

Email move will enhance service for students

UM students will have enhanced email services by the start of fall semester 2009 thanks to an agreement with Microsoft to host student email through its Live@Edu Exchange Labs program. A key part of the agreement is that there will be no cost to UM for hosting email with Microsoft

The new service may be available to students earlier than fall semester, depending on how quickly technical and policy issues can be addressed related to the transition. Options for continued access to the service after a student leaves the University are also under consideration.

As the technical details now stand, students would have a 10 GB mailbox storage quota with the new system, which is 200 times more storage space than they currently have with their campus-hosted GrizMail account. Students would have the ability to share calendars and contacts, which is not currently available, and they would have access to Microsoft Office Live Workspace, which provides document storage and web access to Microsoft Office documents.

Students will log into the new services using their NetID and password, just as they do now for GrizMail. The service will be integrated into UM's OneStop, which provides single sign-on access to multiple campus web systems. Communication and support systems are under development to aid students in the transition.

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The seven year switch

UM classrooms to get high-tech makeover

Garry Kerr describes himself as a stone and chisel guy . . . who loves technology.

Kerr, a UM Anthropology professor, says the nearly 1,000 students he teaches each semester benefit greatly from his ability to show details of relics using a high-tech camera and projector.

"It makes a huge difference," Kerr says. "It makes my job a lot easier when a student can see an article and feel it with their eyes. That will stick in their minds forever."

Today, only 26 of UM's 156 general-purpose classrooms have the technology Kerr and his students desire. But that will change.

A seven-year plan calls for installing or upgrading technology in 22 classrooms per year. That will take the percentage of high-tech classrooms from today's 17 percent to 95-plus percent. About \$200,000 a year will be spent on the installations, with an increasing amount invested each year in maintenance, equipment replacement and other support costs.

The plan emerged from the Academic IT Advisory Committee and was championed by Provost Royce Engstrom and Registrar David Micus.

"For the first time, we have alignment between the Provost, the Registrar and Information Technology on classroom technology," says Loey Knapp, assistant CIO for Technology Support Services. "It took the sponsorship of the Provost and the Registrar to make it happen."

It also took some help from Administration & Finance, who worked out the funding model for the project. Multiple sources of funding contribute to the \$475,000 annual investment according to Rosi Keller, Associate Vice President for A&F. Keller says no current services are impacted by the commitment to classroom technology.

"I think this is one of the best investments this campus has ever decided to make."

- Anthropology professor Garry Kerr

An oversight committee will determine priorities for classroom upgrades and approve the standard equipment that will go into the rooms. Randy Gottfried, manager of IT's Presentation Technology Services, says that standardization will allow for discounts on equipment, make maintenance and support affordable, and end-user training much easier.

"There will be some leeway on add-ons and upgrades as long as they're compatible with the standard package," Gottfried says. "But the big thing is, there will be consistency for a professor using different classrooms to teach."

"Students expect it," Kerr says of technology in the classroom. "It's worth its weight in gold. I think this is one of the best investments this campus has ever decided to make."

