Education via Internet

By Mark J. Sarver
Lantern staff writer

Unlike Ohio University, Ohio State wants to keep the virtual university at a distance.

Joe Tucker, vice provost at Ohio University, said they are the only university in Ohio, permitted by the Ohio Board of Regents, to participate in correspondence courses.

Correspondence courses are classes taken through the mail. Classes are also offered over the Internet for graduation and transfer credit.

OSU Vice Provost Bob Arnold compared the classes taught over the Internet to another form of electronic interaction.

"Cyber sex or the real thing?" Arnold asked. Cyber sex is like getting an Internet degree; it's not real, Arnold said.

Arnold said he finds correspondence learning to be impersonal.

"The student is missing out on a lot of the learning process," Arnold said.

not yet available at OSU

He said he thinks students learn more from one another when questions are asked during the class and in interaction among students outside of the classroom.

Arnold compared the Internet to a drug. He said he is afraid of students losing their friends to the Internet, as he lost his friends in college to drugs. He added that the Internet is addictive and he said he fears people will only communicate through machines in the future.

To keep the classroom atmosphere alive, OSU offers a distance learning program, like the one used by the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Science. There are now 17 universities participating in this program.

The distance learning program is a satellite broadcast course where students are in a classroom watching a monitor. Through this form of learning, participation is still possible through a toll-free 1-800 phone number.

L.H. Newcomb, associate dean of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Science, has taught graduate seminars through OSU's distance learning program.

Newcomb explains the program as, "A demanding and hard process that takes a lot of time." He said he finds it a little easier when there is a live class in the studio because it is just not him with the camera.

Newcomb said he thinks there are great possibilities in the future for distance learning.
Legislation excites some at University

Controversial new bill has provisions that may save Ohio State money

By David Bhaerman

As controversy continues to rage about a new bill legislating restrictions to the Internet, there are people at Ohio State who are excited about some of the lesser-known provisions of the bill.

While the Communications Decency Act has spurred much debate — and several court challenges — about freedom of speech and academic freedom at this University and across the country, the parent Telecommunications Bill may have a positive effect for faculty, staff, students, the community and University as a whole.

Greater Internet access, improved technologies and lower costs are some of the plusses, University officials say.

“We’re excited about the technology-explosion parts of the bill,” said Bob Kalal, associate director of academic computing services for University Technology Services. “Anything that increases access to technology is a plus for the University.”

The sweeping measures, some of the most far-reaching of the Clinton administration, are designed to revolutionize the communications industry. In doing so, they remove monopoly protections of the industry to enhance market competition.

In Columbus, for example, Ameritech is the one company currently franchised by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to provide local telephone service. By removing regulatory barriers, long-distance telephone carriers like AT&T, MCI, Sprint and LCN, cable television and other companies can enter the local-calling market. Conversely, Ameritech can now offer long-distance calling.

That means increased competition, which could mean telephone customers — including the University — get better rates. And economists theorize that lower prices may translate into faster deployment of technology.

“Technology spreads faster when prices get lower,” Kalal said.

As communications companies expand, more fiber-optic cables will be placed to carry an enormous amount of data transmitted at light speed. A larger fiber-optic network increases the speed of the Internet and improves interactive video technologies by allowing data to be transferred faster.

At Ohio State, perhaps nobody is more excited about these changes than Greg Ashe, director of UNITS, the University’s telephone and cable television provider. In addition to having to pay less for phone lines, Ashe sees potential opportunities to partner with a provider to increase the types of access needs particular to the University — Internet connections, for example.

By deregulating the cable television industry, the bill also allows telephone and other companies to provide those services, thus potentially lowering cable prices as well.

“This is good news for the University, as consumers of these services,” Ashe said.

Other technological advancements required by the bill are the so-called V-chip, or violence-chip — which would allow parents to disable television shows rated for sexual and violent content — and high-definition television — which provides a sharper, more vivid image through a digital, rather than analog, signal.

From an educational standpoint, the bill obligates commercial Internet providers to make their services available at a discount rate to elementary and secondary schools in an effort to promote interconnections of schools. “As an institute of higher learning, a lot of language in this bill promotes interconnection of educational institutions,” Ashe said.
OSU: cyberchat directly with D.C. Rep.

