ODYSSEY '98:
Visitors Brave the Rain and Praise the Event

BY AVIVA LURIA

Although El Niño may have dampened attendance, hundreds of faculty, students, and staff braved the rain on May 28 to attend the Odyssey '98 Technology Showcase in Freeborn Hall. Campus and community members toured the 43 exhibits and attended 9 tutorials scheduled throughout the day. People not only observed what was on display, but were seen discussing, debating, advising, and describing their technology experiences.

Odyssey, which was held for the first time in 1996, is intended to bring together the campus community to discuss technology-related issues and to allow faculty, students, and staff to showcase innovative uses of technology. To accomplish this mission, the Odyssey '98 team enlisted faculty, staff, and students to serve on the Odyssey Advisory Board and to build on the success of past Odyssey events. This year, 10 presentations by members of the campus community addressed various aspects of information technology, from remote access and distance education to the California Digi-

Odyssey '98 visitors explored a wide array of technology exhibits and exchanged information with presenters from various campus departments.

> Odyssey '98 was wonderful because of the exchange of information and the interest shown by people.
>
> — Simone Monnier Clay, French

tal Library and the use of fractals in fashion design. Volunteers from various campus constituencies gave of their time, expertise, and enthusiasm to make Odyssey '98 a reality.

Feedback provided by participants on surveys at the Technology Showcase and presentations was very positive, with comments addressing the sharing of information, the introduction to new technologies and new people, the quality of booths and presentations, and the variety of topics and departments represented. Student Di Norman of the McNair Scholars Research Program wrote, "Great resource! I solved three major computer problems/issues for my work at the McNair Program, including finding a Web server that doesn't crash, Quicktime

and streamlining images for the Web, and ergonomics. This was very useful."

Illustrating the unique opportunity to learn from other members of the campus community, faculty member Gary Marty of Veterinary Medicine wrote, "I liked the chance to talk to people about the many possibilities for technology transfer available at UCD." He added that a favorite booth was that of the Veterinary School's Computer Assisted Learning Facility

> Odyssey '98 exposed me to research areas and technologies that I probably wouldn't have been aware of otherwise.
>
> — Anonymous attendee

(CALF). "My office is only a few doors away from the facility, but I had never talked to the staff until today."

Staff member Phil Knox of Student Special Services was impressed by Odyssey's "absolutely astonishing demonstrations of new technology." Another staff member (who didn't provide a name) wrote that Odyssey "gave me a chance to see what people are doing with technology. Since I'm still slow to think in these terms, I liked the opportunity to broaden my horizons vicariously!"

Exhibitors and presenters also provided positive feedback. Undergraduate physics student Miguel Garcia, who assisted Physics Lecturer Rodney Cole at his booth at the Technology Showcase said he found Odyssey '98 to be worthwhile. "[N]ow more people know about my work and they like it," he wrote. He added that the "discussion of [our] project with guests has helped generate new ideas to improve tutorials" in use in the physics classroom.
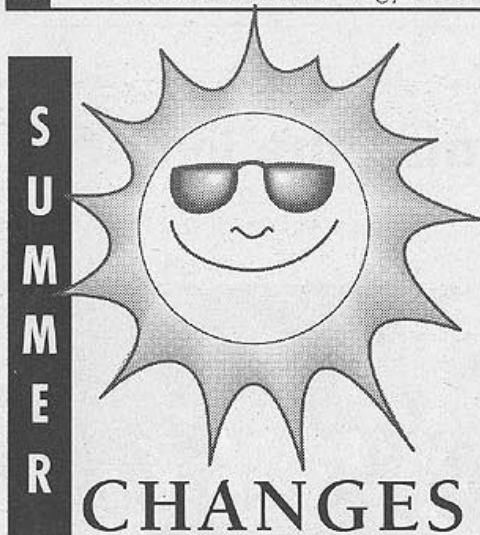
"I've met many people doing similar work on campus who I may not have otherwise met," said staff member Karen Beardsley of the Information Center for the Environment.

