

CTC HelpDesk News



Fort Hays State University

www.fhsu.edu/ctc/helpdesk/

May 2010

Security Awareness Training Coming Soon to FHSU

From Dave's Desk: Dr. David Schmidt, Computing and Telecommunications Center Director, provides an update on current activities at the CTC.

- Data Security
- Conference on Higher Education Computing in Kansas (CHECK) @ FHSU
- The Picken Hall Project

Software Center Special: Get Office 2007 now, get FREE upgrade to Office 2010

The System is Down! – What the Heck Happened??

Summer Fun Online – Don't Fall into the Deep End!

Revised Summer Hours at the HelpDesk

Help Us Help You!

Other HelpDesk Headlines

Security Awareness Training Coming Soon to FHSU

Submitted by Cheryl Helget: Systems and Support Analyst, Servers and Networking section, Infrastructure and Support Services

Security awareness training will be coming to you soon by way of a Blackboard course called **CTC101: FHSU Information Security Awareness**. The recently passed FHSU Information Security Policy requires **each employee** to complete ongoing information security awareness training through a formal process. The policy states that the training must take place prior to accessing data or being granted access to information systems managing restricted data. Restricted data is sensitive or confidential data that, when used inappropriately, can cause harm to the University or to individuals such as students or employees. For example, any data falling within the scope of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and any data protected from disclosure under the Open Records Act is categorized as confidential.

Obviously, since employees have been engaged with accessing restricted data or have had restricted data in their care at some point during their work day since initial employment, security awareness training cannot take place "prior" to being granted access to restricted data unless you are a new employee. We understand that your work cannot cease until you complete the training. Therefore, all employees are required to complete the training within a reasonable period of time in order to maintain uninterrupted access to restricted data systems. Reasonable would be over a period of two to three weeks.

The course consists of four modules and each is independent of another. Consider setting aside 10 to 15 minutes for each module to log in, read the content, and complete the quiz. Some may be able to complete a module in less time. In CTC101, the quiz is used to reinforce the information presented in the module. Your score is for your information only.

Training will be made available in three subsets. Classified staff will be the first group added to the Blackboard course this May followed by unclassified staff in the summer, and finally, faculty will be added

to the course at the beginning of the fall semester. New employees will be required to take the course immediately upon being hired.

We will be sending an email to all employees with instructions for entering and using the course interface. Email relating to the course should arrive in classified staff's inbox the first part of May. We are requesting that the course be completed by the end of the month. If we find that you have not completed the course within a week or two, we will send you a reminder. If you do not complete the course within a reasonable amount of time, we will contact you to discuss the issues you are having in completing the course. Completion of the course allows your continued access to any restricted data for which you have been authorized.

The purpose of the training is to alert you to the potential harm that a security breach can impose on our students, our fellow employees, and FHSU. Our goal is to increase your awareness of security and to encourage a steady mindset protective of sensitive and confidential information. Knowing that you take data security seriously, we know you will make every effort to complete the course.

[Back to Top](#)



From Dave's Desk

Dr. David Schmidt, Computing and Telecommunications Center Director, provides an update on current activities at the CTC.

Data Security

As more and more of our personal data is stored on databases on campus and on the web, the more concerned we should be about privacy. None of us wants our social security numbers or other personal identifiers posted somewhere on the web for all to see, and none of us wants our debit and credit card information compromised. As a partial response to these concerns

the State of Kansas IT community is working on strengthening security policies and procedures. The Kansas Board of Regents universities are helping to write the policy document so that it can be used by us as well as the other state agencies. An **EDUCAUSE**-recommended consultant will have the first draft done by the end of May. We have gained some goodwill from State Legislators because the Regents and State Agencies are working together in a collaborative way.

Security training will be mandated in whatever version of the new policy that is adopted. A big part of security is in the hands of users, so user training is very important. Cheryl Helget, Mark Griffin, and I have been working on a security quiz that should have some educational value. Cheryl has spent the time to create the quiz in Blackboard, and we will encourage every faculty and staff member to take it fairly soon. Some of us tend to have some rather lax security habits, and this quiz helps to highlight the fact that we should never send Social Security numbers or other personal identifiers over e-mail or leave them unprotected on our laptops (for example). The Student Affairs staff has graciously piloted this quiz, and we have refined it since then. We plan to have classified staff take the quiz first, then unclassified staff, and then all teaching faculty (this fall).

