

Fear Factor and American Idol: Leveraging Pop Culture for Student Support

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Kimberly Brookes and Cynthia Rubino, Simmons College, Boston MA

Outline

- Overview of Simmons
- The “Traditional” Support We Provide to Students & What’s Missing
- Technology Fear Factor
- Simmons Idol
- Conclusions

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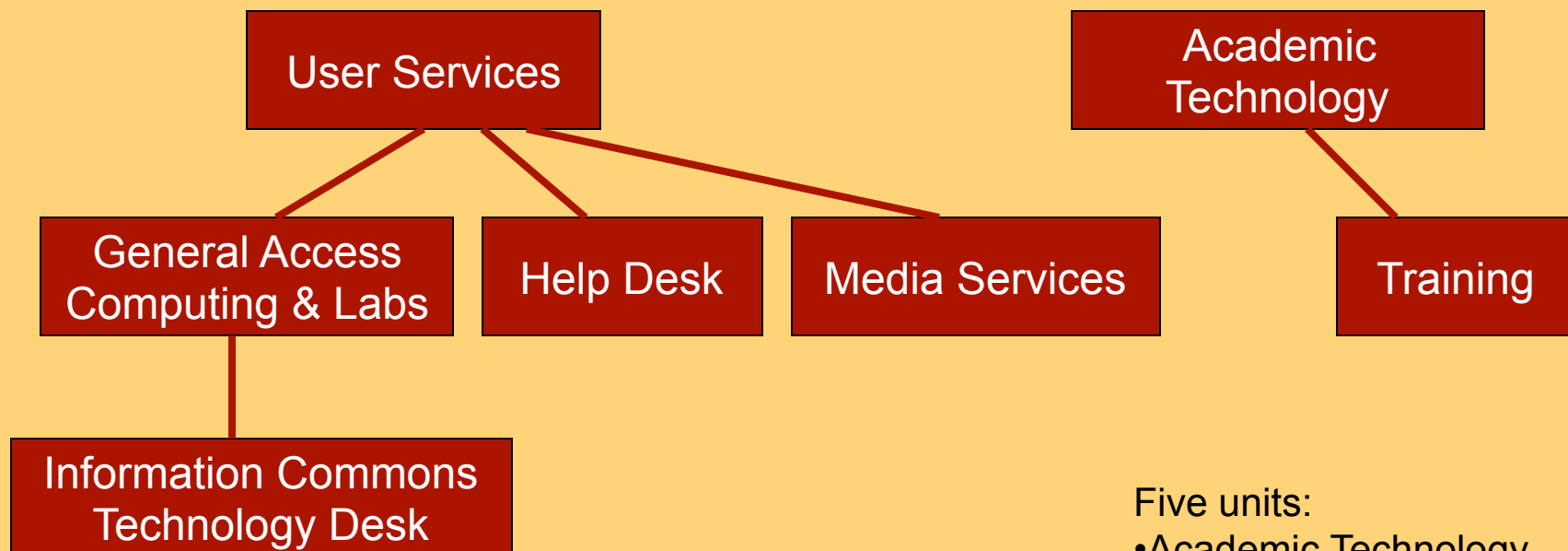
- Small university, urban location
- Undergraduate women's college (1,800)
- Graduate schools (2,500)
 - College of Arts and Sciences
 - School for Health Studies
 - Graduate School of Library and Information Science
 - School of Social Work
 - School of Management (all women)
- 97% of students own computers;
68% of those, own laptops



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Technology at Simmons College



Five units:

- Academic Technology
- Administrative Systems
- Networks & Servers
- User Services
- Web Services

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Support for students

Phone/email

- Help Desk

In-person

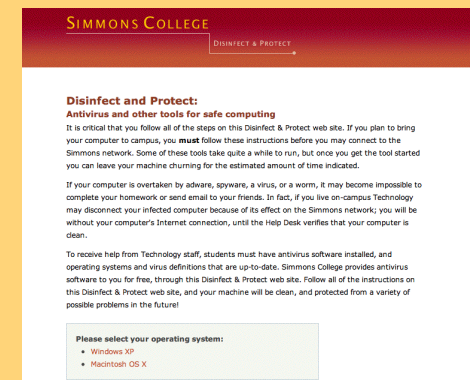
- Information Commons Technology Desk
- Media Services (for a/v equipment)
- Self-Help Clinics (see poster)

Online

- Web site: tips and policies
- Disinfect and Protect site: virtual clinic

Formal training sessions

- Academic Technology



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Challenges

Common to us all

- Students do not know how to properly care for their own computers
- Supporting student-owned technology is resource intensive
- Without support, academic work suffers

Simmons-specific

- No dedicated group assigned to only supporting students and their equipment; no laptop program.



