

# COMPUTER LABORATORY

KNUT BOEHMER

---

The past year has seen many updates and changes to existing systems, both on the hardware and software side. Most changes had the goal of creating better, safer work conditions for faculty and staff, improving support response time or allowing the production of more professional products/videos.

## ***Office 365 Migration***

In late summer 2017, all OI members were migrated to Office365 over two waves. This migration came with many changes affecting everyday work, most notably the move from the outdated Exchange 2011 system (known as “XMail”) to Outlook365. Everyone also received access to a much more generous license, allowing the installation of Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.) on home computers, tablets, and phones.

In a second wave, the programs accessible to all were expanded in May 2018, giving access to a few new tools that are designed to improve collaborative group work.

## ***Two-Factor Authentication***

In late spring of 2018, the University activated mandatory enrollment in Two-Factor Authentication for all staff, faculty, and students. The goal of this change is to minimize the chance of getting one’s account compromised, as well as the “inside attack” threat compromised accounts pose to the campus community. Guiding members of the OI through this process of change was a major focus for a few weeks, with everyone getting accustomed to the raised security measures in the end.

## ***Windows 10 Migration***

With Windows 7 reaching its end-of-life in January 2020, I’m actively working on moving as many Windows users to the newer operating system. As of summer 2018, 80% of users have been moved over, with the remaining 20% expected to be moved by the end of the year.

## ***Symantec Management Console***

To increase local computer security, a central management console has been set up in the IT office. Going forward, antivirus and firewall programs will report errors to this central unit rather than the user having to interpret and/or describe any error messages they might encounter.

## ***Oriental Institute IT Inventory***

With a lot of exchanges in the computer infrastructure over the last year, many outdated devices were replaced by refurbished or new ones, causing the inventory growth to slow down a bit. In summer 2018 about 250 devices are listed for support within the building.

## ***Recycling Pickups***

Working with IT Services, another three vans full of old electronics were removed from the OI in the last year, making sure that outdated or broken electronics do not take up unnecessary storage space and/or are resources that are going to waste.

### ***General Support***

Continual Support for everyone in the building remained a top priority task for the Computer Lab. Supporting faculty, staff, and students, 95% of all issues that were brought up were resolved within 48 hours, 75% within 24 hours. Going forward, the goal is to raise these numbers even further.

The Computer Lab also took care of event IT support for the International Hittite Conference and the annual Postdoc Conference at the OI, as well as several Membership lectures and other high-profile events hosted by or at the OI.

### ***Hybrid Classes / Live-Streaming***

Striving for constant improvement in the OI's Adult Education courses, another big step was made in January 2018. Our previous hybrid courses were recorded, and the videos published about twenty-four hours later, but starting with Foy Scalf's "Intensive Sahidic Coptic Grammar" a switch in configuration and equipment allowed to live-stream the courses to YouTube, allowing real-time interactions with off-site course participants. Between January and July 2018, fifty classes were streamed.

### ***Oral History Project***

Due to good feedback on the Oral History Projects of last year, Anne Flannery and Foy Scalf interviewed three more long-term members of the OI: Gil Stein, Janet Johnson, and Carlotta Maher. Each was interviewed for little over an hour and the videos will be published on the Oriental Institute YouTube Channel in the coming months.

### ***University of Chicago IT Leadership Council Contributions***

With an interwoven IT community on campus, cooperation and coordination are key to many tasks that would be too big to stem alone. To this end, the IT Leadership Council was founded in summer 2017 by CIO Cole Campese, who asked me to be part of this group of IT leaders from all areas of UChicago. Working on several questions in monthly meetings, and serving on workgroups for Office365 and Site Licensing, I happily contributed to this community while representing the interests of the OI on a larger stage.

The above points highlight only a few of the tasks that have been worked on since June 2017; for additional details please contact the IT Department directly.

---