“Crack the Code”

“Crack the code” is a University Computing Support project to better market and promote computer security and the educational support that is available to students. The project is led by Carol Hurley, working with Anne Sheppard and Special Student Programs.

Many students now carry a mobile device with the ability to read QR codes. A QR code is a matrix, or 2-dimensional, barcode readable by dedicated QR barcode readers and camera phones. Many Android, Nokia, and Blackberry phones come with QR code readers pre-installed. QR reader software is available for most mobile platforms like Windows Mobile devices and the iPhone. Beginning with fall 2011 move-in, a variety of QR codes on stickers will be placed around campus. When the codes are revealed, they may take the user to an educational website, a video, or even a prize. Ideally, the campaign will go “viral,” with students looking at educational resources while searching for the prize codes.

The expected benefits include better education on security issues like phishing and identity theft and computer best practices; promotion of the newly revised www.computing.vt.edu site and other educational online resources.

Global Server certificates

Virginia Tech Global Server certificates are now available. These are chained to GlobalSign, one of the major certificate authorities that is trusted by mainstream browsers and other popular PKI-enabled applications. The certificates are functionally identical to those sold by commercial vendors like Thawte or Verisign, and are available at no cost to Virginia Tech users.

The Virginia Tech Class 1 Server certificate service was discontinued March 16 when the new certificates became available. All current Virginia Tech Class 1 certificates remain valid until they expire or are revoked. Note that these existing Class 1 Server certificates do not inherit the external trust. For more information, see www.pki.vt.edu.
“All hands” meetings

Erv Blythe will meet with employees in Information Technology to address initiatives and issues facing the organization. Topics include the Virginia Tech Technology Services and Operations Corporation, a new university-related corporation designed to leverage and manage university technology and services for projects that scale beyond the university, as well as the new university-related entity to manage technology assets. He will also discuss cybersecurity and our responsibilities for protecting university resources and data. Finally, this session will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Four sessions are scheduled in order to accommodate schedules and job responsibilities:

- Thursday, April 21st from 10 am to noon
- Thursday, April 21st from 2:30 to 4:30
- Friday, April 22nd from 10 am to noon
- Friday, April 22nd from 2:30 to 4:30

The sessions will be held in the Alumni Assembly Hall located at The Inn complex. Please register so that we can be sure to spread out attendance and not exceed the 135 seating capacity of Alumni Hall. [https://survey.vt.edu/survey/entry.jsp?id=1300886207244](https://survey.vt.edu/survey/entry.jsp?id=1300886207244).

Employees should make every effort to attend, short of canceling leave or travel, or other reasonable conflict.

New in Learning Technologies

Dr. W. Gardner Campbell, an internationally recognized leader in using digital technologies to support and enrich meaningful learning, joins Learning Technologies as Director of Professional Development and Innovative Initiatives. His responsibilities are providing leadership for creating and managing curricula and partnerships for the Faculty Development Institute, and for developing, coordinating, and implementing special projects that facilitate advancement, diffusion and assessment of strategic, innovative programmatic initiatives. Gardner has been involved in teaching and learning technologies for nearly two decades, including work at the University of San Diego, University of Mary Washington, University of Richmond, and, most recently, Baylor University, where he was Director of the Academy of Teaching and Learning, and Associate Professor of Literature, Media, and Learning in the Honors College.

Gardner received his B.A. in English from Wake Forest University, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Virginia. He is a Fellow of the Frye Leadership Institute, was chair of the Electronic Campus of Virginia, and recently completed a four-year term on the EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative Advisory Board. He is chair-elect of the Board of Directors for the New Media Consortium, and next month will begin a two-year appointment to the Advisory Board of the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education. Read his blog at “Gardner Writes.”

IT Connection

The IT Connection 2011, the spring IT publication is available at [www.it.vt.edu/publications/ pdf/IT_con_NL_2011_v2.2[web].pdf](http://www.it.vt.edu/publications/pdf/IT_con_NL_2011_v2.2[web].pdf).

Topics included are unified communications, Discovery Commons, technology and the arts, and password maintenance.

On March 19th, the Broadband 2015 community forum at Kent Square brought together more than 100 area stakeholders from local telecom providers, university officials, Town of Blacksburg officials, Downtown Blacksburg retail merchants, Corporate Research Center businesses and management, small and large business owners, and regional leaders from the Chamber of Commerce, to learn about needs for good broadband connectivity at home and to businesses. The event was sponsored by the Town of Blacksburg and Blacksburg Electronic Village, Inc.

More information is available at [http://broadband2015.bev.net](http://broadband2015.bev.net/)

Reminder: DCSS this spring will be held April 14, 8 to noon, in the Owens Banquet Facility.