By Sara Perkins
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State students can find Rep. Deborah Pryce (R-OH) at a new "address."

Pryce, who represents Ohio's 15th District including the OSU campus, has a new homepage on the Internet. The Internet is a network of computers around the world, and a homepage represents one site on the Internet.

The new homepage allows Pryce's constituents access to Congress. The homepage contains background information on Pryce and her responsibilities as a member of Congress. The homepage also lists how constituents can simplify relations with government bureaucracy by addressing issues concerning Social Security and veteran benefits, interests in bills, finding federal grants and contracts, applying for passports, and information on touring the White House.

Todd Eachus, a contact in Pryce's office, said the homepage provides users with an introduction to Congress' responsibilities and is a tool used by people who want to get in touch with their representative.

Since the launching of the homepage on March 20, Pryce's office has received about 66 messages a day. Each is answered with a paper letter. Most of the correspondences have been requests for Pryce to vote a certain way on a bill.

Homepages can be beneficial to OSU students, said Jennifer Carruth, a freshman from Chicago majoring in international business.

"I think it's a good idea, since I don't get a chance to watch the news at home. It's a good way to keep informed," Carruth said. Pryce is not the only political entity with a homepage. The State of Ohio also has a homepage accessible through the Internet.

Ohio's homepage contains information about civil service testing schedules, state job postings, Ohio vendor registrations, county and weather maps, and travel and tourism information.

The page was designed by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, an agency within state government, as a service to taxpayers. It is rated in the "Top 5 percent of the Web," according to Point Communications' online review and rating guide.

Homepages can be found on the World Wide Web through Netscape, an Internet "browsing" program. Netscape is available for free at most public computing sites at OSU.


The address for the State of Ohio's homepage...
Material on web covered by copyright

By Steve Seepersaud
Lantern staff writer

Federal copyright laws don't just apply to books, movies or music recordings. Those looking to profit from copying information off the Internet may be in for a surprise.

Copyright statutes also protect material on World Wide Web sites. If information or pictures are republished without permission, the copyright owner can sue. Anything on the Internet that is not for downloading or republication is covered by copyright laws, said David Goldberger, professor of law at OSU.

"If (someone has) a web site, the web site is not for reproduction," Goldberger said. "It's there for you to have fair use of it, but you can't copy it. If there are download authorizations, it's obviously in the public domain."

A web site does not need to be registered with the federal copyright office, said Richard Orloski, a third-year law student.

"Registration is proof you have a copyright," Orloski said. "The copyright arises from when you make something. Registering doesn't make the copyright."

Copyright infringers can be sued for one of two forms of damages.

The copyright owner can recover the actual damages suffered from the infringement and any of the infringer's profits. The person suing needs to present proof of the violator's total revenue resulting from the infringement, according to federal code.

However, the copyright owner may sue for statutory damages instead.

If the court finds the infringement was committed intentionally, damages could be as high as $100,000, according to federal code. However, if the court decides the infringer was not aware of his or her actions, the award could be as small as $200.

Statutory damages can be recovered if the copyright is registered three months after initial publication or before the infringement takes place, Orloski said.

Taehyun Kim, a journalism graduate student, recently learned about copyright laws and how they apply to Internet technology.

Kim's web site features pictures from last January's Ku Klux Klan rally at the Statehouse. Kim said he was going to sue Columbus Alive for using the photos in its hard copy and web site without his permission.

One of Kim's pictures was of a man with a mohawk. Columbus Alive used an airbrush to paint his hair pink, he said.

"It was outrageous," Kim said. "There was fire in my eyes. They just ruined the whole integrity of the pictures."

Columbus Alive settled out of court and met all of Kim's requests, he said. The paper paid him $480, printed a letter of apology in the paper, and corrected a caption that appeared with one of the pictures, he said.

"I think they did a sincere job (of apologizing)," Kim said.
Web helps with language studies

By Becky Baughn
Lantern staff writer

As the World Wide Web continues to grow, it has become a profound tool for students studying foreign languages.

