scan it, and save it as an editable and searchable Microsoft Word document, a PDF, or in another file format.

Kate Monahan is a Faculty Technology Specialist within ITS Faculty Technology Services. Paul Galando and Terrell Johnson are both Faculty Technology Specialists and members of the Digital Studio Management Team. Sujay Pandit is a Student Technology Assistant at the Digital Studio and a Ph.D. candidate in Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts.
Create PDF Documents from Printed Text
Running out of space in your file cabinet? This tutorial is designed to teach you to create high-quality, archival Adobe PDFs from any printed document. Now your research, archival images, and old class readings can be stored in your new, digital file cabinet.

Intro to Capturing and Editing Video
Need to capture or edit films, video clips, or animations for teaching or research? This tutorial is designed to give you the fundamental tools and skills for editing your very own videos using software like Apple iMovie and iDVD.

Create a DVD
Would you like to create a DVD of video or audio clips, images, or other multimedia for your class? This tutorial covers the basics on how to use iMovie and iDVD to create your own DVD.

Create Streaming Video
Have video you’d like to publish to the web? This tutorial is designed to teach you the procedure for taking your DVD, video, and QuickTime clips and converting them to streaming video that is easily accessible to anyone via the Internet.

Audio Encoding and Editing
Get into the groove with this tutorial designed to help you learn how to work with audio files. Learn how to convert your cassette tapes, compact discs and other audio media into wav, mp3, and aiff files. Then, take it a step further and edit your own audio to create a customized academic playlist!

Intro to Advanced Video Editing with Final Cut Pro
Think you might need to do more advanced video editing? Have you taken basic editing programs to their limits and still need to do more with your video? If you need to edit multiple video and audio tracks, require better organization of multiple source files using sequences, need to fine tune the

The Studio offers training sessions and a recording studio where you can create your own podcasts.

Studio staff can instruct you in capturing, editing, and encoding video.

Audio stations let you capture audio from cassettes, records, or digital audio tapes, then edit and encode into many file formats.

Use iDVD to create your own DVDs with titles and chapter markers for easy navigation when shown in the classroom.
audio levels in your video, or require more precise editing control in your timeline, then Final Cut Pro is for you. This hands-on training session will get you started with Apple’s professional video editing software.

Best Practices for Archiving and Storing Files Online with Files 2.0 and the Faculty Digital Archive

You have created a number of text, audio, and video files. Now where will you keep them? This hands-on session will give you guidance in the digital storage and archiving of your files — images, documents, and multimedia — in two NYU file storage systems: Files 2.0 and the Faculty Digital Archive.

Using NYU Blogs: An Intro

NYU Blogs lets you publish your ideas within an academic community. Learn how blogs are being used by University faculty and students to promote communication outside of the classroom. NYU Blogs also enables you to create a personal blog on any topic of interest. In this class, you will get started by creating your blog and making your first post. (Note that this class is a joint offering of the Digital Studio and the NYU Libraries’ Social Sciences and Humanities Reference Center. You can register for this class and for other NYU Libraries classes at library.nyu.edu/classes.)

We hope you find these new training sessions helpful and interesting, and encourage you to submit your feedback and suggestions to us at digital.studio@nyu.edu. Also, be sure to keep an eye on the email newsletters Connect-Direct and Lib-Link for information about another offering of our faculty training and outreach initiative, planned for the spring semester. ITS Faculty Technology Services, in cooperation with the NYU Libraries, will be hosting a day of drop-in tours and demonstrations at each of our three studio locations: the NYU Digital Studio (www.nyu.edu/its/studio), the Advanced Media Studio (www.nyu.edu/its/ams), and the new Data Service Studio (library.nyu.edu/dataservice).

While not required, you are welcome to bring your own materials (e.g., images, slides, videos, text documents) to work with during a training session.

An NYU ITS Academic Discovery Survey

Earlier this year, ITS, in collaboration with the NYU Libraries and NYU Press, conducted a survey of faculty and students to gain a clearer understanding of the role that technology plays in teaching, research, and learning. This project started in the spring of 2008 with a series of faculty interviews and student focus groups, which informed the survey design and final question set. The survey was conducted at the start of the Fall 2008 term and administered to a representative group of faculty and students.

The community-wide survey was designed to elicit a more thorough and grounded picture of the technologies faculty and students use on a day-to-day basis and the issues that appear to have the most impact for them. Areas of inquiry included instructional technologies, Blackboard, computer labs, obstacles to teaching with technology, learning about instructional technologies, digital publishing and dissemination, NYU licensed software, help services, and possible new or expanded services.

Faculty and student interest was tremendous. Responses were collected from more than half of those invited to participate, a remarkable response rate. Initial analysis of the Blackboard-related responses indicates that at least 80% of the NYU faculty surveyed are using the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) as a means of sharing course materials with their students. Of these faculty members, 70% are either satisfied or very satisfied with Blackboard’s reliability. About 92% of the students surveyed are using Blackboard, and of those, more than 50% are satisfied or very satisfied with how their instructors are using Blackboard and the extent to which the LMS is used. Within the area of possible new or expanded services, expanded wireless access received the greatest interest, with more than 65% of the respondents ranking it as either high or highest priority.

Final analysis of the survey results will be completed by the end of the spring 2009 semester. These results will be made available to the NYU community, and will help inform and guide ITS’ strategic initiatives. Thanks again to those of you who participated in this survey; if you were not involved but have comments or suggestions related to the survey or the areas it studied, we encourage you to submit them via the Ask ITS contact form at AskITS.nyu.edu/contactus.