Bonnie Holt (Art and Art History) discusses her image database project with Odyssey '98 visitors.

SUMMER CHANGES

Service Upgrades: What's in Store

While you are lounging on the beach this summer, Information Technology will be busy upgrading a number of its services. This article is your guide to some of the changes you will be seeing this fall.

Computer Labs Get a Make-Over

This summer, Lab Management will:

- Create a new computer lounge in collaboration with ASUCD and Student Affairs. Planned for the current MU East Conference Room, this open-access computer lounge will contain roughly 40 Macs and PCs.

- Upgrade the computers in:
  - 247 Olson to Apple PowerBook G3 (233 MHz)
  - 1131 Meyer to Dell P6233 (233 MHz Pentium II)
  - 1154 Meyer PCs to Dell P6300 (300 MHz Pentium II)
  - 1102 Hart to Apple Power Macintosh G3 (266 MHz)

- Upgrade the audio-visual equipment in 1101 Hart with 10 Kodak slide projectors with audio capabilities, 7 tape duplicators, and 14 Sony VCRs with monitors.

- Upgrade the furniture in 247 Olson, 1102 Hart, and 1101 Hart.

- Upgrade the projection systems in 301A and 307 Surge IV.

- An upgrade to Microsoft Office 98 for the Macintosh on the Macintosh lab computers is tentatively scheduled, pending the results of a software test.

To view Lab Management's most recent changes, both planned and implemented, go to the Web at *http://lm.ucdavis.edu/rooms/changes.html*.

## Bovine Online Upgrades to Version 3.0

Version 3.0 of Bovine Online is expected to be released in September. It will include:

- New versions of Eudora, Netscape Navigator, and WinCRT.

- Better Telnet (telnet for the Mac) and PowerZip (compression software for Windows), two new software products.

- A new all-in-one manual for Windows and Macintosh.

- Documentation for new laptop multiple configurations.

- The Windows 3.1 version will remain unchanged.

Version 3.0 will be available in both CD and diskette formats. (Note: Due to space constraints, the diskette may not include all the software available on the CD.)

Data Center Relocates

The Data Center will soon move from the Hutchison Hall basement where it has resided since 1965. In the last few years, the Center, which houses all centralized campus computer systems (such as email servers, the Banner Student Information System, and the Financial Information System), has been exposed to several incidents, including a flooding in January 1997. The need for moving the campus Data Center to another, safer location was further emphasized by an auditor's report on the potential for earthquake-related problems in Hutchison Hall, and an evaluation of a mock fire emergency in a lab above the Center by the campus Emergency Preparedness Task Force. The evaluation determined that the basement would be flooded when the fire hoses were turned on.

The Chancellor has approved the relocation of the Data Center into the Repro Graphics building recently vacated by Creative Communication Services. This building can accommodate the Data Center with minimal renovation.

The Data Center staff is currently working closely with clients to determine the most appropriate time to relocate its various systems and services while minimizing the impact on the campus community. The relocation is scheduled to occur within the next nine months.

Look for further updates in the *IT Times*, and on the Web at *http://ir.ucdavis.edu/dc/*.

Visualization Laboratory Moves

The Visualization Laboratory, which houses high-end UNIX workstations for general and class use, will be moving into expanded facilities in time for Fall Quarter. The move will allow more students to enroll in classes currently taught in the Visualization Laboratory, and will open the possibility of new course offerings. The lab currently offers software for scientific visualization, geographic information systems (GIS), molecular visualization, statistical analysis, and other scientific areas. The facility is open to students, faculty, and staff. To reserve the lab for a class, send email to *vislab@ucdavis.edu* or call 752-6285.

The lab will be located in Temporary Classrooms 1 and 2, adjacent to Academic Surge and north of Meyer Hall.

Consultative Process on Campus Modem Service Re-Opens

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Grey approved $563,000 in one-time funds to enhance UC Davis' current remote access services. The funding provides an interim solution to remote access services and gives the campus two years to identify a longer-term solution. In the first year, a consultative process with all appropriate campus constituencies and an analysis of remote access options will be reinitiated to determine the future of campus provided modem service. The second year will be used to implement the option(s) selected by the Provost's Office.

