



Critical Dates Calendar

Find information

- answers.vt.edu
- computing.vt.edu
- [CNS FAQs](#)
- [Online Course Support](#)
- [Software Skills Gateway](#)
- security.vt.edu
- antivirus.vt.edu
- [Annual Report](#)
- [CSC-4help](#)

The Critical Dates Calendar for Information Technology resides at <http://purl.vt.edu/isccriticaldates>. This calendar is a planning calendar that tracks critical time periods for general university functions, including the academic calendar and the legislative sessions. IT production service events such as roll-outs and production maintenance windows are currently posted by groups across IT:

- Banner, the data warehouse, the Enterprise Directory, and related systems whose databases are managed by DBMS;
- My VT and other SETI services such as Hokies Self Service;
- Network interruptions and e-mail service windows by NI&S; and
- Learning Technologies production services for Blackboard and associated production services.

The calendar is an Open Source collaboration, with Jochen Rode, formerly of the Web Hosting group, as the primary contributor. Any group wishing to arrange for posting access should contact Greg Kroll.

Exchange upgrade

The Exchange support group accomplished the upgrade to Exchange on July 17. One of the more visible changes is an improved web interface at weboutlook.vt.edu. Try out the new version of Outlook Web Access!

Another change is de-supporting the previous Blackberry service from the university's Exchange system. The replacement service for Blackberry is GoodLink service that has been available since July 1. This mobile messaging capability for faculty and staff supports multiple e-mail capable cellular phones, handheld devices, and industry-standard operating systems. The service provides secure, real-time, reliable wireless information access. Devices support include a variety of palmOne TREOs, as well as handheld units running Windows Pocket PC. See http://www.computing.vt.edu/email_and_calendar/exchange/mobile_messaging/index.html

In this issue

Critical Dates	1
Exchange upgrade	1
Software	2
Secure Network Access	2
IT Organizations	2
IALR Award	2

Software

In July, a new look for online software distribution to VT employees accompanied an expanded list of available software programs. Through site licenses and volume purchases, more applications are available to the end users at no charge. Also newly under license is Symantec anti-virus software use for employees and retirees for both home and office use, replacing the previous, more restrictive license. See network.software.vt.edu.

Secure Network Access: On-Campus Wireless or Remote

Access to the Virtual Private Network (VPN) service is bundled with Virginia Tech's Wireless Network service (<http://wireless.cns.vt.edu>) and with Modem Pool service (<http://www.cns.vt.edu/html/data/vtmp/index.html>). The CNS-provided VPN service assigns a Virginia Tech IP address and establishes a more secure connection via the university's wireless network or remote Internet service provider.

Subscribers to either of the university's Internet connection services are eligible for the VPN service. A subscriber must specifically configure each computer they intend to connect to the university's network via the VPN. Using the Challenge Handshake Authentication Protocol (CHAP), the VPN user name employs the user's PID and associates it with a CHAP secret pass phrase.

Configuration instructions are available by searching for "vpn" in the university's KnowledgeBase at <http://answers.vt.edu>.

Information Technology Organizations

Virginia Tech has been invited to join the Common Solutions Group (CSG) (<http://www.stonesoup.org/>). CSG members are institutions of higher education as well as higher education consortia working together to create a common infrastructure and toolset serving institutions' future needs. Founded in 1994, CSG seeks to identify and understand strategic information technology; to adopt common solutions to common problems; and to plan for the future of IT in higher education. Virginia Tech's Information Technology is also a member of the CIO Executive Board. This group provides best practices research and executive education to senior corporate IT leaders. The CIO Executive Board documents successful practices that may be shared with member organizations, particularly those who have pioneered innovation in IT strategy and management. <http://www.cio.executiveboard.com/>

Information Technology at Virginia Tech

Vice President for Information
Technology
Earving Blythe
1700 Kraft Drive, Mailstop
0169

www.it.vt.edu

Phone: 540-231-4227

Website: www.it.vt.edu

Innovator Award to IALR

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research received the regional Innovator Award from the Southern Growth Policies Board for its programs to improve the quality of life in its region. The IALR was recognized for its work to develop an innovation-driven economy in the Southside region of Virginia. <http://www.southern.org/main/innovators/2005.shtml>.