— Meredith Rendall
A cross the NYU community, researchers are hard at work studying the determinants of good health, the causes and treatments of disease, and the effects of various health policies. Areas of health research vary widely, ranging from laboratory studies of cellular metabolism and the biochemistry of disease to population-based surveys, public health intervention trials, and economic analyses of health-related regulations. All use creative research methods to answer questions aimed at improving the human condition, reducing health care costs, and eliminating unnecessary suffering.

Methods used to study health can be as diverse as the topics under investigation. Here at NYU, researchers use numerous data resources, statistical software packages, and analysis methods to develop new insights. A number of these products and services are supported by the University, or are available at reduced costs to NYU faculty and staff, while others may be acquired independently by faculty or their departments. Researchers and their students learn these “tools of the trade” and keep abreast of the latest technologies, often assisted by the formal and informal networking that takes place on campus.

The four examples provided here — drawn from recent research by several of my colleagues who have worked closely with the staff of the NYU Data Service Studio — barely scratch the surface of the work being done on campus. Together, however, they illustrate some of the cutting edge quantitative methods and leading data analysis software packages being used at the University to study contemporary health issues in New York City and around the world.

Nutrition & Disease
Niyati Parekh
Tools: SAS, SUDAAN

Niyati Parekh, of the Department of Nutrition, Food Studies & Public Health at NYU’s Steinhardt School of Culture, Education & Human Development, uses sophisticated and evolving statistical methods to study the links between nutrition and disease. Her previous work has ranged from analyses of data from the Women’s Health Initiative — in which 2,000 women were recruited to study the connections among diet, lifestyle, and health — to studies of age-related macular degeneration. Professor Parekh has also studied the relations between macular degeneration and vitamin D using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Her current research focuses on the impact of obesity and related risk factors on cancer mortality, using NHANES III data (1988-1994).

The Tools. Until recently, Dr. Parekh’s statistical software of choice was the predictive analytics package SAS, because of its ability to handle large datasets. However, her recent work with NHANES resulted in a powerful addition to her arsenal: SUDAAN software. NHANES requires weighting to address its complicated probability sample, and SUDAAN is the recommended package for handling such complex survey data. Analyses of choice include survival analysis for prospective study designs, and logistic regression for cross-sectional data with dichotomous outcomes. Since Dr. Parekh’s goal is to produce results “generalizable to the U.S. public,” her work is now heavily reliant on both SAS and SUDAAN for their computer-based analytic tools that are designed to handle the huge datasets and weighting that her research requires.

1 http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/whi
2 A national U.S. health study; see www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm for more.
Improving NYC Daycare Centers’ Nutrition Practices
Temitope Erinosho, L. Beth Dixon
Tools: SPSS, ESHA

Recent doctoral graduate Temitope Erinosho learned to fuse statistical analysis technology (SPSS) with databases and software for analyzing dietary intake (ESHA) in support of her recent dissertation, “Nutrition Policies and Practices of New York City Daycare Centers and the Dietary Behaviors of Children Who Attend the Daycare Centers.” Under the guidance of her dissertation chairperson, Dr. Beth Dixon, Dr. Erinosho evaluated the nutrition policies, practices, and menus of group daycare centers in Manhattan, the South Bronx, East/Central Harlem, and Central Brooklyn, and the dietary intake of 240 preschool-aged children who attended them.

Surveys completed at 40 daycare centers provided data on their nutrition policies and practices. Copies of their current menus were collected. Observations of food eaten at breakfast, mid-morning snack, and lunch were conducted in classrooms at the daycare centers. A household survey was administered to 200 primary caregivers of preschool-aged children, to collect data about their food behaviors and the children’s dietary intake at home. This study, initially a collaborative project with the New York City Department of Health, has now been extended with grant funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is providing valuable insights about the policies that shape dietary choices and health for children in NYC daycare facilities.

The Tools. All survey data and the foods and beverages listed on menus were coded and entered into SPSS v. 16.0. Data on children’s dietary intake at the daycare centers were entered into ESHA’s Food Processor SQL and assessed as to food groups, energy, and nutrients. The results from Food Processor were then transferred into SPSS.

Standard descriptive statistics — i.e., frequencies, percentages, mean, and median — were used to characterize nutrition policies and practices at the daycare centers; describe foods and beverages listed on the menus provided and compare them with the recommended guidelines; and compare dietary intakes of children at daycare centers with their dietary intake at home. Binary logistic regression was also used to determine whether primary caregivers’ food behaviors predicted children’s dietary intake at home.

Dr. Erinosho, a frequent user of the NYU Data Service Studio, expanded her SPSS expertise and developed regression methods.

3 Department of Nutrition, Food Studies and Public Health, Steinhardt School of Culture, Education & Human Development.
4 ESHA Research, http://www.esha.com/. ESHA products include ESHA Food Processor SQL.
for this study, with assistance from the Studio’s weekly Statistics Clinics and routine meetings with staff at the Studio. She looks forward to further developing these skills and mastering SAS as a post-doctoral fellow at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, MD this fall.

Modeling the Impacts of Malpractice Laws
Graham Lawlor, Miguel Olivo
Tools: PUMS, MATLAB, LeSage Toolbox
This project was a study of how state medical malpractice laws might impact the quantity of practicing doctors, their decisions to migrate to other states, and the costs to consumers of any resulting changes in the supply of health care providers. Anecdotal evidence indicates that malpractice laws might have significant impact on where doctors decide to practice. In states where it is relatively easy to sue doctors, their risks and insurance premiums are higher than in other states. In these states, Masters candidates Graham Lawlor and Miguel Olivo hypothesized, doctors receive a lower return on their skills and labor, and see a corresponding incentive to move and practice in another state. A reduced supply of doctors might result in higher per-unit health care costs — which might, in turn, offset the gains to consumers intended by the designers of the stricter malpractice laws.