The funds were approved for the purchase of 384 56K modems (bringing the total number of modems to 949) and to cover operational and carrier costs for the next two years. The new modems will be faster (they will be capable of speeds of up to 56K, a substantial improvement on the 14K modems currently available) and will utilize Kerberos authentication. The new equipment will be purchased this summer and is scheduled to be available to all campus constituencies by Fall Quarter.

The Remote Access Management Program (RAMP) report, released in late May, will be used to provide background, information, and recommendations during the campus-wide consultation process. The report's executive summary is available on the Web at *http://cr.ucdavis.edu/ramp/execsum.htm*. To request a full copy of the draft report and to offer comments and suggestions, send email to *ramp-review@ucdavis.edu*.

New UC-wide Internet Service Provider

The contract with Sprint, the UC system's Internet Service Provider (ISP), expired on June 7. After pursuing a number of alternatives, Office of the President decided to contract with Exodus Communications for the near term. The new contract is expected to provide uncongested access to multiple national backbones.

Each of the UC campuses will be brought on one at a time in order to ensure continued network stability prior to the next cut. The Sprint connection will be maintained for one additional month to serve as a backup route and additional protection for a transparent cutover. As part of this transition and in order to deal with the severe congestion problems on the campus network, the speed of the UC Davis campus link will increase from 10MB/sec to 45MB/sec. Dates for the UC Davis transitions have not yet been established. Further information is available on the Web at *http://cr.ucdavis.edu/*.

Network 21 "Block Party"

The Network 21 Project's final stage, the cutover of departments to the ATM network, will be occurring by "blocks" from July through December. A general, non-technical information session ("Block Party") to discuss what will actually occur during the cutover is scheduled for June 10. Handouts including daily cutover schedules and IP address assignments for each department will be distributed. In addition, sample cutover packages, instructions, and policies will be available for review.

"Although this is an information session, it is also a time to celebrate the accomplishments of all the people that brought us to where we are today," said Doug Hartline, director of Communications Resources.

The "Block Party" will be held at the Silo's Cabernet Room on Wednesday, June 10, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

New Telecommunications Rates

Communications Resources has recently completed a major revision to the existing telecommunications rate structure. The proposed changes will go into effect on July 1, and should remain consistent for the duration of the fiscal year.

The revision was made in response to the multitude of changes that have taken place in the telecommunications industry since the rates were last revised nearly eight years ago. They incorporate the new networking fees as well as services that the campus had been requesting for a number of years (e.g., single line set ownership). Whereas some rates have increased, the cost of several services — such as voice mail, paging, calling cards, and cellular phones — is now significantly lower.

Highlights include:

- Most advanced calling feature packages will be reduced to $3.00 per month.

- All calls to the Davis/Woodland area will be charged $0.02 per minute and calls to Sacramento $0.03 per minute, regardless of time of day.

- Voice mail has been simplified to one type of mailbox with a reduced rate of $5.00 per month.

- Monthly numeric pager rates have been reduced by 30% and will be leased for $9.25 per month. Alpha-numeric pagers will be leased for $13.50 per month. Special features will be billed at cost.

- Cellular phone rates and packages will be coordinated and billed by Communications Resources at cost plus $3.00 per month, regardless of features selected.

Based on a random sampling of departmental bills, the rate revisions should, in general, re-

TRANSITION

Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Carole Barone has accepted the position of Vice President of EDUCAUSE, effective September 1, 1998. EDUCAUSE is the new organization formed by the consolidation of CAUSE and Educom, the two professional associations for information technology in higher education. In her new role, AVC Barone will be working to influence the way members of the higher education community, and those upon whom that community depends for support, think about the impact of information technology on teaching and learning.