Conference on Higher Education Computing in Kansas (CHECK) @ FHSU

FHSU is hosting this year's **CHECK Conference** on May 26 and 27. This is a Conference on Higher Education Computing in Kansas, and it is typically attended by all of the Regents' institutions, some private colleges, and some community colleges. Derek Johnson has worked with a statewide committee to plan the conference, create the website, and make the arrangements. We are pleased to have Louis Fox from Duke University as our keynote speaker. He manages the numerous International Partnerships for Duke University, and his speech will address the Duke vision for International aspects of education and the technical resources that support that vision. Here are some of his titles: Senior advisor, Global Information Technology, Duke University and VP, Technology and Innovation, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

Conference tracks include: Technology in the Classroom, Security Issues, Technical View, Process Development, and Roundtable Discussions. Dr. Gavin Buffington will share his views on using DyKnow in

the Classroom in one session. Mike Nease will participate in a roundtable on remote assistance. I will also chair a CIO roundtable discussion. If you are still on campus in late May, feel free to join us for the Keynote address on May 26 (no charge for attending this session only). Take a look at the agenda at <http://www.check.gen.ks.us/>. FHSU faculty and staff who wish to attend the conference should choose Interfund Transfer as payment. Hope to see you there!

The Picken Hall Project

Moving into new or renovated buildings involves a number of things for us in the CTC. The upcoming move into Picken Hall is no different. Derek Johnson does some capacity planning for the switches and routers on the wired network and the wireless network (802.11N in this case). This will be more work than usual because we will be working with a new vendor for the wireless. Derek and Jordan Munch work with the Physical Plant staff to design the data wiring and the telecommunications wiring infrastructure. Jordan assigns the phone numbers in the Avaya phone switch and coordinates the phone cutovers from the old offices to the new. Odus Trober and Jeff Pape work with various departments on special needs for media usually involving large LCD screens. The Picken Hall project will also have two touch screens at the entrance and several all-in-one PCs. The Desktop staff design the various printing configurations, configure the new PCs, and plan for moving all of the personal computers into the new space.

We hope that all of you have a good Summer.

[Back to Top](#)

Software Center Special: Get Office 2007 now, get FREE upgrade to Office 2010

Don't wait!!! - Buy Microsoft Office 2007 for as low as **\$73.00** and upgrade to Office 2010* for FREE!

FHSU students, faculty and staff: If you purchase a qualifying Microsoft Office 2007 product through our online Software Center, you become eligible for a FREE upgrade to Microsoft Office 2010* when it becomes available later this year.

For complete information about FHSU's online Software Center, your eligibility, products, and prices, **visit:** www.fhsu.edu/ctc/helpdesk/software-center

New Faculty and Staff: If you are new to FHSU this year and are unable to access the Software Center, please contact the CTC HelpDesk at helpdesk@fhsu.edu for assistance.

Limited time offer. For more details visit: www.onthehub.com/microsoft/office2010/techguarantee

*Upgrade to Office 2010 open to End Users purchasing Microsoft Office 2007 through the Student Select/Student Select Plus volume licensing program via a Microsoft authorized reseller or institution after March 5, 2010. Qualifying End Users will have the option to receive Microsoft Office 2010 via download (free of charge) or via mail (media + shipping fees will apply). End Users must redeem their Office 2010 product from where purchased by October 31, 2010. Limit one per person.

[Back to Top](#)

The System is Down! - What the Heck Happened??

Submitted by Mark Griffin, Assistant Director, Infrastructure and Support Services

As many of you probably know, today's computing systems are extremely complex beasts. Long gone are the days of a single mainframe computer, running a well-known application (well-known because our staff wrote it), and being displayed on a very small variety of terminals.

Now, virtually every application requires multiple computer servers, running a variety of operating systems, on a bunch of different hardware, being accessed by a huge variety of differing computer systems (again different hardware types, and different operating systems) using a variety of different third party client applications or web browsers. Computer systems are not merely two or three times as complex as they were 20 years ago, but more realistically are dozens or possibly even hundreds of times more complex than before!

Where to start? – Error Messages

With so many things that can go wrong, where do programmers and system technicians begin in troubleshooting the problem? Well, this question itself is fairly complex. First of all, we need to know if there are any error messages from the application, or the system. Often times, the users of the system provide the initial details. The more precise the details are, the better we know where to begin. Was the system slow for awhile, then crash, or was it performing normally right up until the crash point? Were any messages generated on the screen? If so, what was the message – **exactly**?

Once we have a few details, we can examine system logs, application logs, or see if anything else seems unusual with the system. Typically, the error messages are fairly generic and can point us to a variety of possibilities. Occasionally though, we get lucky, and the error message does point to a specific problem. A hardware failure often times gives us a specific error message that will alert us to the specific problem. But, there are also times when we do not have any error messages - the system has just failed.

Where to look? - Hardware

So, where are some likely places to look? Hardware is one place to look. This would include hard drives, memory, processors, controller boards, network cards, network adapters, network cables, mother boards, etc. If all the hardware is OK on all of the computers associated with the system, then we move on. However, sometimes hardware problems can be intermittent, which can add to the difficulty in determining hardware issues. Also, over time, a system that once performed well on certain hardware can now be overly burdened because of increased usage or more complicated software running on a system that basically needs to be upgraded or replaced.