The analysis used a “gravity model” of migration, adapted from physics, wherein gravitational pull (migration) was estimated based on mass (size of a state’s economy) and distance (costs of moving from state to state). Detailed analysis of laws, and categorization of particular clauses within these laws (burdens of proof, negligence standards, statutes of limitations, etc.), were used to help predict the economic impact of each individual clause. The resultant estimates of the costs of malpractice law could be combined with the large, existing body of medical malpractice research that has been used in part to show the public benefits of strict malpractice law. Thus informed, policy makers could work to optimize laws for both costs and benefits to residents of the state.

The clause-by-clause cost-benefit estimates produced by gravity model migration analysis provide a level of detail for looking at medical malpractice laws far beyond other techniques. But the insights of the gravity model are not limited to the study of health-related laws. The technique was pioneered in analyses of how general population migration might be driven by economic freedom measures. Estimation of the migration patterns of doctors is a special case of this form of analysis. Other promising areas of research for the gravity model are in estimating retail interest rates due to changes in usury laws, tax revenue changes due to incidence and rates of taxation, and financial industry employment due to

Here, the gravity model was used to analyze geographic access to dentists. (Courtesy of the New Mexico Health Policy Commission and the University of New Mexico Division of Government Research.)

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6 Masters candidates, Department of Economics, Graduate School of Arts & Science.
changes in financial regulations, such as Sarbanes-Oxley.\textsuperscript{7} In general, anywhere that people or firms can choose among jurisdictions based on their laws, the gravity model can provide a framework to help show which laws attract people and firms, and which laws repel them.

**The Tools.** This study involved estimating a modified gravity model using cross-sectional and panel data from U.S. Census Bureau surveys and the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS).\textsuperscript{8} Spatial econometric methods were employed to capture spatial effects not detected by distance between states. The analytic tools used for this research were MATLAB and the Econometrics Toolbox by James P. LeSage.\textsuperscript{9} These methods make use of a variety of resources of the NYU Data Service Studio, including statistical software advice with respect to the use of MATLAB, data sourcing advice for PUMS, and mapping advice for our spatial econometric analysis.

**Community Factors in Obesity\textsuperscript{10}**

**Jennifer Black**

**Tools: Stata, ArcView GIS**

The aim of this project, Determinants of Obesity in NYC, was to better understand how neighborhood-level factors, such as access to healthy food and physical activity resources, may contribute to New Yorkers’ body weight and health. The most valuable analytic tool for this research was the software package Stata 10, which made it possible to build a database, combine and analyze complex survey data, and work on data imputation and multivariate regression. ArcView software was also essential for mapping neighborhood resources and looking at spatial data, so as to better understand how neighborhood resources cluster.

Training and support from the NYU Data Service Studio, particularly in the application of data analysis procedures and mapping techniques using ArcView, were of invaluable assistance.

**Savvy Use of Current Software**

In these studies and in many others across the University community, NYU researchers and students are making important contributions to the understanding of health. Health researchers now have access to multiple analytical packages to organize, manipulate, and analyze data, each with its own costs and advantages. The researchers featured here have used SPSS, Stata, SAS, MATLAB, and SUDAAN to analyze datasets large and small, with complex survey designs, in addition to straightforward descriptive statistics. These analytical tools have been complemented by mapping software like ArcView GIS and by ESHA Food Processor, which is used in nutrition research to calculate the calories and nutrients in foods. These savvy users of current software have taken advantage of state-of-the-art resources available to them, in order to explore, learn, and use the best methods for answering their research questions.

For more information on the quantitative resources available to NYU researchers, send email to data.service@nyu.edu. \textsuperscript{§}


\textsuperscript{9} [http://www.spatial-econometrics.com](http://www.spatial-econometrics.com)

\textsuperscript{10} Dr. Black’s dissertation research, reported here, was performed under the supervision of James Macinko and Beth Dixon (Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, Steinhardt) and Ed Fryer.
A Summer Program in Quantitative Methods for Social Science Researchers

SO-YOUN PARK
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The Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) is the largest archive of quantitative social science data in the U.S. A Center hosted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan, ICPSR has over 550 member institutions, including NYU, and since 1963, has offered its well-respected Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research.

A Wide Range of Courses, Course Lengths & Attendees
The ICPSR Summer Program is well known for providing a comprehensive, integrated program of studies in research design, statistics, data analysis, and social science methodology. The courses, which are offered in one-week and multi-week sessions from June to August, range from introductory to highly advanced applications, and have included such diverse topics as Quantitative Research on Race and Ethnicity, Analyzing Multilevel and Mixed Models using Stata, Collaborative Psychiatric Epidemiology, Structural Equation Model, Maximum Likelihood Estimation for Generalized Linear Models, Applied Bayesian Modeling for the Social Sciences, Time Series Analysis, Longitudinal Analysis, Game Theory, and Rational Choice Theories of Politics and Society.

Summer Program attendees include students, university faculty and researchers, and nonacademic research scientists. I was among approximately 800 participants, representing over 200 institutions from around the world, who attended this year’s Program. While political science was the predominant area of research, sociology, psychology, social work, education, food science, and other disciplines were also well represented.

Intensive seminars, workshops, and lectures, including those on writing grants, mining data, and computing (using such software packages as SPSS, SAS, R/S and Stata), were led by many different instructors. Program participants could tailor their course work to their own needs.

Tailored course work and specialized training for faculty, researchers, and students in the social sciences

I especially appreciate that the Program is designed to help social science researchers reach a better understanding of mathematical and statistical concepts, and to translate statistics into practical applications and terms. Courses such as matrix algebra and calculus certainly help one to better conceptualize statistics and the underlying mathematics. The program as a whole stresses methods of quantitative analysis within the broader context of substantive social research.