Among her many contributions to information technology in higher education at the national level, AVC Barone has served as chair of the CAUSE Board of Directors and the CAUSE Professional Development Committee, and as a member of the Educom Board of Trustees. In 1995, she received the CAUSE ELITE Award for exemplary leadership and information technology excellence.
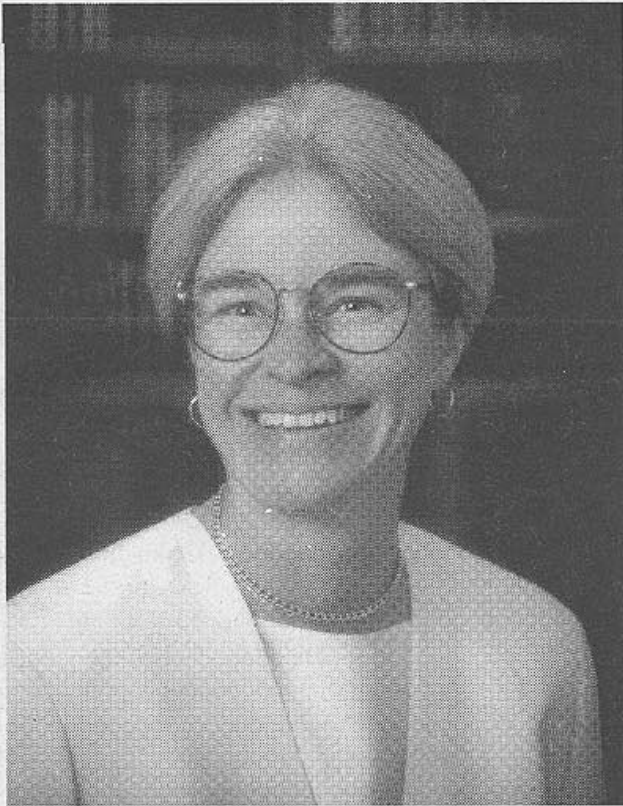
Associate Vice Chancellor Carole A. Barone

"I am grateful to all those members of the campus community with whom the Information Technology organization collaborated during my term as Associate Vice Chancellor," said Barone. "I have formed a deep attachment to the University of California. To the extent that my new position will allow, I hope to retain ties to UC and to the Davis campus."

Starting September 1, Jerry Hallee, Special Assistant to the Executive Vice Chancellor, will provide interim leadership of Information Technology. Paula King, Director of Planning and Coordination for Information Technology, will oversee day-to-day operations. Recruitment for a permanent associate vice chancellor will begin upon completion of the five-year review of the Division of Information Technology, commissioned jointly by Associate Vice Chancellor Barone and the Office of the Provost. The review is scheduled to start on June 12.

Banner Response Time Improves

Since January, the Banner team has been focusing on the puzzling problem of GUI Banner's slow response time. Some users had voiced concerns about the system's performance since the graphical user interface (GUI) version was implemented last December. After months of investigation and troubleshooting, the team is reporting major improvements in the system's performance.

Response times now range from 2 to 5.2 seconds, as measured on a small sampling of high use Banner forms (See Chart 2). By comparison, response times for the same sampling of forms ranged from 4 to 23 seconds in March (See Chart 1).

In early February, despite efforts to clean up bugs and Oracle software pieces, the problem with Banner's response time persisted. The team monitored the network looking for bottlenecks, checked the Banner host computer (Zeus) for processing or memory stress, and the Banner database for any signs of stress. The team also visited various departments to observe difficulties with the Banner forms. These visits yielded a wide range of response times, so the team decided to establish benchmarks in various locations around campus.

Chart 1. *Banner response time ranged from 4 to 23 seconds in March.*

Using a problem solving method developed by Kepner-Tregoe, Inc., a global management consulting firm, the team set out to isolate the problem and test for a possible solution. Solving Banner's slow response time was made all the more difficult because there are so many facets to the system — so many potential points of failure. There had been concern that the production host computer may have had faulty processor chips, but Sequent, Inc. verified that the floating point problem observed in older Intel chips did not affect these processor chips.

