

ITS Training Services

Training Report

Fall 2008

Technology Training Notables

- An initiative to deliver an increased number of sessions both face-to-face and via Adobe Connect was launched.
- The overall number of session offerings (185) and participants (1850) was the highest it has been during any semester reported in 2008.
- 14 campus training sessions were conducted.
- 17 public free sessions were offered this semester via Adobe Connect to 78 online participants from 11 different campuses.
- Working with ETS, Training Services launched a newly redesigned web site <http://its.psu.edu/training> in October 2008. The new site, developed with Moveable Type 4, provides easier content management and display of more dynamic components.
- The Technology Training Community www.technologytraining.psu.edu was launched as a free online resource for continued learning opportunities, available anywhere, anytime.
- Targeted marketing and communication efforts were directed towards new staff and faculty, such as postcards to introduce them to ITS Training Services with the opportunity to sign up for various training listserv lists and/or RSS feeds. (This is part of a green initiative to limit printed communications to new employees.)
- 20% of staff heard about training opportunities via word of mouth and more than 40% of faculty heard via ITS Training listserv lists.
- Both faculty and staff are using what they've learned during in fall training primarily for administrative tasks and professional development (application to teaching was only 18% for faculty) and 99% of participants felt they came away with practical skills they can use.
- A mandatory Data Warehouse Web Based Training program was created with the Adobe Connect Training Module to meet the needs of new users and reduce compliance risk.
- The number of Administrative Computing sessions and attendees was the highest it has been during 2008, as reflected by two of the session titles being among the top 5 for attendance for the semester.
- Fall saw a marked increase in interest in Web 2.0 technologies, tools and pedagogical uses and several partnerships were formed to develop program pilots.
- *Top 5 Topics by overall attendance including all Training Types:*
 1. Getting Started with Outlook 2007: E-mail Essentials
 2. Penn State Financial: Intro to IBIS Electronic Forms Processing
 3. IT Pro Roundtable: Enhancing Communication and Web Presence with Drupal (presented face-to-face and via Adobe Connect)
 4. ANGEL: Course Submission and Consultation System (CSCS)
 5. Penn State Financial: IBIS Financial on the Mainframe (CCOM)

Analysis/Recommendations

Fall 2008 brought a strong close to the year in a number of areas. This semester showed the highest number of offerings, registrations, and overall attendance for any reporting period this year. There were also fewer canceled sessions this semester than any other throughout the year as the topics and types of training offered were more refined. Some new efforts focused on using e-learning and collaboration.

Assessment efforts included a new evaluation tool allowed for feedback on both training sessions and communication mechanisms. Overall, the feedback is quite positive, and so it might be necessary in the future to ask more specific questions and encourage additional comments to avoid the “smiley sheet” complex where people tend to answer in a positive, but not necessarily informative, light.

It has been a year since the Indiana University (IU) materials were introduced for use in the Public For-Fee offerings. Over the past year the list of offerings has been refined to include titles that are most relevant to the audience and have the greatest demand. During 2008, the demand for the Office 2003 offerings has consistently decreased and has allowed for planning efforts to concentrate on current needs and upcoming version changes. The IU materials will be evaluated in conjunction with exploring other courseware alternatives in the spring for the 09-10 year.

While the number of Public For-Fee offerings has decreased over the past year, the number of Public Free offerings has increased. This is due to expansion in the number of offerings that focus on Penn State tools, to the continued success of the Lunchtime Series offerings, and to application Overviews that are being offered both face-to-face and online via Adobe Connect. The types of sessions being offered tend to cycle based on the needs of the University audience. It is necessary to continue to identify the needs of the audience when planning the types of offerings to reach the broadest audience possible.

Communication methods combined electronic and more traditional means to get information to our audience. Working with ETS, the website was revised and launched using Movable Type 4 to provide more dynamic content and more efficient management of that content. Announcements were posted regularly to the new Technology Training Community. A new Faculty Technology Training listserv was created to better communicate with this audience. An initiative to introduce our services to new staff and new faculty began and will continue with traditional mailings on set intervals throughout the year. The new online training evaluation includes items that focus on communication preferences, and the data gathered can be analyzed to further refine communications methods. Exploring the most effective ways to distribute information to a varied audience is important as we strive to meet training needs.

