



**UT TeleCampus Communiqué**  
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***Happy Holidays from the UT TeleCampus!***

**In this Issue.....**

*TRACK to Launch February 16*

*Spring Registration Underway*

*Interactive Student Handbook Now Online*

*UTTC Digital Library Adds "Ask A UT System Librarian"*

*Student Organizations Getting Started*

*Course Closing for the Fall Term*

*New TIS Financial Aid, Veterans' Affairs and Hazelwood Staff Accounts*

*Schedule Set for Mailing Spring "Getting Started" CDs*

**TRACK to Launch February 16**

TRACK (TAKS Readiness and Core Knowledge), the UTTC Every Child, Every Advantage project targeting students as they prepare for the 11th grade TAKS exam, will officially launch on February 16, 2004. In addition to online diagnostic tests, TRACK will include learning materials in Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts.

A presentation on TRACK will occur at the Texas School Alliance meeting January 12 and the Education Service Center Executive Directors meeting January 13. For more information about TRACK, contact Dr. Ellen Bell at [ebell@utsystem.edu](mailto:ebell@utsystem.edu) or see our website at <http://www.track.uttelecampus.org/>.

**Spring Registration Underway**

Students are busily registering for the spring term and courses have begun to fill (and close). If you are an advisor or registrar for students using the TIS, please be sure that you monitor your account and process student requests all work days except for the scheduled winter break. If you will be on vacation additional days, please recruit a co-worker to help you. Contact the TeleCampus for a temporary account and training for them. So that students know when IDEAR forms will not be processed, we will be adding the following announcement to the TIS: *"UT System campuses will be closed in observance of the holidays December 24 - January 2. Registration requests for spring courses can be submitted, but please be aware that requests may not be processed until staff return from the holiday break."* For new or temporary accounts and/or TIS training, contact Tasha Davis at [tdavis@utsystem.edu](mailto:tdavis@utsystem.edu).

**Interactive Student Handbook Now Online**

The TeleCampus has developed a student handbook which is now available at <http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/studentservices/handbook.html>. The interactive

handbook is on the Blackboard portal (in the "Resources" box), on the UTTC website, and will be included on the "Getting Started" CD. The handbook is divided into four sections: Learning Online (Student Responsibilities, Your Online Course, Tips for Success), Student Services (Academic Support, Technical Support, Course Materials), Connections (Registration, Academic Advising, Student Records) and Digital Library (Academic Resources, Getting Help, Additional Resources). The handbook contains a great deal of information and a number of tutorials. While the primary audience for the handbook is students enrolled in UTTC courses, potential students may also find the information helpful. Tasha Davis oversaw the development of the handbook which was designed by Jenni Freeman; many TeleCampus staff contributed time and energy to the project which we are happy to have in place in advance of the spring term. Contact Tasha Davis at [tdavis@utsystem.edu](mailto:tdavis@utsystem.edu) for more information.

### **UTTC Digital Library Adds "Ask A UT System Librarian"**

Recently, a new service was made available to UTTC Digital Library users. The new service, "Ask A UT System Librarian," is a real-time chat service that began as a beta project in September with librarians from six UT campuses contributing their time during limited weekday hours. With growing confidence in using the new tool, the Ask A UT System Librarian committee invited the UTTC Digital Library to make this service available to its students. Links to the chat service have been added to the website and UTTC students can access the service using their TeleCampus username and password. To learn more, contact Terry Barksdale at [tbarksdale@utsystem.edu](mailto:tbarksdale@utsystem.edu).

### **Student Organizations Getting Started**

Student organizations for programs are in place and are beginning to be opened in Blackboard. There is one organization for each degree plan which, beginning in spring, students will have access to if they have selected the degree program in their TIS account and have had a status of "Enrolled" in a course anytime in the previous 12 months. All faculty teaching in a degree plan have a "Leader" status in their organization. This will allow faculty to post content and announcements in the organization and email all students in the degree plan. Students can create and/or participate in discussion boards and access information. Organizations for the Kinesiology and Educational Technology degree programs are open to students and the others will be opening over the next few weeks, so that all are open as we start the spring semester. For information on organizations, contact Lori McNabb at [lmcnabb@utsystem.edu](mailto:lmcnabb@utsystem.edu).

### **Course Closing for the Fall Term**

Students will lose access to Fall 2003 courses in Blackboard on January 12. (This also applies to any student who still has access to a Summer 2003 course.) If you have students working through incompletes and they need access after January 12, please contact Lori McNabb at [lmcnabb@utsystem.edu](mailto:lmcnabb@utsystem.edu) with the course, the students' names and the dates to which their access should be extended. For future semesters, the TeleCampus is in the process of changing the way in which course access ends at the close of a term. Beginning with the end of the Spring 2004 semester, students will lose course access when grades are received from the host campus SIS and the student's status in the TIS changes to "Complete." "Complete" will be triggered whether the student received a letter grade or an Incomplete for the course. For a student to continue to have access after grades are sent to the TeleCampus from campuses, the faculty member will need to contact Lori McNabb at the address listed above.

### **New TIS Financial Aid, Veterans' Affairs and Hazelwood Staff Accounts**

Student and Faculty Services staff met by videoconference with campus staff who oversee financial aid, veterans' and/or Hazelwood benefits to demonstrate new TIS functions which will be in place for the spring term. There are two key goals to be met by the new functions. To notify staff when students are enrolled on other campuses so that processing aid requests can begin as soon as possible, the TIS will email a notification to a staff member whenever a student who receives aid has an IDEAR form approved for registration. And, to allow campus staff to monitor student enrollment on other campuses, staff will have the ability to create reports on the host campus enrollment status of their home campus students receiving aid. To implement these new functions, the staff at each campus needs to confirm or provide a UTTC Financial Aid liaison ([http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/student-services/financeaid\\_contacts.html](http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/student-services/financeaid_contacts.html)) and UTTC Veterans' Benefits liaison (<http://www.telecampus.utsystem.edu/student-services/utvets.html>). In addition, campus staff should provide the name of a UTTC Hazelwood Benefits liaison. Confirmation of aid liaisons should be sent by the chief financial aid officer for the campus to [telecampus@utsystem.edu](mailto:telecampus@utsystem.edu).

**Schedule Set for Mailing Spring "Getting Started" CDs**

"Getting Started" CDs will be mailed to faculty and newly enrolled students beginning on Monday, January 5. For students who enroll after that date, there will be additional mailings on Tuesday, January 13 and Monday, February 9. The CDs contain a welcome video; a UTTC quick reference list and getting started checklists for prior to and the first day of class; applications, plug-ins and settings to configure your machine for Blackboard 6.0; and, the Student Handbook. (Additions to this version of the CD include the Java plug-in needed for the Blackboard Chat and the Student Handbook.) As is typical, CDs will only be mailed to students who were not enrolled during the Fall term. For information on the Getting Started CD, contact Lori McNabb at [lmcnabb@utsystem.edu](mailto:lmcnabb@utsystem.edu).

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