

Eye On Columnists

Webmail Shwebmail

Lion's Eye Featured Columnist:

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I am not alone when I say that Webmail2 is a disappointment. Ask any student from any Penn State campus, and the response is usually the same. At first glance, some say Webmail2 is prettier than its predecessor. Unfortunately, that's about all that Penn State ITS "improved" in this recent upgrade. Some of the previous functionality of the original Webmail does not even work correctly after the upgrade.

After asking several students and scouring Facebook anti-Webmail2 groups, I made the conclusion that Penn State really did not take the preferences of the 80,000 or so students into consideration when designing this new system.

An email client should be clean and easy to use. With over 50,000 students using the system every day, I would imagine that ITS would scrutinize every

aspect of Webmail2 before forcing it on students and faculty that are used to the original. This makes me think Webmail2 was definitely rushed to completion before the fall semester began.

Webmail2 takes way too long to initially load, and according to Penn State's Webmail2 "known problems" website, the system is still horribly slow on dial-up connections to the Internet. If your screen resolution is not high enough, Webmail2 creates scrollbars all over your screen to show the content of your messages. I feel like I am plotting points on a Cartesian plane by moving in X and Y directions just to see what I want. When I wrote the ITS helpdesk about this issue, they told me that decreasing my browser text size would fix the problem.

It didn't.
The "attach signature to message"

feature is known to only work half of the time. After informing Penn State ITS of this problem, they stated that the Firefox web browser must be used to run

Webmail2 correctly. I congratulate them on their interest in open-source projects, but the 80% of people who use the Internet Explorer web browser are not going to be too happy. Using Firefox did not fix the problem anyway, so it does not matter which browser is used.

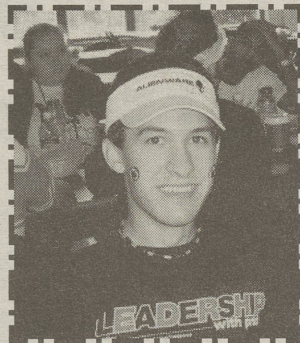
The buttons on the left hand side function exactly the same way as the buttons that magically appear up top. The whole "tabbing" feature is a waste of space and should be removed from Webmail2. This would open up more space to use for the most important task, reading and writing email. Isn't that what Webmail2 is for? I wrote the helpdesk an email with my sugges-

tions, but did not receive a reply in the two weeks since.

Webmail2 also breaks the back button in your web browser; in other words, it does not work anymore. Clicking the back button to go back to a previous message will knock you out of the system. This is definitely not an improvement.

Anyone who took Professor Bodek's IST331 class, which focuses on user-centric web design, knows that Webmail2 is a poorly designed system that was never tested with real people. Using fancy graphics and cool effects will not make a system any better if it does not work in the first place. With the information technology fee currently set at \$190 per full-time student in the Penn State system, I would imagine that the money controlled by Penn State ITS would be used more effectively.

My suggestion to all who despise Webmail2: forward your mail to a Gmail account or your own ISP. Gmail and most ISPs like Comcast or Verizon will allow you to check your email with a real Webmail system.



Lion's Eye Student & Teacher Profile

By: Bryan Drissel



Penn State University is among the most diverse university systems in the United States. There are more than 41,000 students attending Penn State University. But for that large number, each student has a face, a personality, a family, and a life. Matt Schoenberg is one such unique student at PSU.

Matt is a freshman at Penn State Delaware County campus, majoring in journalism. He is a graduate of Haverford High School in Havertown, Pennsylvania.

Matt spent much of the summer at University Park where he took several courses and made some new friends.

Going to University Park during the summer has not discouraged Matt from taking a full schedule of classes this fall. He is taking public speaking, newspaper practicum, business with a first year seminar, college algebra, and a class that discusses the role of gays and lesbians in society.

Equally important to Matt is his life outside of school. Matt is a pianist and has been playing the piano since he was nine years old. He also enjoys playing basketball, playing video games, and hanging out with friends. A big sports fan, Matt follows the Eagles and Phillies.

Matt enjoys watching television and listening to music. Currently, his favorite television show is Prison Break, which is on the Fox network on Monday nights. His favorite musical artists are the The Beatles, and hip hop artist, John Legend. His favorite movies include The Rock, Air Force One, and movies starring comedian Adam Sandler.

In Matt Schoenberg, one sees the diversity that Penn State University has to offer. Matt is a small fish in a huge pond, but he shows his uniqueness is his own way.

Matt Schoenberg



The Earth. It is full of mysteries just asking to be solved. Scientists have been studying the sea, the land, the air, the reason natural disasters occur, and the history of the Earth. Dr. Laura Guertin is among these distinguished scientists.

Dr. Laura Guertin, also affectionately known as Dr. G by her students, is an assistant professor of Earth Science in her sixth year of teaching at Penn State Delaware County. She has a Ph.D. in Marine Geology and Geophysics from the University of Miami. Dr. G is also a coordinator of the Jane E. Cooper Honors Program and a Civic and Community Engagement Minor Coordinator.

She has also received various awards including the George W. Atherton Award for excellence in teaching for 2006, an award given to four of the 4,000 Penn State faculty throughout the Penn State University system. Dr. G has also been nationally recognized in Who's Who Among American Teachers

She teaches a variety of courses at Penn State Delaware County, including Natural Disasters and Hollywood, an oceanography course, Biodiversity and Earth history and first year seminar. When asked what Dr. G wanted her students to take from her classes, she emphasized that she wants her students to "teach what they learn to others, to engage in conversation and discussion."

She is focused on developing new ways to use technology to help students learn about geosciences. This includes online courses and courses that combine computer and in class work, such as the Natural Disasters Hollywood course, which examines how movies and media portray natural disasters.

"I hope students learn that they can share what they learn with more people than just professors," explains Dr. G. "After all, the reason to attend college is to take your knowledge and go out and change the world!"

Dr. Guertin

