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NEWS RELEASE

STUDENT SURVEY HELPS DEFINE WIRELESS NETWORK AT UD

DAYTON, Ohio — Where do University of Dayton students plop down when they have a few minutes to open the laptop and do a little research or catch up on e-mail?

Rather than assume it's the student lounge or a building lobby, campus officials asked students to tell them. "We sent out an e-mail asking for the most creative, comprehensive and 'between class zone' suggestions for expanding our wireless network," said Tom Skill, associate provost for educational IT. "And we were surprised by some of the answers, so it's a good thing we asked."

Jeremy Burgess suggested McGinnis Center, 301 Lowes St., a building that serves the student neighborhood with meeting rooms and laundry facilities. "There's not a whole lot to do while you're waiting on your laundry to finish. Might as well do some homework," he said.

He and several other students suggested the plazas in front of Kennedy Union and the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. "What's cooler than sitting outdoors and surfing the net? On a beautiful day this is a great place to study," Burgess said.

Other students provided surprising suggestions. "Whenever I have a few minutes between classes to do a little bit of work, I usually go to the nearest rest room and have a seat in the last stall," said Tony Unverferth. "I found that this is the most private, quiet place on campus where I can sit down and relax without being bothered. That's my secret for last-minute studying or (getting) work done."

The survey is in preparation for the expansion of the campus wireless local area network that is already deployed in several areas on campus. "We have it installed and operating in the Learning Teaching Center and Kennedy Union as well as in about 15 classrooms across campus," Skill said. "The School of Education is using a mobile version in their classroom with 20 notebook computers."

UD is using the 802.11a system, which provides up to 54 Mbps in the 5GHz band. "We are one of the few institutions that have moved with the newer 802.11a system," Skill said.

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"This is clearly an area where we are moving fast."

Baujan Field is equipped with a wireless network, as are several areas in Miriam Hall.

The wireless network builds on a refinement of the University's computer requirement. First-year students entering UD in fall 2003 will be offered only notebook computer options instead of a roster that includes desktop models. They can choose to equip their laptops with wireless cards to take advantage of the wireless network or continue to use the many data ports in academic and residential buildings.

"First- and second-year students particularly recognize notebooks as an important tool for their education," said Skill. "It's part of their professional preparedness. And desktops have limitations in that the dorm may not be the best place to work. Students know they can throw a notebook computer into a backpack and wander over to some nook on campus where they can find the calm and quiet — or the noise and the working group teammates — they need to do their work."

The University provides a technology-enhanced learning environment that has earned it a reputation for technology initiatives that mark it as a national leader in Catholic higher education. In fall 1999, officials instituted the computer requirement for incoming students and began building a \$4.5 million fiber-optic infrastructure on campus and in the student neighborhood.

The use of technology to enhance learning extends off campus as well.

"We also have many faculty, staff and students who are running 802.11b wireless systems at their homes, connected to cable modems," Skill said. "It is not unusual for a faculty member to be at home on their front porch instant messaging students who are on campus."

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For media interviews, contact **Tom Skill** at (937) 229-4898 or via e-mail at skill@udayton.edu.