FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 8, 2002

NUIT CONSOLIDATES COMPUTER LAB RESOURCES TO NU LIBRARY

In order to provide better service to students and faculty on the Evanston campus, NU Information Technology (NUIT) is beginning a process this fall of consolidating more of its campus computer labs into University Library.

As part of this plan, a new digital media studio, “NU Media Works,” will open this fall in the Library for student use. NU Media Works is a dedicated space where Northwestern students will be able to work with many of the most powerful digital media applications available.

Media Works is the first of several investments that will put additional advanced-media capabilities into the hands of students for creative support of class assignments and campus activities.

The initial configuration of the NU Media Works studio places special emphasis on video-editing services for students with the latest Avid DV Express and Apple FinalCut Pro software. New Windows and Macintosh workstations in the studio also support image-editing, illustration, and interactive Web development activities.

NUIT and Library staff will begin offering free “short courses” this coming year to students who want to learn how to make full use of the new studio’s capabilities. Unlike most other campus computer labs, NU Media Works will be dedicated to continuous drop-in use by Northwestern students and will not be pre-empted by training class sessions.

“Our partnership with University Library will bring a variety of new technology services for students to this central campus location,” said Bob Taylor, Director of Academic Technologies for NUIIT. “By making many of NUIIT’s future investments for campus computer labs in the Library, we can co-locate important student computing activities with the expert staff support available and offer great spaces for quiet study or group project work.”
Taylor also mentioned the Library’s convenient location for students who use NU shuttle services, the introduction of wireless networking services in University Library this coming year, and late-night safety considerations that affected NUIT’s decision to locate more student computing activities there.

NUIT’s other campus labs include the Library Computer Labs with over 70 workstations; the Cresap Computer Lab with 35 workstations for social science computing activities; the Tech Computer Lab with over 30 workstations for science and engineering activities; and the Kresge Digital Media Studio for support of NU digital media courses.

In the Tech building, one of NUIT’s computer labs is being upgraded with new PC workstations this summer and turned over to McCormick’s Engineering First program this fall for concentrated use by Engineering First students.

NUIT’s public lab at Kresge Centennial Hall was closed permanently at the end of Spring Quarter 2002. This decision was based on the declining usage of general-purpose computing in NUIT public labs as well as on the cost of replacing the Kresge lab’s aging workstations.

“Most NU students own their own computers, and we haven’t seen anything near the demand for general-purpose computer workstations as in previous years,” said Tom Board, Director of Technology Support Services for NUIT.

Extended computer lab hours will be available for Northwestern students during Reading Week and Finals Week this coming year in University Library.

Please check www.at.northwestern.edu/ctg/labs/default.ssi frequently for the latest information on NUIT campus computer labs.

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