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Analysis of our standard solutions

Students must take the initiative:

- Download & install free Sophos Antivirus
- Run Disinfect & Protect CD or web site tools
- Enroll in a workshop
- Read a flyer, handout or web page
- Attend a self-help clinic

Timing of messages out of step with opportunities

- June orientations: what to buy
- September orientations: overwhelmed
- Training: need to know this instant
- Self-help clinics: just fix it

Passive

- Listen
- Read
- Follow instructions

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Potential Creative Solutions

- Coordinate with Student Life
- Look through students' eyes
- Engage students through Pop Culture

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At Simmons, there are some things money can buy...

Simmons T-shirt from the bookstore.....	\$15.99
Large Café Mocha from Java City.....	\$2.99
Lunch at the Fens.....	\$4.95
Accessing your documents on the Simmons file server from home.....	priceless

Not all things at Simmons cost money! Take advantage of the free 100MB of storage space students have on the **Simmons file server**.

It's easy: just open your Internet browser and go to

<http://remote.simmons.edu>

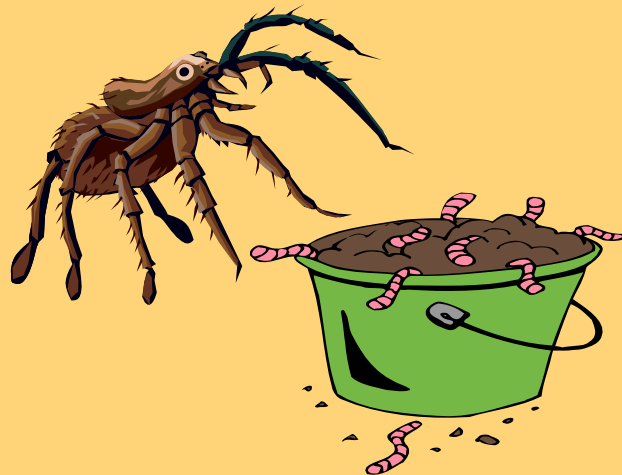
The small print: For instructions on using remote access, go to <http://my.simmons.edu/technology/helpdesk/remote.shtml>. Give remote.simmons.edu a try from the Library Information Commons so you can get help from staff at the Technology Desk on the 2nd floor. If you are not sure what a file server is, see <http://my.simmons.edu/technology/helpdesk/fileservers.shtml> or stop by the Technology Desk for a conversation about it.

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TECHNOLOGY FEAR FACTOR



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Technology Fear Factor: Logistics

- Students were divided into teams, or “shark tanks”
- Competition was based on total time
- Each team had group facilitator or two
- Rules
 1. Complete a challenge at the round tables in the center of the room.
 2. Go to the team laptop and discuss the first question from the online quest.
 3. For each question, provide final answer to your facilitator, then go to next question.
 4. Facilitator makes a tally mark on score card for wrong or skipped answers, and for team work.
 5. Teams finish the online quest, and go back to round tables for the next challenge.

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Technology Fear Factor: Curriculum

1. Phishing

2. Securing Your Computer

3. Copyright

4. Using Simmons Computers



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Technology Fear Factor: Successes

- No initiative required: attendance was mandatory
- Time efficient: 2 huge sessions (150 and 270)
- Peers learning from one another
- Hands-on learning
- Collaboration with Student Life
- Facilitators benefited too
- Good publicity for Technology

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Technology Fear Factor

Challenges

- Facilitators: mixed bag
- Teams: mixed bag
- Planning was extensive during a busy time of the year

Changes for Next Time

- Train facilitators
- Follow-up material for students
- Evaluations

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Coming to a Quadside near
you...

Technology at Simmons
College
and the Class of 2009
present
Simmons Idol

- ★ Test your knowledge on how to download music legally and safely.
- ★ Come and enter for a chance to participate in the Simmons Idol karaoke contest.
- ★ And find out why Kerline sings the blues.



Thursday, October 27
6:30-8:30pm
Quadside Café



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Simmons Idol

- Workshop held in dorm cafeteria
- Props and equipment from Student Life
- Simmons celebrity judges
- iTunes gift cards for prizes



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Simmons Idol: The Program

Kerline sings the blues

Questions and answers

- Why does filesharing mean and what are some filesharing programs?
- Why is it often illegal to share files?
- What harmful effects can happen to you or your computer if you share files?

Guest performers

- Class of 2009
- Associate Director of Student Life

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“My world was shattered, I was torn apart. Like someone took a knife and drove it in my heart.

You shut off my port and I thought that I didn’t care. But I lost everything and all my songs I downloaded.”

-Kerline St. Fleur, Class of 2007

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Simmons Idol: unqualified success

- Approximately 80 participants
- Reinforced ownership of problem and understanding of filesharing
- Students knew more than expected, likely because of Fear Factor
- Cost effective
- Bonus: Prospective students were at the event and participated



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