Operating Systems

Another place to look is at the server operating system. Various issues can occur at the operating system level. Not having a necessary update can cause an issue, or sometimes just the opposite can occur. For example, a “necessary” operating system update is installed, but then it causes a problem for a particular application. Operating systems need good security in place to prevent viruses or hackers from getting into the systems. But sometimes preventing viruses and hackers can actually cause issues for applications running on the system. Log files have to be maintained so as not to grow out of control and so that they provide needed information for troubleshooting. And, because not every application runs on every operating system, we must maintain a large variety of disparate and complex operating systems. At FHSU, we have Unix, Linux (a couple different varieties), Windows 2003, Windows 2008, CMS and VSE on the mainframe, and other proprietary operating systems on other smaller specific use computers.

Third-Party Applications

Then, we also have third-party applications. We have dozens of different third-party applications to maintain. Lotus Notes, Oracle, PowerFacts, Raiser’s Edge, Microsoft SQL, DB2, Content Management System, IFAS, various browsers (IE, Firefox, etc.), Adobe products, and Microsoft Office to name just a few. Vendors unfortunately cannot test for every single way in which their application will be used. So, occasionally, problems will occur. Some vendors are better at testing their products than others, but virtually all products will encounter a problem at some time or another. Some of those issues, we can fix by making changes to the specific installation of the product. Other times though, we are at the mercy of the vendor to fix the problem. Many of us have spent days and nights on the phone with vendors trying to resolve an issue with their application. Many of these applications are very complex and again they are running on very complex hardware systems that oftentimes have to integrate with other complex systems. So, locating the problem and fixing it can be a painstaking process.

In-House Applications

And, finally, we also do some of our own application programming. The applications we write have to take security into account, the variety of hardware systems that they are running on, the third-party applications they will be accessing, the other systems that they will integrate with, and the specific programming language being used for the application. Some programs may only take a few lines of code,

other programs may take 1000's of lines of code, and one program may be accessed by numerous other programs.

Sometimes application errors are relatively easy to find, but other times it can take hours scanning through a variety of programs to find one little error. Then, once the error is found it could be as simple as changing a single line of code to fix the issue, or it may require a whole new program to be written to fix the issue. What can make matters more difficult is sometimes the person that originally wrote the program (and understands it the best), is not the same person who is now trying to troubleshoot the issue. Programs can also run perfectly for years, but a small change in the data or a new occurrence in the data can suddenly cause an issue that has not been seen before.

The Bottom Line

So, in order to keep all of our systems running as best we can, we have a variety of different staff members who are somewhat specialized in what they do. Some individuals are programmers or application developers, some are system administrators (operating system experts), some are network administrators, etc, etc. Despite the specialization we do have, we certainly do not have the specialization that most large companies have on their I.T. staffs. Typically, a large company will have an expert or possibly several experts on one particular system. Our experts get to handle dozens of systems each. Some are similar, but others are quite different from anything else we manage. In some cases we get specialized training for a particular system, other times we just learn as we go. The success that FHSU has had in developing good systems that are generally reliable and well-maintained is largely due to the dedication, hard work, and communication that goes on among all of the I.T. staff in the CTC.

Rest assured that there will be another system outage at some point for FHSU. There are simply too many pieces to fit together perfectly to not have a failure sometime. But, generally speaking, those outages should be few, and I can assure you that we have a top-notch staff looking into all the possible issues that could be causing the problem. Certainly we want to receive any input we can from our users to help troubleshoot the problem, but before becoming too agitated about the problem, think about all of the things that might be wrong. Remember how long the system has been running perfectly fine... ...and don't worry, the problem will be addressed quickly by our knowledgeable and dedicated staff!

[Back to Top](#)

Summer Fun Online – Don't Fall into the Deep End!*

Guest article by Tania Alekson, Learning Commons Coordinator, Forsyth Library

The Learning Commons wants to make sure your summer is secure. In a world where people are increasingly living their lives online, privacy in the digital world is becoming one of the most important issues of modern life. Stories of identity theft, ruined careers, and fraud abound. How well protected are you against these very real threats?

Identity Theft

Personal information that you enter into an online form can be saved, sold, copied, hacked, and sent around the world. Make sure you're taking precautions to prevent your data from going astray. Important components to your identity are:

- Full Name
- Birthdate
- Social Security Number
- Place of Birth
- Phone/Address
- Credit Card Information

How easily are you sharing this data online every day?

Facebook

The information you post freely on **Facebook** is sometimes enough for identity thieves to use! Even your Facebook profile might give an identity thief enough to get started. Make sure **ONLY FRIENDS** can see your information.

