New Year’s resolution: change your passwords

Strong passwords help secure both your own personal data, as well as information about other people that you may have legitimate access to. To create a strong password, follow the current set of rules at www.computing.vt.edu/accounts_and_access/pickinggoodpasswords.html.

During this fiscal year, everyone must change their PID, Hokies, and Oracle/Banner passwords at least once before June 30.

Online virtual environments

InnovationSpace is exploring the application of online virtual environments to areas of education, administration, and research. With assistance from NI&S Systems Support, two online virtual instances based on the OpenSimulator (http://opensimulator.org) framework have been established. This semester, InnovationSpace is collaborating with Art Department faculty members to build a virtual photography gallery to be used in a summer distance learning course hosted in OpenSimulator. Current work is focused on applications of a Second Life nature. For more information, contact Bill Plymale (plymale@vt.edu)

Hokies deprovisioning

Identity Management Services has implemented a process to improve deprovisioning Hokies accounts and related services, including Exchange. Only two types of individual user accounts are eligible to create or keep Hokies accounts—university employees and sponsored individual accounts. Employees are identified by an Enterprise Directory affiliation of vt-employee, an affiliation that currently includes both wage and salaried employees, both staff and faculty, and individuals with P85/86 appointments (“non-state employees”). This affiliation does NOT cover student wage workers, a category that includes graduate assistants.

Multiple times each day, ineligible accounts are set for deletion. Exchange users have a 2-week grace period to retrieve content. Eligible individuals who do not yet have a Hokies account may create one through Hokies Self Service.
In the news . . .

Anne Moore, associate vice president for Learning Technologies, is featured on the cover of the January 2011 cover of Campus Technology, a national journal focused on technology issues across all areas of higher education. She and three other recognized leaders—Phil Long, University of Queensland, Judith Boettcher, Design for Learning, and Joel Smith, CIO at Carnegie Mellon—were asked to identify information technology trends impacting higher education in 2011 and beyond. As a result of her leadership in the area of learning technologies, Dr. Moore has also been asked to keynote an upcoming virtual conference with Dr. Sherry Turkle, Professor of Science, Technology, and Society at MIT, and Trent Batson, Executive Director of the Association for Authentic, Experiential, and Evidence-based Learning. See www.digital.1105pubs.com/t.do?id=6809150:21005161

Professional development

Information Technology managers are taking advantage of the university program for administrative evaluation and professional development. The program, run by Human Resources, is designed to reinforce the university’s commitment to enhancing leadership, developing strengths, and preparing mid-level managers to become competitive for senior roles.

The periodic review component fosters professional development, using, among other tools, the Discovery Leadership Profile for Educators. This tool is a 360-degree assessment instrument designed for educators and made up of leadership categories. This year’s participants from Information Technology are Mary Dunker, Carl Harris, Terry Herdman, and Anne Moore.

ACCS coming in March

The annual ACCS Conference, “Innovation and Creativity in Higher Education,” will be held March 16–18 at the DoubleTree hotel in Charlottesville. The call for presentations is available at the organization’s website, www.accsva.org/conference/.

Security presentations

Mary Dunker presented during a workshop at the Common Solutions group meeting at Duke University, January 12-14: The topic was “InCommon Silver.” Other workshop presenters were Tom Barton (University of Chicago), Matt Kolb (Michigan State University), R.L. "Bob" Morgan (University of Washington), Renee Shuey, Kevin Morooney (both of The Pennsylvania State University), and Chris Pruess (University of Iowa).

She also presented at EDUCAUSE’s Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference in Baltimore, held January 12-14, on the topic, “Overview of the EDUCAUSE/Internet2 Higher Information Security Council Information Security Guide, or How to get a virtual work force for free.”