Computer labs were open until 11:00 pm, teaching assistants were there to help students with assignments, and the instructors were also generally available for consultation outside of class hours. A lounge in the main building provided a pleasant and constructive working environment.

Intensive Study & Sharing One’s Research Interests
The program promotes not only an excellent environment for intensive study, but also one in
which participants can network and connect with other attendees. For me, the ICPSR Summer Program provided a wonderful opportunity to explore my field of research in greater depth and to write my dissertation proposal.

If you are a student in the social sciences and are looking for specialized training that reaches beyond your coursework, and an opportunity to share your research interests with attendees from many other institutions and disciplines, I highly recommend the Program.

Accessing ICPSR & the Summer Program
As a member institution, NYU has access to all the ICPSR data archives and offers member rates for the Summer Program. In addition, ITS provides some stipends to NYU students attending the ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research. I am grateful for the financial assistance that Frank LoPresti and Gretchen Gano offered through my work at the NYU Data Service Studio (see the sidebar, at right).

Further information and course descriptions can be found at www.icpsr.umich.edu/sumprog. If you have any questions about the ICPSR Summer Program, please feel welcome to contact the Data Service Studio at data.service@nyu.edu or 1-212-998-3434. §

The New NYU Data Service Studio

Data management and statistical analysis in the academic environment are changing radically due to increased computational power and the ubiquity of the Internet. While a wealth of information and data can now simply be “Googled” or mined, countervailing trends in scholarly publishing are shaping data access in many disciplines. Conducting professional research in an increasingly digital environment can require the purchase and licensing of key data collections and the acquisition of specialized software and tools.

At NYU, ITS and the Libraries are collaborating to lower barriers to faculty and students’ access to data products and services, through a new unified service. Called the NYU Data Service Studio, it provides integrated ITS/Libraries staffing and space, that maximizes existing resources and pools expertise to strengthen overall support.

A New Facility in the Bobst Library
The new NYU Data Service Studio is now open on the sixth floor of the Bobst Library. This ITS/Libraries service conveniently locates staff, software, statistical computing, and data collection resources to support NYU research and scholarship.

The facility features a ten-seat work and instruction space where students and faculty can receive consultation and resources in statistical analysis and geographic information systems (GIS), and gain access to a variety of software for statistical, qualitative, and GIS analysis (SPSS, SAS, Stata, R, ESRI GIS products, MATLAB, and others).

Consultation is available via email (data.service@nyu.edu), telephone (1-212-998-3434), by appointment, or on a walk-in basis. Visit us on the web at library.nyu.edu/dataservice, or sign up for tutorials covering various statistical packages and data sources on the Library’s classes page. Information on upcoming workshops and other events is available by subscribing to the ITS/FTS Statistics and GIS Group Listserv at statistics@lists.nyu.edu.

— Gretchen Gano
The NYU Libraries are among the most valuable resources available to researchers, students, and faculty at NYU. Yet, with so many collections, databases, and services to choose from, how do you know where to start?

The Libraries’ Ask-A-Librarian services (library.nyu.edu/ask) can help you find what you’re looking for, and in ways that work for you. Ask-A-Librarian is especially useful to the ever-increasing population of researchers who work from off campus, whether from home or from afar. As use of Ask-A-Librarian has grown, the Libraries have worked to get the word out about this popular service to an even wider group and to develop more avenues for providing help. This year, the service added yet another way in which you can ask and get answers — text messaging!

Ask-A-Librarian now offers the following reference services.

**Email a Librarian**

When using the Ask-A-Librarian email form (library.nyu.edu/ask/email.htm), researchers will typically receive a response within four hours — an option that is ideal for anyone who does not need an answer immediately. This format works nicely for librarians, as well, since some questions involve a little “digging,” which can take some time.

**IM (Chat) with a Librarian**

You can chat with us on Google Talk (Gmail chat), Yahoo! Messenger, AIM, and MSN, by sending an IM message to AskBobst. This service has become so popular that its hours have been extended, and it is generally available Monday-Thursday, 10:00am-midnight, Friday-Saturday, 11:00am-6:00pm, and Sunday, 1:00-10:00pm.

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**Many Ways to Get Research Help!**

**Tom McNulty**
tom.mcnulty@nyu.edu

The Libraries’ Ask a Librarian Page is located at http://library.nyu.edu/ask.

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Tom McNulty is Librarian for Fine Arts at Bobst Library.
Text Us!
Now you can send and receive messages from librarians and staff from your mobile phone, simply by sending a text message with your question to 646-265-1342. The Text Us! Service is available Monday through Saturday, 10am - 6pm.

Call Us
You can call 1-212-998-2500 to select from a menu offering a variety of options, such as listening to a recording of library hours and access policies; talking with staff about renewal, fines, recalling books, and related matters; and asking quick questions about your research during regular hours (library.nyu.edu/about/access.html).

In-Person Services
While Ask-A-Librarian can be an enormous help to researchers who work remotely, the Libraries also offer traditional on-site services, including in-person reference (1st, 6th and 9th floors of Bobst), as well as individual consultations with our many subject specialist librarians.

To find your subject specialist, see the list located at library.nyu.edu/research/lib_arc.html.

For more information on how the staff at the Libraries can assist you in your research, visit the Libraries website (library.nyu.edu) and check out the resources available to you!

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A New BobCat
This fall, the Libraries rolled out a new version of BobCat, its online catalog. BobCat now offers a number of new features, including the ability to “pre-limit” searches by material type (books, journals, video/audio, and musical scores) and date range. Perhaps the most valuable enhancement is the ability to simultaneously search for articles in a number of subject-specific databases. You simply select a subject area (e.g., “art”) from a pull down menu, then enter your search terms, and BobCat will search the most important databases in that subject area, eliminating the redundancy which invariably occurs with resources that cover the same subject matter. The next issue of Connect (Spring/Summer 2009) will feature a more in-depth look at all of BobCat’s new functions; meanwhile, try it out and let us know what you think.

