2013 Dziuban Award

The Center for Distributed Learning (CDL) has awarded the second annual Chuck D. Dziuban Award for Excellence in Online Teaching to Pavel Zemliansky from the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

Along with winning the award, Zemliansky received an iPad tablet and a stipend to attend the 2013 Sloan-C Asynchronous Learning Networks Conference in Orlando.

The Dziuban Award recipient is selected by a committee of experienced, award-winning online UCF faculty members.

The committee also recognized two Honorable Mentions: Bernardo Ramirez from the Department of Health Management and Informatics, and Carolyn Massiah from the Department of Marketing.

Named after UCF’s Chuck Dziuban, the award recognizes one outstanding UCF faculty member who has taught at least one blended or fully online course within the previous academic year. Dziuban is an internationally acclaimed leader in online learning and, among much other recognition, was named UCF’s first Pegasus Professor and is currently a Professor Emeritus.

For more information about the award, eligibility and winners, visit http://award.online.ucf.edu.

Knights Email

Knights Email, UCF’s student electronic mail system, is provided to UCF at no direct cost by Microsoft. The service is hosted in Microsoft’s data centers. Microsoft has just completed a conversion of Knights Email from Outlook Live (Exchange email accessed through the Outlook Web App) to a more comprehensive service called Office 365. With Office 365, UCF students will have access not only to Exchange email service as before, but also new tools that will facilitate creation of reports, spreadsheets, and presentations with real-time online collaboration with fellow students. These capabilities can be access from a PC or Mac, smartphones, or tablet devices from any location with an Internet connection.

The new collaboration tools will be phased in over time, and will include:

- Microsoft SharePoint Online for storing and sharing files, photos, and other information
- Office Web Apps (online versions of Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) for document creation, sharing, and collaboration
- Microsoft Lync for instant messaging and online meetings

Knights Email users can access their new Office 365 accounts by navigating their Web browsers to https://www.outlook.com/Knights.ucf.edu.

The new URL is admittedly longer than the former address, but comes as a requirement from Microsoft. Students are advised to bookmark the new address.
Effective July 2013, Computer Services & Telecommunications (CS&T) has substantially reduced the cost of services and resources provided by the Shared Services Center. Colleges and departments that de-commission their server rooms and migrate applications and data to the Shared Services Center can take advantage of the following services, which will be made available at no cost. In addition, startup costs for the initial migration to shared services will be waived.

- Domain Name Service (DNS)
- Microsoft Distributed File System (DFS)
- Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP)
- Antimalware software
- NET Domain (enterprise Active Directory access for all users)
- Windows Server Update Service (WSUS)
- Key Management Service (KMS)
- Remedy Ticket Submission
- Central Exchange Email Archiving (seven years)
- Desktop image deployment (WDS)
- Casper service suite for Mac*
- System Center Operations Manager (SCOM)*
- System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM)*

*These services are in development.

To take advantage of these services at no cost, units will:

- Commit to decommission server rooms and migrate to the Shared Services Center
- Develop a suitable transition plan and timetable
- Assist with the migration (e.g., NET domain)
- Collaborate on governance

In addition to the above, the costs of virtual machines (VMS, or virtual servers) and data storage have been substantially reduced. Adoption of the shared services IT service delivery model is growing, with nearly 100 service level agreements (SLAs) currently in place.

The 2013-14 Computer Services & Telecommunications (CS&T) Service Catalog now contains more than 450 items — up from 230 in 2009-10. See what’s available at https://publishing.ucf.edu/sites/itr/cst/Pages/serviceCatalog.aspx.

New Online Programs

The Center for Distributed Learning (CDL) works throughout the year with our colleges and departments to assist in the planning, preparation and development of online courses and programs.

UCF has built an inventory of thousands of online courses and numerous online programs. Students will sometimes discover a pathway to complete a UCF degree program that is substantially online (so-called “shadow programs”). With relatively low effort, such programs can be made available fully online. CDL is pleased to announce the addition of the following fully online programs for the 2013-14 academic year:

- B.A. in Criminal Justice
- B.A. in English Creative Writing
- B.A. in English Literature
- B.A. in English Technical Communication
- B.A. in International and Global Studies
- B.A. in Religious Studies
- B.S. in Psychology
- Graduate Certificate in Modeling and Simulation
- Graduate Certificate in Research Administration
- Graduate Certificate in Fundraising

The complete list of UCF online programs is available at http://programs.online.ucf.edu.
PeopleSoft Gets Technical Makeover

When we access online services, we usually focus mainly on the navigation, interaction, and information on our devices' screens as we conduct our online business. As users of online services, we have no idea what kind of "thing" handles our transactions or manages our information. Is it a monster, powerful machine, or a bunch of smaller machines? To users, it really doesn't matter so long as it is reliable and works to our satisfaction. Google, for example, runs on a series of massive data centers throughout the world containing hundreds of thousands of servers (you can see a fascinating photo gallery of Google's global server farms here: http://www.google.com/about/datacenters/gallery/#).

Although UCF does not have (or need) anything approaching even one Google's data centers, we do run quite a bit of hardware and networking apparatus to support the growing information processing needs of the university and our students, faculty, and staff. The accompanying illustration (at right) illustrates how our PeopleSoft system is configured. On the left, is a series of Web servers — the machines we interact with when we access myUCF or any of the primary applications: campus solutions (the student system), human capital management (the HR system), financials (where the money lives), or CRM (constituent communications). These Web servers then hand off user requests to a series of application servers that process the code required to execute users' requests and determine what data are needed. These servers, in turn, communicate with the main database servers, which run the database management software and access the storage devices to fetch or write out the required data. Computer Services & Telecommunications (C&S) keeps all of these machines humming along, with frequent adjustments, software updates, and occasional re-configurations occurring behind the scenes (you've probably seen their notices of system maintenance).