Sophos, a security software company, has a **great resource detailing Facebook settings** that will minimize your risk of personal information harvesting. Take a few minutes to go through their suggestions - you won't regret it!

You should also take **this great Facebook Quiz** prepared by the **ACLU** - it shows you what information you are sharing with potentially malicious companies and individuals who create and post quizzes.

More Identity Theft Resources

To avoid giving out your real email address, why not go disposable? Here are **8 Disposable Email Address Services**.*

7 online blunders - These common mistakes can ruin your computer or invite identity theft (from consumerreports.org)

Privacy Alliance's **Rules and Tools for Protecting Personal Privacy Online*** (from privacyalliance.org)

IC3 (the Internet Crime Complaint Center) is the FBI's citizen and small business complaint site. They post the latest scams as well as gather information about internet crime.

The Virtual You

Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and Flickr have become part of our everyday lives. Many users of these fun, online products don't think twice about the public nature of the information they're posting or the potential risks they may be open to for viruses and scams. By being aware of the pitfalls, you can avoid both embarrassment and expensive computer repairs in your future!

How Clean is the Online Version of YOU?

A good rule of thumb is **DON'T post anything you wouldn't want a potential employer to see**. If your friends post tagged images of you, look at them carefully and ask them to remove them immediately if there's anything that might scare off someone you want to impress down the road. If you can't stick to that simple caveat, make sure you have air-tight **security settings** on your accounts and your computer and **read this eHow tutorial on protecting your posts and information**.

When you go back later and try to remove offensive or embarrassing material, you'll find out just how hard it is to scrub the virtual you clean. If you find yourself cringing at your online persona, there are a few good resources out there to help:

- **eHow - How to clean up your Facebook page for job searching**
- **Mashable - How to clean up your Facebook profile**
- **Mashable - 5 Ways to avoid sabotaging your personal brand online***

Social Media Scams

Social media has become the hunting-ground-du-jour for the malicious forces that troll the web looking for your information and your money. You may think you're clever enough not to fall for **email scams**, but are you aware of all the bad people lurking in the shadows on Facebook and Twitter?

CSO Online has put together **5 Facebook, Twitter Scams to Avoid** and **5 More Scams to Avoid**. By the time you read this, there will be countless more scams, so the only true protection is to be aware, be skeptical and use caution.

The Learning Commons says, "See you next year!"

If you have any questions about online privacy or any other questions about how you can better use technology, visit the Learning Commons website at www.fhsu.edu/library/tlc or drop by to visit us next year at Forsyth Library. We are closing for the summer, but will be open again on August 16, 2010.

*Referral sites listed in this article are not affiliated with Fort Hays State University, and therefore FHSU does not make any recommendations or guarantees, either express or implied, regarding their services. Please contact these sites directly to inquire about their credentials, services, and pricing.

[Back to Top](#)

Revised Summer Hours at the HelpDesk

After experiencing a significant cost savings last summer, the university will once again implement a four-day summer work week. Following a work schedule of four 10-hour days during summer 2009 allowed air conditioning to be shut down in nearly all campus buildings from Friday through Sunday. As a result, FHSU achieved energy cost savings last summer of over 27% compared to the previous three years' average.

As a result, FHSU will once again follow a four-day work schedule this summer and the CTC HelpDesk will observe modified office hours. From May 24 through August 6, 2010, FHSU faculty and staff will work four ten-hour days, observing official business hours from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Thursday.

The CTC HelpDesk will offer extended hours while summer classes are in session, remaining open until 7:00 pm. Please note that the HelpDesk will not be open on Fridays, but will be open Sunday evenings from 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm from June 6 through July 25. As is done every year, adjustments will be made to our hours for holidays and during the interim periods when classes are not in session. As always, please **send us an e-mail** if you are unable to contact us during office hours. For a complete list of these changes, view our **CTC HelpDesk hours** Web page.

This change will once again allow FHSU to save a substantial amount by reducing air conditioning usage and other operating expenses in our buildings this summer. This is just one move the university is making to help keep our tuition rates down in these difficult economic times. For additional information, see FHSU's **Budget Watch** site.

[Back to Top](#)

Help Us Help You!

Have you recently contacted or visited the CTC HelpDesk? If so, how did we do? If you have ideas, concerns, or other feedback, let us know! **Contact us**, complete our **survey**, or use our **secure comments form** to give us your suggestions. Thank you in advance for your feedback - we look forward to hearing from you!

[Back to Top](#)

Other HelpDesk Headlines

[Back to Top](#)

CTC HelpDesk News is a semi-annual newsletter published by the Fort Hays State University Computing and Telecommunications Center HelpDesk. Nancy Cunningham and Michelle Schlyer, Editors



**FORT HAYS STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Forward thinking. World ready.