Keep Up With New E-Resources: The Trial Databases Page
If you’re interested in finding out which resources may be coming to the Libraries’ ever-increasing array of e-resources, check out our Trial Databases page. Here, we list citation databases, full-text primary source collections, and other products being considered for acquisition. The Trial Databases page is located at library.nyu.edu/collections/databases.html?category=TRIAL#items.

The Libraries welcome your views on these potential new acquisitions, so send your comments via Ask-A-Librarian (see article on page 17) or to one of our subject specialist librarians.

EndNote Bibliographic Software Available to Faculty, Students, Staff
EndNote allows you to search, retrieve, and store citations from bibliographic databases such as ABI Inform, the Web of Science, Anthropological Literature, the MLA bibliography, or the catalogs of individual libraries. It can generate bibliographies, reading lists, and footnotes in a wide variety of styles, and because it links directly to word-processing programs such as Microsoft Word and WordPerfect, you are able to add and format citations to papers as you write. There is both a Windows and a Macintosh version of EndNote.

The NYU Libraries has obtained a site license under which NYU faculty, administrators, staff, and students may use EndNote free of charge. In collaboration with the Libraries, ITS has made EndNote available for download by qualified NYU community members. For more information, please see www.nyu.edu/its/research/software/#endnote.

— Tom McNulty
The increasingly digital nature of our work as students, teachers, researchers, and administrators is an undeniable reality. We have documents, spreadsheets, and images that we need to store, access from several computers, and share with other individuals. These files might be saved to computers, thumbdrives, CDs, or emails, and over time, it can become difficult to know what files you have and where they are stored.

If you are looking for an easy, user-friendly way to store, share, and retrieve your files, the new Files service may be just what you need. Sometimes called Files 2.0, the service is available via the Files tab on NYUHome or at https://files.nyu.edu. With a default storage capacity of 2GB, as well as advanced features such as collaboration, web hosting, versioning, logging, and RSS feeds, Files provides advanced “Web 2.0”-style file storage and sharing that can be accessed from any Internet-connected computer.

**Getting Started**

Once you’ve accessed Files and logged in, click the Upload button to begin uploading files from your computer to your Files account. You can browse your local computer to find files to upload, or you can drag and drop files into the system by using the Advanced Upload feature (which may require you to install software on your computer).

You can organize your Files account by putting documents in folders. Click the New Folder button to create and name folders, then use the Move button to put files into the folders.

You can also set up Files access through a folder on your computer’s desktop, using a feature called WebDAV, available in most operating systems. In Windows XP and Vista, you can create a folder through the “Add a Network Place” functionality; on a Macintosh computer running Mac OS X 10.4 or later, you can create a similar folder by using the Finder’s “Connect to Server” option in the “Go” menu. For more detailed instructions on this and other features, visit www.nyu.edu/its/filestorage/faq.

**Sharing**

Files also allows you to securely share files in your account with individuals at NYU, as well as those who are not affiliated with the University. To share a file or a folder.

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**Webspace or Files: Which One Is For Me?**

Are you a University department looking to securely share files? For those departments that handle protected or restricted data, Webspace offers all the basic features of Files 2.0, but with a greater emphasis on security best practices.

To determine which service is right for you, visit www.nyu.edu/its/filestorage or the Ask ITS page (AskITS.nyu.edu). For those with specific questions about handling and securing restricted data, you can also contact security@nyu.edu.

For more information on how data is classified at NYU, visit www.nyu.edu/its/policies/data-classification.html. For an overview of the file and data management services highlighted in this issue of Connect, see the Afterword on the inside back cover.
with others at NYU, right-click (Control-click on a Macintosh) the item you wish to share, and select Share from the menu which pops up. You can also select a group of files and folders by checking the box next to each file or folder, then clicking the Share icon at the top of the screen.

Once you choose to share a document, you must specify the people with whom you will be sharing it, as well as the level of permissions you wish to give them. If you wish to share a file with an instructor, student, or administrator at NYU, you should be able to search for them by name. (Keep in mind that directory listings often include the person’s middle initial. You can use an asterisk as a wildcard character if you’re not certain of spelling.)

To share a file with a colleague or friend who is not affiliated with NYU, enter their email address in the sharing wizard to create special “ticket” access for them (keep reading for more on tickets).

Next, you must decide what level of permissions to grant to these files and folders. In most cases, Viewer-level access is sufficient, as this allows the person you share the file with to download the files, view them, and make changes to their copies of the files, but not alter your copy in any way. Contributor-level access gives all the Viewer permissions, and also allows them to make changes to your copy of the file, overwriting your version. (You may want to use this option in conjunction with the Versioning feature, which you can read about in the Files Help menu.) Full Access allows the person to administer your files, change their settings, and share them with others.

Finally, you can choose to notify individuals that you have shared content with them. This important step allows the recipient to know how to access your files.

Sharing vs. Tickets

When you share files with an individual from the NYU community, they must log in with their NYU NetID and password to access the shared files. They will be able to
access these files indefinitely, or until you remove their access.

If you are sharing files with a person who is not affiliated with NYU, and therefore do not have a NetID, Files will create a “ticket” containing a special encoded link to your file, which is then sent to the recipient. Anyone who has the link will have access to the file without the need to log in — unless you chose to set an ad hoc password when you created the ticket, in which case you will need to provide the password to the person separately from the ticket link. Tickets also have a default built-in expiration date of 30 days.

