Dear Oakton Faculty:

Welcome back to a new term and a new year! As a way of assisting this term as well as getting ready for our next academic year we in Information Technology (IT) have put together answers to some of our most frequently asked questions:

**Where do I go for technology help?**

If you need help with an office computer (as opposed to one in a classroom or computer lab), please feel free to call the Help Desk at ext. 1965. The Help Desk assists with college-wide software applications (email, Word, Excel, etc.), coordinates repair with our microcomputer technicians, acts as a clearing house when there is a problem that impacts computers college-wide, and offers assistance with special initiatives as well (such as Ethics training). With several thousand computers on campus to support, Information Technology is unable to assist employees or students with the use of their home computers – except as it pertains to Oakton specific applications (such as MyOakton).

If you would like to become proficient in a specific application, such as Excel, PowerPoint, etc., the Center for Professional Development (CPD) has staff to help. The CPD coordinates workshops from IT, HR and other areas and is a good resource for all your professional development needs. The CPD is only for employees of the college.

If you are looking to integrate online resources into your curricula, or to work on web pages for your coursework or self, then there are several resources. Oakton uses WebCT CE as its primary Learning Management System (new system TBA July 2010). Faculty may also distribute academic materials via their personal home pages, use non-Oakton web-based teaching aids, stream video and more. Consultations and workshops are available.

The primary contact in IT for these areas is Dann Foster, Manager of User Support Services, ext. 1674

A major responsibility of the lab coordinators is to maintain all of our computer labs and the computers that are in any classroom. If you have any problems with computers in classrooms please let us know - classrooms with only one instructor computer are clearly labeled with the phone numbers of the lab to call when you have problems; if you have problems in a computer lab, please contact the coordinator in the adjacent open lab. If you need a computer in a classroom that does not usually have one, contact Instructional Media Services, ext. 1995 at Des Plaines/ext. 1431 at Skokie/RHC (note: we are in the process of transitioning all computer deliveries to IMS, so you may be redirected to IT at Des Plaines depending on when you call).

**Where should I send my students for computer help?**

Our lab coordinators, and the student employees who work for them, are available to help Oakton’s computer lab users with general computer questions (login id problems, how do I save a file, send an email, etc.); for more in-depth or specialized help, students should work with tutors from the Learning Center. Each term the Learning Center has on its web pages information about tutoring hours, which are also posted at the learning centers and in the computer labs.

**How do I schedule a lab?**

Scheduling of computer labs for regularly scheduled classes (such as WWW131) is done by Registration and Records; any other scheduling of computer labs is done online at [http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labres.htm](http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labres.htm) (there is a link to the “special lab request form”). Other scheduling includes booking time for credit courses that don’t have an official lab segment but do want some regularly scheduled lab time and/or requests for one-shot, single event or short series of events lab times will be accepted. Labs need to be scheduled at least one business day in advance; an email verification of which lab you are assigned will be sent. Most labs only have 24 student stations; a list of how many stations are available in each lab is available online at [http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labspecs.htm](http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labspecs.htm). Please don’t walk your class to the computer lab and hope for an open lab – and please be sure to book a computer lab for every week that you need it (don’t assume because you had it last week it will still be available and open this week).

**What else should I know about the labs?**

In an effort to meet the needs of our students, the 1860’s open lab allows parents to bring in their children. There are specific policies and procedures for parents and their children to follow which are posted in the lab. If you regularly use a computer lab with your students or require them to use a computer to complete assignments we urge you and your students to be familiar with our lab guidelines (available in our “Guide to Computer Labs” brochure, as well as [http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labguide.htm](http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labguide.htm)); all users of Oakton computer resources are expected to follow our Responsible Use Policy, which is summarized online at [http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/use_pcl.htm](http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/use_pcl.htm).
Color printing is available only for computer classes that pay a special lab fee to cover the additional cost of color printing. If students are not enrolled in one of these special classes, please do not require them to print in color.

We ask all lab users to use any printing responsibly; we strongly encourage faculty to use Oakton’s Copy Center for required print outs - please don’t require your entire class to print out huge quantities of required readings in the lab. It is substantially more expensive to print using a laser printer than a copier.

**What is the procedure for new software?**

Purchasing, installing and maintaining software at a large organization like Oakton can be a complicated and confusing. In an attempt to clarify the steps for new software, we’ve put together this chart to help guide you:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question/Step</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do we already have the software?</td>
<td>Look at our online list of software at <a href="http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labs2.htm">http://www.oakton.edu/resource/it/labs2.htm</a> (under Lab Software). If we have it, there may be limits on licensing or use, contact Jim Kowols (ext. 1734 or <a href="mailto:jkowols@oakton.edu">jkowols@oakton.edu</a> for more information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t have the software, try to get a copy for evaluation.</td>
<td>First contact Jim Kowols to see if our system can host the software (even before ordering); if it looks like it will work, fill out the form for evaluation software from the Academic Computing Committee please see <a href="http://www.oakton.edu/facstaff/acadcomputing/purchaseform.htm">http://www.oakton.edu/facstaff/acadcomputing/purchaseform.htm</a>. Jim can help order it if the money is approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We’ve got a copy to evaluate, now what?</td>
<td>Please submit the software to Jim Kowols. Our professionals need time to research any software (new or upgrade) and make sure there is no known negative impact on any of the 256 other currently installed software packages); They also explore licensing options. These time-intensive tasks must be done for each software title that is being considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t have a copy to evaluate, now what?</td>
<td>Contact Jim Kowols with the name and version of the software you’re looking at. If we don’t have a purchased copy to evaluate, IT reviews with the software vendor to make sure it works with any type of machine it may be used on (we have four different machines we need to check at any given time); and they explore licensing options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The software looks good …how do I get it for next year? (Yep, next year … budgets are due in February for next year, so please plan ahead)</td>
<td>After the preliminary evaluation, Jim and his staff will work with you and the purchasing department on pricing so you can budget appropriately. Once you have it in the budget it goes through the usual budgeting process (which thankfully is not part of IT).</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s in the budget, when will it be installed?</td>
<td>If it gets through the budget, come next fiscal year (July 1) Jim will work with you on ordering it as early as possible - and then IT needs to do extensive testing to make sure it really does not impact any other applications and works with all our machines. Once it’s been tested by IT, we will often ask the department requesting it to test it as expert users. When everything is working IT can then install it on our network, after which it can be installed in a computer lab or wherever it needs to be installed.</td>
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Please be sure to work with Jim Kowols even if you are planning on only getting a single copy for one office or classroom. With all the evaluation and testing that needs to be done for each software title, IT only installs Oakton approved and purchased software.

**Who do I contact if I still have questions?**

While the IT Help Desk (ext. 1965) should always be your first resource, please feel free to contact any of us:

For Des Plaines Technology Services (Computer labs, software)
Jim Kowols, ext. 1734
jkowols@oakton.edu

For Skokie Technology Services (Computer Labs, User Support)
Julia Gray, ext. 1264
jgray@oakton.edu

For Online Course Support, Web Pages, User Support Services
Dann Foster, ext. 1674
dannf@oakton.edu