

SSC Network Update

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What's New? in SSNDS

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DRL Staff Part of Western Libraries, but Still in SSC

Statistical and GIS Software

Social Science Network and Data Services

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What's New and What's the Same in SSNDS?

Heather Stevens

SSNDS is currently being restructured. Heather Stevens is working as co-manager of SSNDS, in conjunction with Jeff Grieve from Information Technology Services (ITS), during our transition period. Kam Abado remains as Hardware and Network Specialist; Ali Hammoud as Network Systems Administrator and Desktop Support; and Mary Van de Ven, office support. We encourage all members of Social Science to continue to contact SSNDS first for all of your computing needs.

SSNDS
Main Office Hours

NEW

Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

(Closed during holidays)

Computing Rooms

Three of our student computing rooms have been migrated to the *ITS General Use Student Computing Labs (Genlabs)*, including our former *Help Desk* room. These rooms are available to all students on weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. Instructors needing to book Room 1000 or 1032 will need

to make the booking request to *Genlabs*, stating any special software needs, via an online form: www.uwo.ca/its/genlabs.

The *ArcGIS* and *Stata* software that was previously available on those computers is now available through *MyVLab@Western*: myvlab.uwo.ca.

Rooms still managed by SSNDS are: *The Survey Services and Participant Testing Room* (1038), which is also our *Graduate Computing Room*; *Seminar Room* (1020) with 12 computers that can still be reserved; and our popular *Student Group Project Meeting Room* (1014) that can be used for Faculty of Social Science course-related group project work. We hope to open a second *Student Group Project Room* soon.



Trend Officescan

The process of migrating all Social Science computers from the SSNDS *Trend Officescan* server to the server in ITS has already begun. Please note that after your computer has been migrated, you will be prompted to restart it. Virus reports will still be sent to your departmental IT support person, and anti-virus support will still be offered through SSNDS.

Services Being Transferred to ITS

Over the next several months, the following services will be transferred to ITS:

- Web infrastructure; however, your *URL*'s will remain the same
- Data storage such as your *H:* and *S:* drives
- Remote Access Servers (see Ali's article for more details)
- *SQL* databases
- Printers; however, the *Equitrac Express* software will continue to be used with any printers which currently involve monitoring or cost recovery.

Domain Changes

Next spring, all computers will be moved to the UWO domain and the SSC domain will be collapsed. We will still manage policies affecting the SSC group on the UWO domain; therefore, network software installations and other network policies should be similar.

Transition Updates

Planning for each of these migrations will need to be very detailed and they will take place over the course of the next year. We will notify you of any changes via email and by posting *SSC Network Notices* on our web site: *ssnds.uwo.ca*. Our goal is to make this transition as smooth as possible for our users. We hope to complete this entire migration process by September 2010.

SSNDS Services Update

Some services could not be migrated to ITS, but cannot continue to be supported by SSNDS:

- There will not be any instruction or support offered for *SPSS*.
- We will not offer any non-credit computer courses or *Lunch and Learn* sessions.
- Support for survey development has been reduced to basic support for Social Science graduate students only. Web space access, on *survey.uwo.ca* and web security are provided for Social Science Researchers.
- While the university is moving away from supporting *Marks Management System (MMS)* as a tool for submitting your final grades to the Registrar's Office, it can still be used until April 2010, and remains as a useful tool for managing your grades prior to transferring them to *WebCT*. SSNDS will continue to provide *MMS/ScanExam* support for the Faculty of Social Science.
- Room 1012 is no longer staffed with *Help Desk* consultants, or statistical consultants. For online assistance please email *ssnds-help@uwo.ca*

Just ask us!
ssnds-help@uwo.ca



SSNDS remains committed to assisting with your computing needs. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our main office (ext. 82152).

Terminal Server Migration

Ali Hammoud

Over the next few months, SSNDS will be migrating the *SSC Network* terminal servers (*sscnet.uwo.ca* and *sscnet2.uwo.ca*) to: *myvlab.uwo.ca/*. SSNDS will attempt to make most SSC terminal server applications available through *MyVLab*. Users are encouraged to start discovering *myvlab.uwo.ca*. Information and assistance are available at the same web address. As the migration date approaches, details will be provided on our website and as a *Network Notice*.

Purchasing a Computer or Laptop?

Kam Abado

SSNDS provides a wide range of hardware and software services to Social Science faculty, staff and departments. We work closely with UWO approved computer hardware vendors, and have helped to develop standardized computer configuration and peripherals that are expected to ensure reliability, support and service over the life expectancy of a computer or laptop purchase.

We simply cannot support all the different models, made by various manufacturers, which are found on store shelves. Dealing with some of these manufacturers and vendors on warranty issues can be very time consuming.

To avoid problems, we encourage you to consult with us (ext. 82152) prior to making computing hardware purchases and we will do our best to recommend the most suitable system for your computing needs.

Before You Give Up Your Old Computer - A Checklist

Kam Abado

- ✓ Did you backup your data onto your network drive or onto an external drive?
- ✓ Have you included the folders inside *My Documents* which generally includes:
 - *My Pictures*
 - *My Music*
 - *My Videos*
 - *My Documents*
- ✓ Did you copy your files from *Internet Explorer (IE Favorites* and *Firefox Bookmarks* that you access from your Web browsers?
- ✓ Did you copy your archived email – saved as an *auto archive* or as *.pst Personal Folders*?
- ✓ If you use special programs, that are not part of the standard installation, have you noted a list of these programs?

For assistance with any of the above mentioned tasks, please contact SSNDS at ext. 82152.



Sadly, we had to say goodbye to five of our colleagues: Doug Link, Steve Rumas, Les Flodrowski, Peter Fewster and Ramona Fudge. Ramona subsequently took a position in Psychology and we wish her well there. The others have ended their careers at Western and we would like to pay tribute to them.