Webpages and the Public Folder

Using Files, you can host a website, which may be accessed by anyone via the Internet. First, you must go to the Files 2.0 channel in the NYUHome Files tab and click on Activate My Public Folder. Once you have agreed to the Terms of Use, a folder named “public” will be created in your Files account. Anything that you put into this folder will be available to anyone, via the Internet, until you remove it from the folder. Your website’s address will be https://files.nyu.edu/your_netid/public (replace your_netid with your own NetID).

Advanced Features

To learn more about advanced features available in Files, such as bookmarks, versioning, logging, tags, RSS, and subscriptions, visit www.nyu.edu/its/filestorage/faqs, or simply click the “Help” link at the top right of the Files screen.

Files 2.0 in the Data Service Studio

The NYU Data Service Studio (DSS), an ITS/Libraries facility for assistance with and instruction in statistics and mapping software, was one of the first campus groups to begin using Files. Starting in the summer of 2008, while planning for the move from the ITS Third Ave North lab to the 6th floor of the Bobst Library, the DSS examined and completely overhauled its software, hardware, and network systems and processes. Files was identified as a service that would fulfill a number of the requirements of students and faculty working in the DSS (see below), and with help from the administrators of the Files system and other ITS staff, the DSS established a set of internal guidelines and best practices for the use of Files. These are now instituted in the DSS and promoted among staff and others who use the facility, enabling us to optimize our use of Files, and take full advantage of its features.

Files provides several ways to manage data that are ideally suited for the kind of work done by students and faculty in the DSS: statistics and mapping research is data-intensive, which requires reliable and secure file storage; many users of the DSS are working on group projects and need to share files among their team members; and projects with long duration, such as Ph.D. dissertations, involve large numbers of files which must be carefully managed and version-tracked. Each of these needs is addressed by features available in Files, such as secure and reliable network storage, web-based group file sharing, and advanced versioning. Files is well-suited for group projects, distribution of common documentation and software to the University community, and long-term research involving multiple versions of the same files.

If you would like to hear more about how the DSS is using Files, please visit us on the 6th floor of Bobst. For information on the facilities, training, and expert staff at the DSS, please see page 16, as well as the DSS website at library.nyu.edu/dataservice.

— Graham Lawlor
Document management at NYU will soon be reaching a new level of efficiency, one department at a time. ITS has begun collaborating with University academic and business offices to provide customized implementations of Interwoven WorkSite MP, an enterprise document management system.

A document management system, or DMS, is a system for the electronic scanning, storage, retrieval, sharing, tracking, revision, and distribution of documents and the information they contain. A DMS provides many benefits — it frees up floor space, centralizes document storage for easy retrieval and administrative efficiency, securely stores sensitive data, and reduces paper costs and waste.

An Enterprise DMS
A recognized need for an enterprise-wide DMS at NYU emerged several years ago. It was impelled in part by the University’s “green” efforts to reduce and eliminate paper wherever possible, but the management of paper documents was also becoming increasingly unwieldy, and for many departments, the very floor space required for the storage of paper files had become a scarce and precious resource. While the University’s Office of Legal Counsel initially provided the impetus for acquiring such a system, it was soon recognized that other departments within the University would also benefit from a DMS. A task force was formed, representing many academic and administrative units across the University, and Interwoven WorkSite MP was ultimately chosen as NYU’s enterprise DMS.

Not only does WorkSite make sharing and collaborating on documents more manageable — with features such as “check-out” and “check-in” (which restrict document update access to one person at a time, by requiring them to check the document out of a repository), document version control, tracking, expedited retrieval, a friendly interface, and Windows-style file organization — but it can also ultimately alleviate the use of shared departmental network drives.

Chris Agnelli heads the Interwoven WorkSite MP implementation at NYU, and is a Project Leader within ITS ECOMS, where he has worked with various administrative application systems for over 17 years.
WorkSite MP’s familiar and easily navigated Windows-like file organization is also highly customizable, allowing departments to create folder structures and folders that closely accommodate their needs. Moreover, through the use of metadata (definitively, data about data), departments working with ITS create document and folder properties specific to their business needs, such as Project Number and Title, Review Date, NYU ID, and more. These properties, in turn, are used to optimize the process by which department staff search for and retrieve documents stored in the system. The ability to customize metadata is particularly valuable to groups with highly specialized business processes and information. WorkSite can also store a very large variety of document types.

Implementing a DMS for a Department

DMS implementations that are tailor-made to a department’s business processes and needs aren’t accomplished in a day. When a department or school undertakes a WorkSite implementation, extensive preliminary procedures are begun, in collaboration with the ITS team. In the early stages, ITS leads a series of workshops to assist department staff in their consideration of such topics as taxonomy, metadata, document types, transition plans, and security policies, as they relate to the department’s particular business process. Eventually, the department will have a “facility” within WorkSite, to which only that department will have access. The results of these workshops and subsequent planning ultimately determine how the files within that department’s DMS facility will be organized, who has access to the various documents, and the metadata that will be associated with each document, so as to best facilitate the search and retrieval of documents.

Additionally, ITS works with the department to assess the quantity of existing files to be stored in WorkSite, those already in electronic format, as well as those that need to be scanned. This can require a lot of thought and analysis. Consider, for example, all the papers in filing cabinets and the email messages that a department might wish to collect and store, not to mention all the electronic documents on individual and shared network drives. Next, a process is devised for getting the electronic files into WorkSite and scanning the paper files, so that they too can be added to the department’s WorkSite facility. For those departments with a large volume of paper “backfile,” NYU has a master contract with an imaging company that can do the scanning for them. For departments with smaller amounts of paper to be processed, NYU Copy Central has the means to do the scanning for them, and is an option to be considered.