It is important for Training Services to look for growth opportunities as we continue to move forward, while also considering past training trends to incorporate timing of offerings and audience considerations into the planning process. Continued focus on the aspects that made Fall 2008 successful should foster continued development of services that best meet the technology training needs of the community.

Training Session Summary

The workshops included in this report took place during Fall 2008. Dates included in this time period range from 9/2/08 to 12/23/08. This summary does not include sessions offered during the Fall Break-Fest period as they were discussed in a previous report.

Registrations for all workshop types totaled 2708, while the total number of attendees was 1845. The difference in these values is due mostly to cancelled registrations as well as those registrants who remained on waiting lists or were considered no-shows.

The overall number of training sessions was the highest seen for a recorded semester in 2008. There was a shift in number of sessions by training type as illustrated by the increase in the number of Public Free sessions over the course of the year.

Total registrations and overall attendance values were the highest seen this year and were consistent with Fall 2007. The average attendance was slightly lower than last year, yet was recorded at a respectable 9 participants per training session. The no-show rate, which has remained relatively low over the course of 2008, was the same as last year.

Number of Training Sessions and Attendees by Training Type

Training Type	Number of Sessions	Number of Attendees	Average Number of Attendees
Administrative Computing	31	281	9
Public: For-Fee	34	260	8
Public: Free	61	346	6
IT Pro (Free, For-Fee, and Roundtables)	7	146	21
Training on Demand: Staff	17	211	12
Training on Demand: Faculty/Students	6	122	20
Campus Training	14	149	11
Vendor	5	114	23
Library offered	10	94	9
TOTALS*	185	1845	9

*These totals do not include the ITS Forums (see Appendix A)

During Fall 2008, a total of 185 training sessions were offered by 23 instructors and two vendors. Six of the instructors work for the University Libraries and instruct library and research-specific topics. There were also 7 ITS Forum sessions presented by 8 ITS employees.

Public Free sessions had the highest number of offerings and attendees followed by Public For-Fee offerings. In fact, the number of Public Free offerings, which had steadily decreased in the past, showed an increase during this time period due to the introduction of more application Overviews, offerings on Penn State tools, and the Lunchtime Series sessions.

The Data Warehouse class continued to be offered in both Access 2003 and Access 2007 to accommodate the needs of users but saw a decline in attendance for the Access 2003 titles. The financial offerings had some of the highest attendance they have seen in recent reports.

The average attendance for the IT Pro Roundtables was 38 participants per session, attending either face to face or via Adobe Connect.

The number of Campus Training sessions more than doubled from fall of last year. The Training on Demand for Staff decreased, yet showed much interest from repeat customers who value the service.

Staff comprised 76% of training session attendees, with faculty/instructors and graduate students making up nearly 14%, and undergraduates making up 10% of attendees. These findings are similar to those reported from regular semester offerings throughout 2008.

Service Highlights

Use of Adobe Connect

An increased number of sessions were presented using Adobe Connect during Fall 2008. Following the successful framework of the IT Pro Roundtables, 17 Public Free sessions were offered this semester to both a face-to-face audience in the classroom and an audience participating via Adobe Connect. There were 78 online participants from 11 different campus locations including University Park. Several Overview offerings were introduced to bring more free training opportunities to the audience across the University. The Overview sessions served as an introduction to an application and provided information on upcoming opportunities for more in-depth training on those applications. Recordings of the sessions were posted online to provide an asynchronous e-learning opportunity for participants.

Training Services staff was involved not only in coordinating and delivering these training sessions but also in moderating them for one another. One of the sessions was developed to present a workshop that was traditionally hands-on. There was also an additional session presented via Adobe Connect for Campus Training. Further exploring how e-learning methods may be used to deliver training is important in providing an effective and cost-efficient way to reach the audience at the campus locations.

Technology Training Community

The majority of learning occurs outside the classroom. The Technology Training Community www.technologytraining.psu.edu was launched in the fall to provide an online resource that provides continued support for participants following technology training sessions offered by various Penn State units, as well as a place for users to pose questions and participate in discussion. The Training Services staff supplied much content during the semester and invited contributors from across the University. From late November through the end of the fall semester the site has had over 1,400 visitors and more than 2,500 page views. Marketing efforts for users of this resource will be released during Spring 2009. Looking at non-traditional means for delivering information electronically, such as this community, aids in meeting the training follow-up learning needs of the University.