The team then focused its attention on the Citrix servers where the Banner forms reside. With over 1,200 forms, the team expected the search to be slow. As the newest additions to the Banner architecture, the Citrix servers were also considered possible points of failure although extensive monitoring of these systems showed no processing limitations. When comparing the code for one of the locally modified forms with the vendor's, a programmer discovered SCT had adopted design solutions which were different from UCD's. Once the team changed to the SCT design, the forms sped up to compare with the SCT forms. In April, performance improved even further following tuning enhancements to the Citrix WinFrame operating system.

Chart 2. *Banner response time ranged from 2 to 5.2 seconds last May, indicating a drastic improvement over response times observed in March (see Chart 1).*

This summer, the team will continue to explore the exact cause of the performance problem and other possible improvements. SCT, the vendor that supplies the Banner software, has pledged to work with the team until the response time has improved as much as is possible for GUI technology.

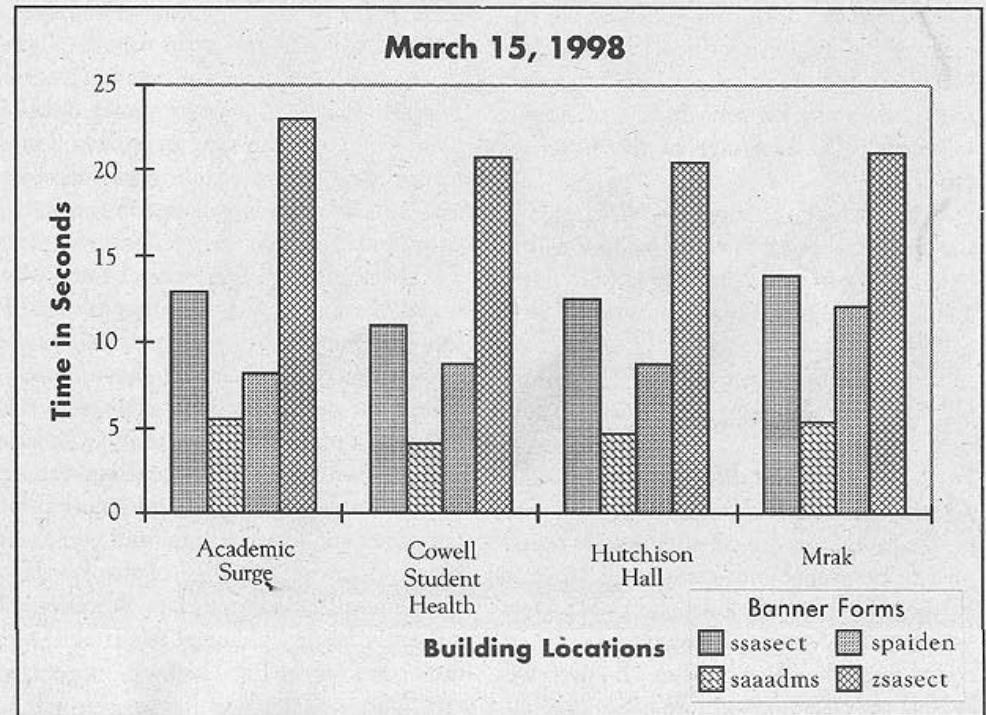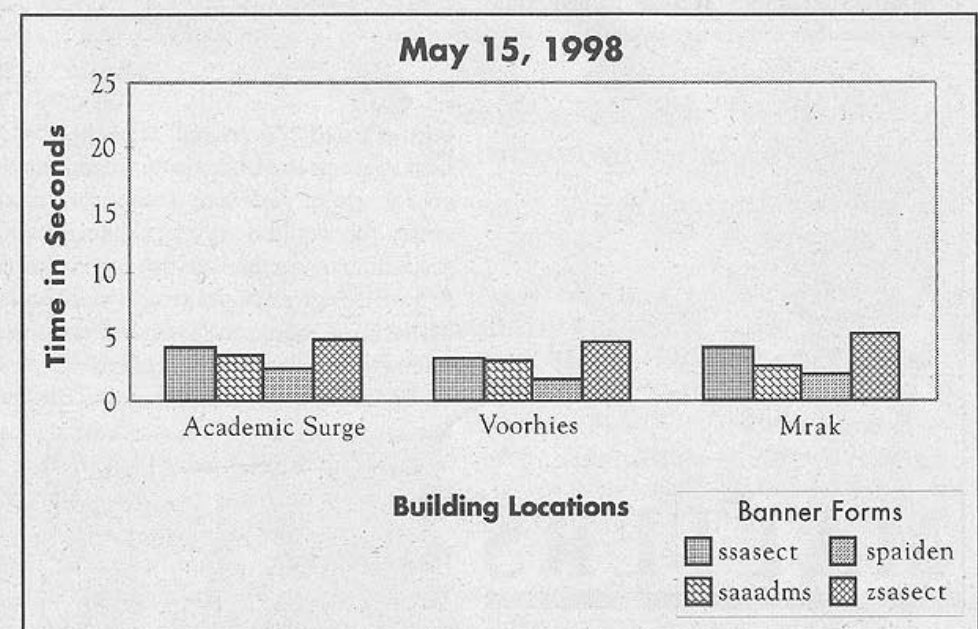*Sandra Stewart of Information Resources contributed to this article.*

