October 2023
Office of the Chief Information Officer Update

Single source of record for transcripts assists Registrar team in providing better service to Mills College students: The Registrar's office, along with ITS team members in Boston and Oakland, successfully migrated nearly 25,000 academic transcript records for all legacy Mills College students into Northeastern's central enterprise Banner student system. Migrating these records provides students with a single point of contact in the Registrar's office to request transcripts. It also streamlines tasks for the Registrar's office by using a single process and a single system for all Mills and Northeastern transcripts going forward.

New solution put in to support the university's changed sponsored account policy, a milestone in reducing institutional risk and modernizing identity and access management: The process for requesting sponsored accounts has moved into ServiceNow to ensure a consistent approach as other services and to improve the university's security posture. Sponsored accounts can now only be requested for individuals by their direct manager or delegate. Previously, any Northeastern employee could request a sponsored account for anyone else. Additionally, the move to ServiceNow ensures a consistent approach for requesting IT services and allows IT to retire legacy platforms. Northeastern will, in the near future, leverage this work to reduce the need for sponsored accounts, a part of the university's multi-year roadmap for modernizing identity and access management.

New instructor resources developed as part of efforts to improve student learning experiences using Canvas learning management system: Academic Technologies launched a new series of example Canvas courses for instructors to demonstrate course design principles and effective practices. The first course, which is Art History themed, provides a basic and concrete example of the effective use of Canvas and integrated tools to show faculty how to create engaging and effective courses with only basic Canvas knowledge. This course is now a key resource when consulting with faculty new to Canvas and will help lead to improved student engagement and learning experiences. Academic Technologies conducted 620 consults for Canvas and integrated tools with instructors last academic year. This year, the AT staff have conducted over 175 of these consults since Aug. 15, 2023.

ITS celebrates Founder's Day and generates excitement among staff for 125th birthday celebration and campaign: In honor of Northeastern Founder's Day on Oct. 3, ITS partnered with the Office of Global Network and Strategic Initiatives to create a festive atmosphere at Boston HQ at 216 Mass Ave. With custom cookies, balloons, special 125th birthday edition display backgrounds, and lots of red, white, and black, the office was transformed for the day as part of the larger Founder's Day festivities on the Boston campus. Leading up to and on Oct. 3, several messages went out to ITS staff to generate awareness and excitement for the day, to celebrate the university's milestone, and to recognize ITS's role in helping power the next 125 years of experience at Northeastern.

ITS and Registrar partner on new functionality that takes the manual work out of managing transfer credits for students: The uAchieve Transfer Bridge functionality went live for advisors and students on Oct. 18. The Registrar's Office and ITS deployed the new system together, eliminating all manual steps in managing student transfer credit at the university. This new technology and process provides students and advisors up to date transfer credit information, which previously could lag up to 30 days, helping make this transition easier and less stressful for students coming to Northeastern with credits already. Additionally, this new technology and process greatly reduces the manual steps that the Registrar's team was performing, saving them time to work on more strategic tasks.

With 1Login initiative near completion, university has moved off of legacy systems and into a more modern single sign-on experience that improves experience and security: The Identity and Access Management team, along with other IT teams and vendors, have reached a significant milestone in the 1Login initiative, which is scheduled wrap up in the next couple of weeks. The legacy Microsoft ADFS infrastructure that used to run on-premises and power account access has been retired. In its place, Northeastern single sign-on has transitioned to the more modern and cloud-based Microsoft Azure Active Directory. The teams have also migrated 93% of the apps and services that use Shibboleth SSO, another legacy system, to Azure AD. There are just 10 Shibboleth apps left to be migrated to complete the project. This sets the stage for the university to go passwordless, a transformation that reduces security risks, increases productivity, and provides more seamless experience for the Northeastern community.

New Microsoft Teams, now widely available to Northeastern community, provides faster, simpler, and more flexible collaboration for work, research, and learning: In coordination with Microsoft's rollout, Northeastern enabled the new Teams experience for the university community on Oct. 18. With a performance-first mindset, new Teams desktop apps have been completely rebuilt from the ground up to provide a faster experience while using less battery and system resources. This means that faculty, students, and staff can now launch and switch between apps, respond to chat messages, and join meetings and calls more quickly while using less battery and memory, all tasks that are part of day-to-day communication and collaboration. An independent study has found that app launch and join meetings are twice as fast as before and memory consumption has decreased by half. These benefits have been realized without the need for any significant training or education as the new software uses the same familiar layout.

Campus communities in Boston and Oakland safely destroyed hundreds of pounds of physical data and files at annual Data Destruction Day, following best practices for security and sustainability: Northeastern hosted its annual Data Destruction Day on Oct. 23 on the Boston campus and the inaugural event on the Oakland campus. Students, faculty, and staff on those campuses safely destroyed personal data on their outdated devices and paper materials with the help of Northeastern staff. Devices and paper that contain data and files must be destroyed in a safe and secure manner to prevent unwanted access to old information that could be used for malicious activities. Data Destruction Day also promotes recycling and sustainable disposal practices. Initial reports indicate that Northeastern shredded nearly 200 hard drives, 15 phones, three carts of paper, and three and a half boxes of e-waste. The events take place during Cybersecurity Awareness Month held each October, which the Office of Information Security celebrates each year to help educate and inform the Northeastern community about cyberattacks, phishing, malware, and other threats that exist in the digital world.

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