Training on Demand for Staff

Requests for training focused on communication tools this semester. There were 15 sessions and a total of 164 individuals trained on either Video Conferencing or Outlook topics. Most of these sessions were

for the Office of Human Resources. The Colleges of Education and Agriculture were also repeat customers this semester.

e-Learning

E-learning methods were utilized this semester to deliver just-in time training as well as to plan for the future. In conjunction with AIS, Training Services created a mandatory Data Warehouse Web Based Training program to provide new users with basic information on the Data Warehouse. This program fulfilled a high priority requirement identified during an AIS audit. The three content modules in this program focus on basic database skills, an overview of the Data Warehouse system, and how Penn State policies apply specifically to Data Warehouse users. This project also serves as a pilot for using the Training Module that is part of Adobe Connect to track participant data including time spent working through the training and individual test results. While it isn't considered a Learning Management System, the Training Module does have some very basic tracking features that could make it useful for similar projects across ITS. Future plans for this project include conducting an assessment of the Web Based training module to ensure that objectives are being met, as well as providing feedback to the Adobe Connect team on the use of the Training Module.

Campus Training

This semester 14 campus training sessions were instructed. Most customers were repeat customers who had made previous requests or requested multiple training sessions during Fall 2008. One session was presented remotely using Adobe Connect.

- Greater Allegheny Campus - 10/7/08 & 10/8/08 – 1 session (6 participants)
 - Intro to IBIS Electronic Forms Processing (IBIS)
- Brandywine Campus - 10/16/08 & 10/17/08 – 2 sessions (18 participants)
 - Data Warehouse: Introduction to Queries Using MS Access 2007 and Intro to IBIS Electronic Forms Processing (IBIS)
- Hershey College of Medicine (via Adobe Connect) – 10/29/08 – 1 session (6 participants)
 - Getting Started with RSS Feeds
- Hershey College of Medicine – 10/30/08 – 1 session (9 participants)
 - Access 2007: the Basics
- Great Valley Campus – 10/30/08 – 2 sessions (15 participants)
 - ANGEL: Start Using ANGEL in Your Course Right Away and Desktop Security Overview
- Altoona Campus – 11/5/08 – 1 session (14 participants)
 - Photoshop CS3: The Basics
- Altoona Campus – 11/11/08 – 1 session (15 participants)
 - Photoshop CS3: The Basics
- Hershey College of Medicine – 11/18/08 – 1 session (8 participants)
 - Access 2007: Queries
- Berks Campus – 11/24/08 – 2 sessions (8 participants)
 - Getting Started with Penn State Wikispaces and Getting Started with Videoconferencing
- Hershey Campus – 12/9/08 – 1 session (6 participants)
 - Access 2007: Reports
- Hershey Campus – 12/16/08 – 1 session (5 participants)
 - Access 2007: Database Relationships

Public Training Session Assessments

Online surveys were filled out for every class, when possible, usually at the end of class, if hands-on. The highlights were as follows:

- 96% of respondents rated their overall training experience as very good or good.
- 80% of staff and 53% of faculty were going to apply what they learned to administrative tasks.
- Only 18% of faculty was taking the training to help their teaching (this is expected to be higher for the Fests, where more pedagogical topics are offered).
- About 62% of respondents planned to use their newly learned skills immediately.
- 99% of respondents felt they came away with practical skills they can use.

Appendix A: ITS Forums- all session presented face-to-face and via Adobe Connect

- IPv6 – 9/16/2008
 - Presented by Derek Morr
 - 17 participants (confirmed)
- Building Communities – 9/29/2008
 - Presented by Cole Campese
 - 14 participants (confirmed)
- Scanning and Encryption – 10/10/2008
 - Presented by Ed Ko
 - 30 participants (confirmed)
- Pollock Testing Center: Design and Operation of a High-Stakes Testing Center – 10/20/2008
 - Presented by Chris Sacksteder
 - 7 participants (confirmed)
- Visitor Wireless – 11/3/2008
 - Presented by Jeff Reel
 - 13 participants
- Data Center Study – 11/4/2008
 - Presented by Mark Sausser, Monica Reed
 - 25 participants (confirmed)
- Faculty Partnerships in Research Computing and Cyber Infrastructure – 12/4/2008
 - Presented by Vijay Agarwala
 - 16 participants