One of the hallmarks of satisfactory online interactions is response time: how long it takes for the system with which we are interacting to respond. As UCF has grown, and our use of online services such as PeopleSoft has greatly expanded, from time to time it is necessary to replace the current hardware with bigger and faster servers that can hopefully keep up with users' needs and expectations. Now is such a time.

Between now and the coming fall semester, CS&T will replace all of the current application servers with newer and much faster machines, with the goal of speeding transactions for all users as well as adding more capacity for periods of peak demand, such as the first few days of each semester when user demand increases by a factor of seven to 10 times.

Mobile myUCF

UCF currently provides smartphone and tablet users with convenient options for accessing UCF data. UCFMobile, a set of 19 functions ranging from Webcourses access and library information to the phonebook, maps, and UCF events, can be easily downloaded from the Apple App Store or the Android Market on Google Play. For information or to download UCFMobile go to http://ucfmobile.ucf.edu. New versions of UCFMobile are automatically downloaded as updates are published. In addition, Web-based versions of these and other mobile-formatted sites appear when you access the university's main Web address (http://www.ucf.edu) from a smartphone.

Coming at the start of the fall semester will be a new interface to an initial set of myUCF functions specially formatted for smartphone and tablet browsers. Rather than attempting to cram a myUCF Web page originally designed for a computer-size screen into smartphones or tablets, new software will automatically re-format myUCF in a manner suitable for convenient viewing and navigation on screens, and with touch navigation. The goal is to have a set of five initial myUCF self-service functions ready for action when students and faculty members return to campus for the fall semester.

The proposed initial functions are:
- View Schedule — list and weekly
- View Grades
- Financial Aid Award
- Student Accounts (view only)
- To Dos
- Holds
- Housing

Presuming mobile myUCF performs well and meets user expectations, the range of myUCF functions that can be brought to mobile devices can be greatly expanded over time. Nearly any self-service function in myUCF can be delivered in a mobile format. In addition, new apps will be developed so that myUCF can become part of UCFMobile.

Mobile myUCF will adhere to PeopleSoft security settings and require a user login, just as the current myUCF does.

Tech Fee Deadlines

If your department intends to apply for a 2013-14 Technology Fee Award, planning, technical specifications and project budgets for proposals that include new or upgraded classroom multimedia equipment, wired or wireless network infrastructure or facility improvements (FI) must be coordinated in advance according to the deadlines shown below:

July 5, 2013
- Facility improvements or renovations — Facilities Improvements (http://www.fp.ucf.edu/activities/facilities/home.html)
- New or upgraded wired or wireless network installations — Network Services (https://publishing.ucf.edu/sites/itr/cst/Pages/NSResources.aspx)

July 19, 2013
- New or upgraded multimedia classroom installations — Office of Instructional Resources (OIR) (oir.ucf.edu)
2013 IT&R Contribution Awards

Congratulations to the winners of the 2013 IT&R Contribution Awards. They were acknowledged at the Staff Recognition and Social event on May 9.

Outstanding Service
Awarded to the individual who has made significant contribution to the UCF community and his/her profession.

Cynthia Dancel
“Cindy has a real talent for graphic design. She works on the web pages of the department and the Libraries, and serves as a member of the Libraries’ Web Working Group. She also attends training sessions for implementing new technology in the library, supervises the department’s student assistants and answers the telephone for the Ask-a-Librarian services.”

Outstanding Innovator
Awarded to the individual who demonstrates a commitment to innovation with proven success. Recognizes innovators in learning practices, new research, service delivery and individual achievements in the field.

Ian Turgeon
“CDL is privileged to benefit from the outcomes of Hack Day, a venue organized and spearheaded by Ian for more than a year and a half,” says Tom Cavanagh, Associate Vice President of Distributed Learning. “A recent example of the impact Hack Day has had on in CDL’s operations and culture is the breadth of processes, tools and software that were developed during Hack Day to be able to successfully deliver what was necessary to help migrate thousands of online courses from one course management system to another. This is only one example of the impact Ian has had with his innovative outlook and dedication to CDL’s mission.”

Outstanding Collaboration
Recognizes collaboration by two or more departments, divisions, offices or programs within the university. To be eligible for consideration, the collaborative efforts of the nominees must have resulted in unique exemplary service or academic excellence within the university and the community. These collaborative contributions must demonstrate improved competence and/or quality in teaching, learning, research, outreach, leadership or service.

David Canova, Ronald Mathews, Carl Henderson, Jae Hyun Paek and Christopher Beaman
“The CS&T project team collaborated with the Registrar’s Office to implement the delivered waitlist functionality in PeopleSoft this past October, significantly benefiting enrollments in Spring 2013 and beyond.”

information technologies & resources websites

Center for Distributed Learning (CDL) http://cdl.ucf.edu
Computer Services & Telecommunications (CS&T) http://cst.ucf.edu
Information Technologies & Resources (IT&R) http://itr.ucf.edu
Library http://library.ucf.edu
Office of Instructional Resources (OIR) http://www.oir.ucf.edu