Changes
from page 2

sult in overall lower monthly bills for voice services.

Communications Resources service representatives will contact departmental Area Telephone Representatives (ATRs) to review rates and to provide consultation on how to take greatest advantage of the proposed changes.

Two campus briefings are scheduled in the Silo's Cabernet Room. The first will be held on Wednesday, June 17 (10:00- 11:30 a.m.), and the second on Thursday, June 18 (2:00-3:30 p.m.).

For more information, call (530) 752-4603 or visit the Web at *http://cr.ucdavis.edu*.

Payroll/Personnel Decision Support System
A Payroll/Personnel Decision Support System, currently under construction, is scheduled to be available to campus departments by the middle of July. Like the DaFIS Decision Support System, this system will be accessed through a Web browser, and users will be able to select and execute pre-defined reports from a menu of query options. It will incorporate a security system which will allow authorized users access to employee and expense data for their department(s).

The initial release will include expense and personnel queries. These query types were identified through two information sessions with key campus business managers and users conducted jointly by Office of Administration, Accounting and Financial Services, and Information Technology staff. Payroll liens queries, the third priority identified at these sessions, will be implemented at a later date. A beta test of the system and queries will be conducted during the month of June.

A class on the Payroll/Personnel Decision Support system, currently under development, will cover the security of Payroll information, and policy regarding accountability, accessing the system, navigating menu options, and executing the queries.

The local Payroll/Personnel Data Warehouse, the source of information for this PPS Decision Support System, was initially rolled out to the campus during the summer of 1996. The system was designed to allow users to access a payroll database using SQL-based query tools to create reports and data extracts. It contains over 50 tables of information with personnel and expense data from UCD's employee database at Office of the President. The Payroll/Personnel Data Warehouse is currently being enhanced to provide additional data for the PPS Decision Support System. Current Data Warehouse users will not need to change their login accounts to access the new system.

For further information, Web browser requirements, and updates, visit *http://payweb.ucdavis.edu/* or contact Linda Honzik at (530) 757-8772, *ljhonzik@ucdavis.edu* or Ray Reveles at (530) 757-8794, *rreveles@ucdavis.edu*.

New Method of Email Access for Pine Users
On July 1, anyone using pine to access their mail on *mailbox.ucdavis.edu* will be prompted to enter their login password when accessing their inbox. This change will make possible a unified method of email access for all pine users. Whether you access your mail through a dedicated POP server (*blue, green, scarlet*) or the central mail server *mailbox.ucdavis.edu*, you will be asked for an IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol) password. The IMAP method of access will replace the NFS (Network File System) method currently in use. IMAP offers greater security, and it can properly handle file locking, which reduces the risk of corrupting an inbox. For further information on this change, visit the Web at *http://ir.ucdavis.edu/info/*.

