Cell-phone users who have tried to make a call on campus, only to get a blank "no bars" icon on their phones, have not been hard to find. As part of IT Partners, third-year sociology major Supham Huang has dealt with technology on campus, and says cell coverage is one area that is lacking.

As an antiquated intramural volleyball team, she once sent text messages to her players about an upcoming game. Poor coverage kept one player from receiving the text, so she did not make the match. "We ended up playing with only four players on what’s supposed to be a six-player game," Huang said.

People on campus rely on cell coverage for school, work, or, like Huang, for play. The Virginia Tech tragedy last year reminded all school officials of the ability to communicate across campus is also a vital safety issue. But until recently, the only call site on campus was west of Highway 113—too far to decently cover many places on campus. The campus acknowledges that cell phone coverage has been "spotty" and needs to improve. And now it is.

"Spotty coverage has been a result of several factors involving construction standards and policies governing the installation of commercial services on campus," said Mark Redicka, manager of the Network Operations Center for Communications Resources, a unit of Information and Education Technology. "Over the last few years, with the increased popularity of cellular service, policies have been revised, and technological advances have addressed the construction-related issues."

2008 should see significant gains.

Here come the new cell sites

Communications Resources and the campus Real Estate Services department are part of 2007 negotiations with the four major cellular service vendors—Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, and T-Mobile—to install cell sites on campus to boost service.

Each vendor was given the core campus map and told to submit their prospec"
SMARTSITE SETS IN, COLLECTS IDEAS FOR NEW FEATURES

One of SmartSite's major features is to allow it to adapt to what UC Davis needs. In Fall 2007 the campus started getting more ideas for what SmartSite could do, and now the faculty, staff, and students are being asked to help SmartSite develop new features.

"SmartSite is an open-source software developed and used by more than 50 universities. It is a framework for creating a learning management system," said Fernando Socorro, the CIO of IT Services.

"The idea is to have a site where the faculty and students can collaborate, share resources, and have a common space for discussion," he said.

The faculty advisory group is meeting this month to discuss the results and offer a recommendation this spring.

The campus will evaluate the results and offer a recommendation this spring.

SMARTSITE ACCESSES NEW FEATURES

NEW EQUIPMENT BOOSTS WIRELESS ACCESS ON CAMPUS

One of the four upgrades to the SmartSite system includes the addition of new equipment in the campus library to increase wireless coverage.

"The upgrade to the SmartSite system includes the addition of new equipment in the campus library to increase wireless coverage," said Mike Minear, the CIO of IT Services.

"The upgrade includes new antennas, which will boost the signal strength and increase the range of the wireless network," he said.

The new equipment will be installed in the library, and will be available for use by students, faculty, and staff.

"The upgrade will improve the wireless network, allowing students, faculty, and staff to access the Internet more easily," said Minear.

"The upgrade will also improve the wireless network for students who are using the library's computers, allowing them to access the Internet more easily," he said.

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