Students are using the Internet for research, class presentations and reading assistance to master their new language.

Jason Yalen, a junior majoring in German, said he has used German newspapers on the Internet to study presentations required for his class.

Most foreign language classes use newspapers and the Internet as learning resources, he said. One of the German newspapers currently available on the Internet is Die Zeit.

Students studying Russian may also find that Russian newspapers on the Internet will help enhance their studies.

Russian Story Inc. offers features ranging from theater and music to health and money issues. The new Internet site delivers more than 10 Russian newspapers, including one of the world's most circulated newspapers, Argumenty i Facty.

“We wanted to present Russian newspapers in original form and using the latest technology,” said Alexander Gruntsev, CEO of Russian Story Inc.

The site will add more Russian newspapers to the service each month.

The use of the Internet for classroom enhancement is much larger than just newspapers, said Galal Walker, associate professor of Chinese.

Students can use chat rooms and news groups to communicate world wide, he said.

For example, students studying Chinese are learning with the Chinese online reading assistance project. It offers instruction and materials to improve reading and writing skills.

Dee Noble and Shauna Seung, graduate students in the Department of East Asian Languages and Literature have used the reading assistance project and are taking a class that could enable them to create their own program.

“The project is great,” Seung said, “It helps to improve language skills and is interesting at the same time.”

Professionalism is important to Noble.

“It's nice to be able to type a document rather than having it hand written,” Noble said.

The programs that students use to translate words into Chinese symbols are available in computer labs and for home use with shareware. One student who has used one of these programs is Xin Tian Ma.

He said “It is crucial,” for students of a language, country or culture to use the Internet as a resource for developing skills.
Ohio State to spend nearly $19 million updating Wi-Fi across campus, including Ohio Stadium

By Jennifer Smola
The Columbus Dispatch
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Ohio State University is moving forward with several major projects, including an $18.6 million campus Wi-Fi update and a $95 million project to renovate Postle Hall, which houses the College of Dentistry.

The finance committee of Ohio State’s board of trustees on Thursday approved the spending for these and other projects, which will come before the full board for final approval Friday.

The Wi-Fi update will expand outdoor wireless internet throughout the campus and also within Ohio Stadium and the Jerome Schottenstein Center, Lynn Readey, associate vice president for facilities operations and development, told the committee Thursday.

The project consists of installing indoor and outdoor wireless access points across Ohio State’s main campus to create a “more seamless, efficient and modern-end user experience,” according to board meeting materials.

Work is expected to begin next month, with campus Wi-Fi improvements implemented between June and late 2020, according to board documents. Wi-Fi enhancements to Ohio Stadium are anticipated to be completed by July 2019, with enhancements at the Schottenstein Center expected by October 2019.

“It’s a very important project and everybody’s very excited about launching that, although it’s going to take some time to get everything in place,” Readey said.

The finance committee also approved $79.7 million for construction costs for Postle Hall renovations. The project will renovate classrooms and replace a portion of the building to better serve the teaching and outreach needs of the College of Dentistry, according to board materials. The work will include a building addition with four levels of upgraded clinical spaces, simulation teaching classrooms, study spaces, and improved access and circulation for patient services.
The total cost of the project, including $15 million already approved by the board, is about $95 million. That total includes $26 million in state funding, as well as a fundraising goal of about $25 million, Readey said.

Improvements to the 1950s-era building are much needed, said graduate student trustee Lydia Lancaster, who is a resident in Ohio State's orthodontics residency program.

"The dental community is very, very excited about this project," Lancaster said. "This isn't just an investment in improving our health sciences at the university, but it is also an investment in improving the already high quality ... dental care that Ohioans are receiving."

The finance committee also approved $200,000 for design services for a new airport hangar at Ohio State's Don Scott Field on the Northwest Side.

While Ohio State has already spent $5 million to add new hangar space to double its plane storage capacity, this project would cover design costs for a commercial hangar, Readey said.

The hope is that a corporate client would bear the cost of construction for the hangar through a long-term lease agreement, said Michael Papadakis, interim senior vice president and chief financial officer at Ohio State.

Details of any such agreement are still being determined, Papadakis said.

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