NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE

CTG, a computer consulting firm, recently completed a plan for voice, data, and video networking of the campus. Based on the plan, the College issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) and has received bids from several vendors. With CTG’s continued help, the College is in the process of evaluating selected vendor proposals and hopes to complete this review by November 26th. Selection of the winning bidder will occur soon after, with work to commence as soon as possible. The project is expected to take 12 to 24 months to complete once work begins.

On December 12th, at 2:00 p.m., CTG will present the results of their initial study, along with future plans for the networking of the campus, to faculty and staff who are interested in learning more about it. The presentation will be held in the Media Classroom of the Gutman Library. Since seating is limited, RSVP if you plan to attend to Liane Pittman at extension x2970.

As a first visible step, trenching is scheduled to begin the week of December 12th to provide conduit from the main systems room in Search Hall down to the Ravenhill campus. This conduit will carry the many fiber optic cables required to provide direct connections for data, video, voice, and security services.

The proposals include complete plans for data, voice, video, and communications services to provide connectivity to all parts of our campus. Direct access to all network facilities from labs, offices, residence halls, and from off-campus will be possible when the project is completed. In particular, connection to the new Microsoft Exchange e-mail system, Internet, and other campus resources will be possible at speeds much higher than are available now.

STAFF CHANGES

Lee Kirts, a valued member of the Information Technology team, has left his position as Systems Manager to pursue other endeavors. He will be missed! However, we’re lucky to have with us Scott Risnick, a consultant who will assume Lee’s responsibilities until a permanent manager is hired. We look forward to working with Scott and hope that you will have the opportunity to meet and work with him too.

TRAINING

We are asking for formal requests from faculty and staff for deskside training sessions in basic computer usage and application instruction. Please direct your requests to us at x2645. Students with suggestions for training classes should submit them to our suggestion box in Search Hall.

IT WEB PAGES

Information Technology is now on the world-wide web! Look for us at http://www.philacol.edu/it. Currently we are providing contact and staff information, as well as important technology usage policies. In the future, we will be adding tip sheets, training schedules, IT project updates, and more.
E-MAIL FOR STUDENTS
Currently, all Philadelphia College students are eligible for VMSmail accounts on the DEC VAX, "Hardy." If you need an account or are having trouble with an existing account, please call us at x2645. New accounts and password changes may take up to two weeks to process. Passwords will not be given out over the phone; for security reasons you must present your student ID in person at the Computer Center’s front desk. Our goal is to move all student accounts off the VAX onto the new NT servers starting fall semester, 1997. This will give students a sophisticated, graphical-interface mail system as well as world-wide web access.

E-MAIL FOR FACULTY AND STAFF
Faculty and staff have historically also had e-mail accounts on Hardy. We have begun the process of moving these accounts to the new Microsoft Exchange mail system running from our NT servers. The many benefits of moving to the new system are currently available only to faculty and staff with fairly high-end equipment, including:
- 28,800 bps modem or network wiring
- Windows 95 (requires 486sx/33 minimum)
- at least 8Mb RAM
- at least 40Mb free hard disk space

OFF-CAMPUS ACCESS
Currently, anyone in the Philadelphia College community can dial into Hardy with a modem for e-mail access. We are working on a procedure for allowing dial-up into the new NT network as well. This will provide access to MS Exchange mail accounts, shared file space, and the world-wide web. We are aiming to make this service available to faculty and staff over the spring semester, beginning with access from Win95 machines only, but becoming available to Windows 3.1x and Macintosh platforms as soon as possible. Students will be granted dial-in access to the new systems by fall, 1997.

SUGGESTION BOX
A suggestion box for Information Technology has been placed in Search Hall on the second floor next to the vending machines. Feel free to submit any suggestions that you might have for our review and consideration.

POLICIES
The “Information Technology Policy” and “Conditions of Use for Computing Services” are available in printed form at the Computing Center. This information is very important and we would appreciate all retrieving a copy.

COMPUTER LAB NEWS
A new lab of Pentium-based microcomputers will be added to our Academic Computing lab resources for the spring semester, located in room 307/309 in Search Hall. The process of removing the existing machines in room 307/309 will begin on Dec. 20th. If there is a need to convert Microsoft Word for Macintosh or WordPerfect 5.1 for DOS documents to be used in the Windows-based labs, please see a Lab Assistant for details on facilities available for this purpose.

Efforts to ensure that resources are available for Philadelphia College students, staff and faculty will be increased beginning next semester. Another Lab Assistant will be added during all lab hours, increasing our total to four Lab Assistants available at any time. Random ID checks will protect the availability of resources for students in the Academic Computing Labs and prevent non-Philadelphia College individuals from using resources.

In addition, security measures are used on the microcomputers to ensure that the software remains stable and available for all Philadelphia College students. We will let you know of the status of this endeavor as we progress. The computer lab schedule will be as follows, with extended hours on Saturday to the end of the semester to enable students to complete final exams and papers:

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<td>Tuesday, August 27 through Thursday, December 19</td>
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There will be a lab open on snow days with a Lab Assistant for supervision. We will announce the times and which lab will be used at a later date. Information will be posted in the Computing Center.

COMPUTING SUPPORT
Information Technology is committed to providing support for Win95, Windows 3.1x, DOS, and Macintosh desktop systems on campus. Call for advice, troubleshooting, or training and simply specify which type of system you are using. We are always happy to meet the needs of our customers! Call x2645 or send e-mail to: it@philacol.edu.