

## **IT RESPONSE TO 5/2017 SENATE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE COMPUTER LIFE-CYCLE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM**

### **1 Administrative Rights**

**Senate Recommendation** *Administrative rights should be granted upon request, at the time of issue or a later date, for the person issued the machine under the Life Cycle Program. If Technology Staff have a specific, defined reason that administrative privileges should not be granted to an individual, the rationale should be presented in written form to the user along with a clear point of contact who has sufficient authorization to resolve the outstanding issues.*

**IT Response** To minimize risk of security problems and interference or damage to other software or data on a workstation, best practice is to research and review software before installing it, including validating the software against a national whitelisting. Additionally, IT can most effectively support users on workstations that adhere, for the most part, to a standard configuration/image.

For these reasons, Montclair State University installs a standard secured image on workstations for faculty and staff and reviews/adds additional software as required by their jobs, teaching and research. This is accomplished by restricting administrative rights to the IT staff and installing additional software when requested after review/validation of the software.

Exceptions are made when the faculty/staff member's job, teaching or research requires very frequent software installations or engineering-level management of an application or workstation. In these cases local administrative rights may be enabled so that the faculty/staff member installs the software without IT assistance. If an exception is made, the faculty/staff member assumes added responsibilities for reviewing/validating the additional software and for supporting the workstation's unique configuration. Challenges may include inadvertent impact to other software or data on the workstation and occasionally issues accessing the University's standard applications or services.

A survey of 24 other NJ institutions, conducted via the NJEdge CIO group, confirmed that the majority follow a similar practice to maximize the security and reliability of faculty and staff workstations.

For the reasons above, Montclair State plans to continue our existing practice of defaulting to no local administrative rights, and encouraging faculty/staff to contact their supporting IT department regarding needs for additional software. If that practice prevents specific individuals from effectively performing their jobs, teaching or

research, they may submit a request with statement of need and rationale to their supporting IT department. In those cases IT will recommend how best to address the need – either through enabling local administrative rights as an exception or through alternative solutions.

## 2 Replacement Process

**Senate Recommendation** *At the start of each academic year, all individuals who are due for a new computer under the Life Cycle Program should be notified regarding the specific process, and the machine options, along with a date range for replacement of his/her machine. Each person should have a designated single point of contact who is able to address questions and concerns regarding his/her up-coming Life-Cycle replacement. Each person issued a machine under the Life Cycle program should be able to look up basic information, such as the required return date for his/her current machine, on a Web site by authenticating with his/her NetID.*

**IT Response** Currently IT works with the College/School technology teams to notify individuals typically two months prior to the expiration date of their workstation lease. Options for workstation replacement are maintained and continually updated on the IT web site. Additionally, in response to Senate and other requests, in June 2017 we launched an online service at <https://montclair.service-now.com/ess/> allowing faculty and staff to proactively look up information regarding their workstations including equipment assigned to them, workstation model, date of lease expiration, and request for replacement.

We acknowledge your recommendation to provide earlier notice to individuals due for a new workstation during the year. We plan to launch such communications this fall, along with publicizing the online lookup service available. Questions can be addressed to the College/School technology teams or the IT Service Desk.

## 3 Life Cycle Length

**Senate Recommendation** *The Life-Cycle replacement should occur approximately every three years.*

**IT Response** At Montclair State University we replace leased workstations every four years to best balance timely implementation of evolving technology with prudent management of costs and support resources. A survey of 24 other NJ institutions, conducted via the NJEdge CIO group, confirmed that 80% replace workstations every four years or less frequently. We plan to continue this practice at Montclair State University.