Doug Link was employed at Western for 39 years starting in the Registrar's Office. He began working in the Social Science Computing Laboratory (SSCL) as a programmer back in the punch card and mainframe days. He became the Director of SSNDS (formerly known as SSCL) in the fall of 1986. Doug was perhaps best known on campus as the author of the *Marks Management System (MMS)* and *ScanExam* programs, which were labours of love for him. He also developed the camera surveillance software that is used throughout Social Science and across campus and many other programs during his tenure at Western. Doug is currently enjoying retirement but he is still working on his favourite programs.

Steve Rumas was the Assistant Director of Network and Hardware and worked in the unit for more than 35 years. Over this time period, he helped students, staff and faculty members with various computing technologies, such as punch cards, VAX-based *Pathworks* networks, *DOS* and all *MS Windows* platforms. Steve's passion for UWO and his work was noticed by many. He worked many early mornings, late nights and weekends. Whether you were a student, staff or faculty, he treated everyone with dignity and respect, and was generous with his time in assisting people.

Les Flodrowski was employed at Western for over 23 years. Les was the Assistant Director of Information Systems but we called him our "guru". He was the brains behind the network software architecture, was responsible for all of the servers, and managed all software installed from the network. Les was always able to come up with creative software solutions that made life easier such as account creations for classes; supplemental disk storage creation; logon control, and more significantly the card swipe access software. Perhaps one of his greatest legacies was leading the development of the *Internet Data Library System*, and its successor, *Equinox*.

Dr. Peter Fewster was employed at Western for over 21 years. While Peter was originally hired as a statistical consultant, in recent years he served as webmaster for Social Science while supporting statistics and running the *Help Desk*. Peter was the only person on campus who offered a course in, and technical support for *SPSS*. He designed the main Social Science website and most of our departmental websites. He set up the web style sheets so departments could easily maintain their web pages following the *Western Standard*. He was instrumental in the development of several online surveys for many researchers inside and outside of Social Science. Peter is in the process of launching a new business which will offer survey support and *SPSS instruction*.

We truly miss our friends and colleagues, and wish all of them well in their future endeavours. To Doug, Steve, Les, Peter and Ramona, we thank you for your commitment over the years and for your friendship.

Equinox Data Delivery System Launched!

Vince Gray/Liz Hill

The Data Resources Library, Western Libraries and SSNDS, together with our partners from the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities (CREPUQ), were excited to launch the bilingual *Equinox* data delivery system in June 2009. The system is the successor to *Western's Internet Data Library System (IDLS)*. *Equinox* is a partnership project between Western and CREPUQ drawing on the expertise of librarian and technical staff from both partner groups.

Equinox is used by 45 Canadian universities and is a bilingual system to which data and geospatial products are added on a regular basis. Students, faculty and staff who require research data can find and download data files from *Equinox*. The interface has a robust and user-friendly look and feel that includes both "browse" and "search" access points.

The web site is: equinox.uwo.ca. We encourage returning and new data users to explore the system and discover the vast array of data products available to them at Western. Your contact for help with *Equinox* and data are Liz Hill and Vince Gray, located in Room 1004 SSC.

Many thanks to our current and former colleagues that made the development and launch of Equinox possible!

The *Equinox* project benefited from the support and technical expertise of the SSNDS staff for the in-house development of this system.

Technical team members included: Heather Stevens who programmed systems engine components; former SSNDS staff members Les Flodrowski, the team leader, who guided the system design and programmed the "search" and "browse" aspects of the system; Peter Fewster who developed and implemented the web interface. The system design and field structure were developed by Vince Gray, in conjunction with Rita Buono and Maryna Beaulieu from Quebec. System description and documentation was written and implemented by Liz Hill. Doug Link, former Director, SSNDS and Rita Buono served in advisory roles for this project.

DRL Staff Part of Western Libraries, but Still in SSC

Vince Gray/Liz Hill

The Data Resources Library is still located within the SSNDS area. As of May 11, 2009, Western Libraries assumed the responsibility for the operations of the Serge A. Sauer Map Library and the Data Resources Library. Cheryl Woods, Elizabeth Hill, and Vince Gray, the librarians of the Map and Data Libraries now report to Western Libraries. They continue to deliver library services for maps and data.

A transition working group has been established with the goal of creating joint maps and data services within Western Libraries. The transition period may last a year or more, during which time a new facility will be created within Western Libraries to house the new service with prominent visibility. Library service for maps and data will continue to be offered from the

current locations in the Social Science Centre until the physical move occurs.

All Western users will continue to receive data and map reference services from the DRL and the Map Library.

Statistical and GIS Software

Liz Hill

Software that is available to users of map and data products includes *SPSS* as well as *ArcGIS* from *ESRI*. The *Genlab* facilities provide access to a complement of software, including *SPSS*. Users can access *ESRI's ArcGIS* software from the *Genlabs* or anywhere on or off campus, through the *MyVLab* application. *MyVLab* creates a virtual software environment that can be used to access a variety of software products available within the academic community. For information related to software offerings in the *Genlab* environment or in the overall campus community, please consult the ITS site license website at: www.uwo.ca/its/sitelicense/.

Social Science users who have a PC connection to the *SSC Network* can continue to access *SPSS*, *SAS* and *Stata* licenses as well as *ArcGIS* using the *SSC Network* menus, and *Add/Remove Programs*. Software offerings within Social Science can be found at the following web page: ssnds.uwo.ca/software/resources.html.

The remote access service also provides off campus access to the statistical and *GIS* software products. The article outlining how to use the remote access service can be found at: ssnds.uwo.ca/remotearchive.html