Once the department or school is set up with WorkSite, people can interact with their documents in the repository in two ways. The first is

Some Additional Benefits of a DMS

- The scanned files are secured from the effects of flood, fire, and other disasters.

- Using an enterprise DMS helps the University maintain compliance with governmental eDiscovery and record retention rules.

- By reducing the amount of paper used, it helps to “green” the University’s processes.

- Departments working with ITS to implement a DMS are able to reexamine their business processes for opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce their dependency on paper.

Figure 2. Once “Worksite Open” has been selected from the menu (see Figure 1), a Worksite dialog box very similar to that of Word enables you to navigate to the file within the Worksite repository that you wish to open.
Selecting a File Storage Solution

ITS offers a variety of departmental file-storage and -sharing solutions. Webspace, for example, may be a good choice for departments that need a space for ad hoc storage, and prefer a flexible, more self-service model of organization and access.

While WorkSite also permits ad hoc creation of folders, it is within a well-planned and -articulated framework and structure. Thus, WorkSite may be the better choice for a department that is looking to “get organized” and/or requires a file organization that reflects its business process and structure. To read more about individual file storage and sharing using Files 2.0, see page 19. For an overview of the file and data management services highlighted in this issue of Connect, see the Afterword on the inside back cover.

ITS is happy to work with you to find the right solution to fit your departmental, research, or individual needs: please visit www.nyu.edu/its/filestorage or send email to AskITS@nyu.edu to arrange a consultation.

NYU’s DIAL Modem Service To Retire in January

Due to the widespread availability of residential broadband data services (e.g., cable and DSL), the use of NYU’s DIAL modem service to connect to the NYU network has decreased sharply over the past several years. Maintaining DIAL service is costly, particularly as its usage declines and the underlying technology ages. As a result, ITS will be retiring DIAL service on Tuesday, January 20, 2009.

ITS has contacted all students, faculty and staff members who have used NYU’s DIAL modem service to connect to the NYU network within the last six months, to let them know of this service change. Over the next several months, we will be sending these individuals additional information about DIAL’s retirement and dial-up alternatives which they may choose to use.

If you currently use DIAL service, please be assured that, prior to this service’s retirement, we will provide you with as much information as needed to make your transition as smooth as possible. Please check www.nyu.edu/its/nyunet/dial for updates, and feel welcome to contact ITS Client Services (1-212-998-3333 or AskITS@nyu.edu) should you need additional information or help.
Online Course Lookup
Searching Made Easy at NYU

Eve Simonsen with Jim Gonzales
ev.esimonsen@nyu.edu,
jim.gonzales@nyu.edu

This January, ITS, in collaboration with the Office of the University Registrar and the NYU Libraries, will be introducing an online Course Lookup System. The new system will include simple, easy-to-use, one-stop searching across all courses given by the participating schools, replacing the current situation, under which students often find themselves searching numerous NYU school websites to locate information on a particular course or topic.

The system will benefit current and prospective students alike. Current students using NYU’s web-based Albert system to register for classes will see a link to the Course Lookup System, and prospective NYU attendees will be guaranteed easier course searching than at most universities; NYU is one of the first schools to have such an extensive and wide-reaching system!

How Does It Work?
The new system results from a successful integration of NYU’s Student Information System (SIS), which underlies Albert, with the individual class descriptions of the participating schools. While behind the scenes, this is a bit of a technical feat, students using Course Lookup will find it very straightforward.

Once up and running, you will be able to go to the course lookup website, then select the term and year you wish to search. Then enter the department, course title, keyword, or description. A complete list of all the courses that match any part of your search will appear.

Click on an individual course and all the pertinent information will come up: the course’s school or department, instructor, description, prerequisites, and other data. The system will have some “intelligent” capabilities (for example, when you type within the “Search by Department” box, any terms that match the letters you type will automatically come up), but as with any search system, it’s always helpful to be as specific as possible; with the new system, you will be able to use any or all of a range of search criteria, including school, department, keyword, class title, and course number.

Jim Gonzales is Manager of Application Services within ITS ECOMS, where he manages the development and maintenance of fame, BIA, JEMS, AP Workflow, Capital Workflow, and other web-based administrative applications.
more information will help ensure that you get the results you need!

Course Lookup in the Future
There are additional possibilities in the Course Lookup System’s future. Schools and departments will be able to log in and update their own descriptions and class information in real time. The system will eventually be integrated more fully with Albert, as well as other University systems. Someday, the search options may include instructors’ names, and students may be able to download the class syllabus from the system.

The online Course Lookup System is a work in progress, set to make its debut in January 2009. ITS will continue working with the NYU Schools and Offices to further accommodate their requirements. Questions, comments, and suggestions are welcome: please send them to the Office of the University Registrar at registrar@nyu.edu.
This past spring, NYU selected PeopleSoft, Inc.’s Campus Solutions as the replacement for the University’s aging student information system (SIS), the core administrative system that supports registration, admissions, bursar and financial aid functions at NYU. A major step in an important project that’s come to be known as “SIS, Next Generation,” the decision to use the PeopleSoft system followed an exhaustive vendor selection process that took place over the preceding several months and involved not only central University offices but representatives of various other constituent groups across the NYU community, as well.

Intensive Planning & Analysis

The project has since moved into a nine-to-twelve month phase of planning, in preparation for the implementation of SIS, Next Generation at NYU. This intensive planning is focused on preliminary requirements gathering, functional training for NYU planning phase participants, and in-depth fit-gap analyses for each of the new system’s major modules (Records & Registration, Financial Aid, Recruiting & Admissions, and Student Financials). The overall purpose of this phase is to identify and resolve issues and gaps between the functionality of the new product and NYU’s requirements.