Modems and Computer Labs Get Their Own Mothra Permits
New computer accounts set up via the mothra services menu (*http://mothra.ucdavis.edu*) will soon receive additional "permits." Current users get an ISUN permit which grants them access to the *isun.ucdavis.edu* servers for email, the 752-7900 modem banks, and Information Technology computer labs. Starting July 1, there will be three different, separate permits: ISUN, IMOD, and ILAB, which will allow users and administrators greater flexibility in granting access to these services. New and existing users should note that passwords changed in the *isun.ucdavis.edu* system will no longer affect passwords for the modems or computer labs. Users will need to change their passwords using the mothra utility (*http://mothra.ucdavis.edu/*) so the new passwords can propagate to all services. More information on this change is available at *http://ir.ucdavis.edu/info/*.

The following IT personnel contributed to this article: Lora Delwiche, Dana Drennan, Leigh Ann Giles, Paul Grant, Doug Hartline, Tim Leamy, Matthew Matuszak, Morna Mellor, Zack O'Donnell, Ray Reveles, and Dave Zavatson.

http://it.ucdavis.edu/itcalendar/

Visit the IT Calendar online for a schedule of events during the summer months. Check in periodically for updates.

DaFIS MATTERS
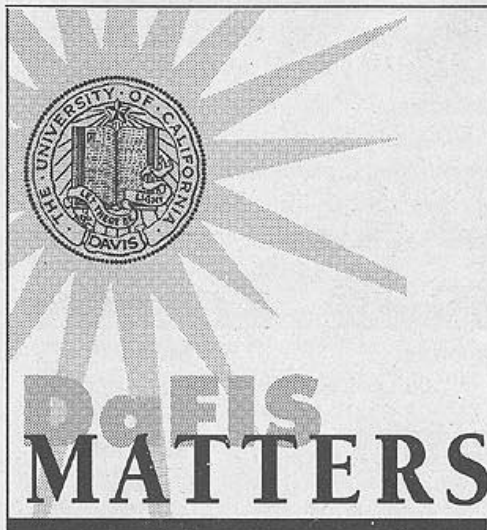
BY LIA SCOTT

In Box Improvements

Concerns over performance, and ease of use, of the In Box in the DaFIS system have prompted a new design. The new version of the In Box is scheduled for early June implementation. The new design not only improves performance, but adds some additional functionality that account managers and delegates will find particularly useful.

The Original Design
The original design of the In Box included a button titled "Alternate." This button was used to access the In Boxes of account managers for whom you were a non-primary delegate. You would then select the appropriate account manager, and see the documents that fit your delegation authority. It was also used by account managers to access documents routed to their primary delegates.

Not only was this functionality confusing to some users, but performance was proving to be a problem with some experiencing long delays before the Alternate In Box would open.

The New Design
The new design has replaced the Alternate button with a drop-down list of options, adding several more levels of functionality.

- **Normal.** This is the default selection. This will display all documents in your In Box, just as you see them today.

The following selections replace the original functionality of the Alternate button:

- **Alternate: Search as Non-Primary.** This selection will provide a list of users for whom you are a non-primary delegate, and a list of documents that you are authorized to approve.
- **Alternate: Search as Account Manager.** This selection will provide a list of delegates for whom you are the account manager, and a list of documents awaiting approval.

The remaining selections offer functionality previously unavailable. While the previous selections locate documents in another user's In Box, these selections allow account managers and primary delegates to find documents in their own In Boxes.

- **Account Manager/Primary.** This selection will show you only the documents with accounts for which you are account manager, or primary delegate. All other documents will be removed from the In Box display.
- **Account Manager Only.** This selection will display only documents with accounts for which you are the account manager.
- **Primary Delegate.** This selection displays only documents containing accounts for which you are the primary delegate.

We hope you find the new design helpful in streamlining the approval process.

Contact Information
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