This effort is being accomplished with the participation of broad representation across the campus community and the global sites. As the project team gathers information, they meet continually with the SIS Advisory Committee, representatives of the Schools, to keep them updated on the project status and engage them in decision-making for the project. “Constant communication between the project team and the various NYU communities is...critical to us,” notes Marilyn McMillan, Associate Provost and Chief Information Technology Office at NYU.

Once the planning phase is complete, the system will be implemented in phases, over the course of approximately three years. The first phase of implementation is expected to begin in Spring 2009. The first features of the new system are expected to be made available in Summer 2010. Subsequent phases will bring additional features online in Summer 2011 and Summer 2012.

Why a New SIS

The benefits of replacing the existing student information system with a more modern one meeting NYU’s current needs and future growth have become increasingly evident over the past year or so.

While the University’s aging SIS has been kept viable through the years by means of continual modifications and extensions, the system is technologically several generations old, and its limitations simply will not allow for NYU’s needs in the coming years. For example, today’s SIS can only with great difficulty be made to accommodate the creation of multiple or overlapping semesters beyond the traditional fall-spring-summer academic year.

One of the strategic aspects of the implementation of the new system is to enable NYU to function easily as a global network university. There is now general recognition across the University community that the time is ripe to begin replacing our current SIS with one that can keep pace with NYU’s plans and aspirations for the future. Please direct any feedback or questions you may have to the SIS, Next Generation project team, at sis.nextgen@nyu.edu.
It’s Monday morning, and you, an NYU faculty or staff member, need a new digital camera to use in an upcoming academic research trip. You also need a new stapler, as well as a desk chair for your office. You could take several trips to electronics, office, and furniture stores to locate the things you need. Or, if you’re trying to save money and time, you might spend hours calling each store, finding out what’s in stock and which store has the best price. If you’re feeling technically savvy, you might visit each store’s website and order the products, then use AP Workflow to request reimbursement.

Does that sound like a lot of work to you? Would you like to buy all these supplies in one shopping session on the Internet, receive NYU prices, easily submit the Purchase Requisition for the items, and save money and time?

NYU Purchasing Services has the solution: a web-based tool called i-Buy. i-Buy was introduced in early 2007 as a one-stop online shop for University faculty and staff to quickly and easily purchase supplies for their work at NYU. i-Buy integrates with Purchasing Services’ e-Requisition system to make submitting purchases for approval fast and easy. (For more information on i-Buy, visit the article in the Spring/Summer 2007 edition of Connect, www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/spring07/monahan_ibuy.html.)

In one visit to the i-Buy website, you can shop for many different products from NYU’s key suppliers — office and laboratory supplies, furniture, multimedia products, computers, and much more. You simply log into the i-Buy site, choose your items, and place them in your shopping cart. When you’ve collected all the items you wish to purchase, simply review your cart, then click “Submit.”

Besides the ease and convenience of shopping for many different types of supplies online, i-Buy helps to eliminate many of the paper forms that can be required when purchasing through NYU, including Procurement Card Orders, Blanket Orders, Small Dollar Orders, and Individual Personal Reimbursements, and there are no minimum or maximum dollar limits for your purchase (except those set by your department). You also receive the products you’ve purchased much sooner, since once the purchase has been approved through your department’s workflow, the Purchase Order is immediately transmitted to the supplier, who ships the items to your office.

NYU Purchasing Services frequently adds new vendors to the i-Buy system to provide the best shopping experience possible to NYU faculty and staff. Want to find out more? Visit the NYU Purchasing Services website (www.nyu.edu/purchasing.services) and check out the i-Buy tutorials. You can also view the i-Buy animated tour, hosted by i-Buy’s friendly “spokesperson,” Bob — just go to the Purchasing Services website and click on “Introducing i-Buy Bob.”

Let i-Buy help you help yourself! §
Afterword: Files, Data & Documents — Storing, Managing, Sharing

Resources for the storage, management, and sharing of files and data — text, images, multimedia — are of growing interest across the NYU community. Academic and administrative departments and research groups, as well as individual faculty, students, and administrators alike: we all have more files, documents, and data than ever before, and with more to come!

ITS offers a variety of services that are designed to assist you with your needs, several of which are discussed in this issue of Connect. Next time you login via NYUHome to check your email, we hope you’ll take a look at Files 2.0; to learn more about this easy, user-friendly way to store, share, and retrieve your files, see the article on page 19. Faculty members might also consider taking a one-on-one tutorial, offered by the NYU Digital Studio, in the use of Files 2.0 and/or the Faculty Digital Archive for storing their images, documents, and multimedia (page 10). And be sure to read about the new NYU Data Service Studio, where you can obtain guidance in data access, management, and analysis across disciplines (page 16).

ITS also offers a number of solutions for departmental file storage, management, and sharing. For University departments or research groups handling protected or restricted data, and looking for a flexible, self-service startup and organization, Webspace may be a good choice (see the sidebars on pages 19 and 24). And for departments interested in creating a more formal file organization that closely accommodates their business processes, requirements, and structure, a customized implementation of NYU’s new enterprise document management system, Interwoven Worksite MP, might be the better choice (page 22).

This is a dynamic and evolving service area for NYU and ITS, and these are just some of the resources available to NYU community members. We hope to include additional information in future issues of Connect. Should you need further assistance in selecting the tool that best suits your requirements, or those of your department, please visit us at www.nyu.edu/its/filestorage or search our knowledge base at AskITS.nyu.edu. §

The Digital Studio’s website (www.nyu.edu/its/studio) also provides helpful comparisons among many types of tools, including file and image management.
Also inside:
Enterprise Document Management
Online Course Lookup
SIS, Next Generation
and more.

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