

CAMPUS

Nine distance learning delivery methods to be consolidated into one structure beginning with fall semester

By Clif Lusk

For thousands of the TROY students, the information superhighway has become a lifeline to learning through the University's distance learning programs.

Beginning with the Fall 2006 semester, the University's eCampus will serve more students than any other site, region or campus in the TROY family – and be the single consolidated source for distance learning offered by the University worldwide.

"This makes the University a true, year-round, 24-7 university," said Dr. Dave White, the interim eCampus director. "Very few schools have this level of sophistication in their distance learning programs and many schools are not even year-round."

What eCampus has done for TROY, simply put, is to consolidate nine different distance learning delivery methods into one organizational structure.

"Our goal has been to make that transition completely transparent to our current students - they don't even know that a change has occurred," White said. "It's been the natural out-

come of the University's consolidation that went into effect in Fall 2005.

It's the One Great

University (OGU) for distance learning."

Nearly 70,000 people have taken advantage of TROY's more than 40 programs on the two-year, four-year and master's levels and various continuing education courses online. Last year, online enrollments accounted for 34 percent of the University's total enrollments and another 9 percent came via eArmyU, the University's partnership with the Department of Defense.

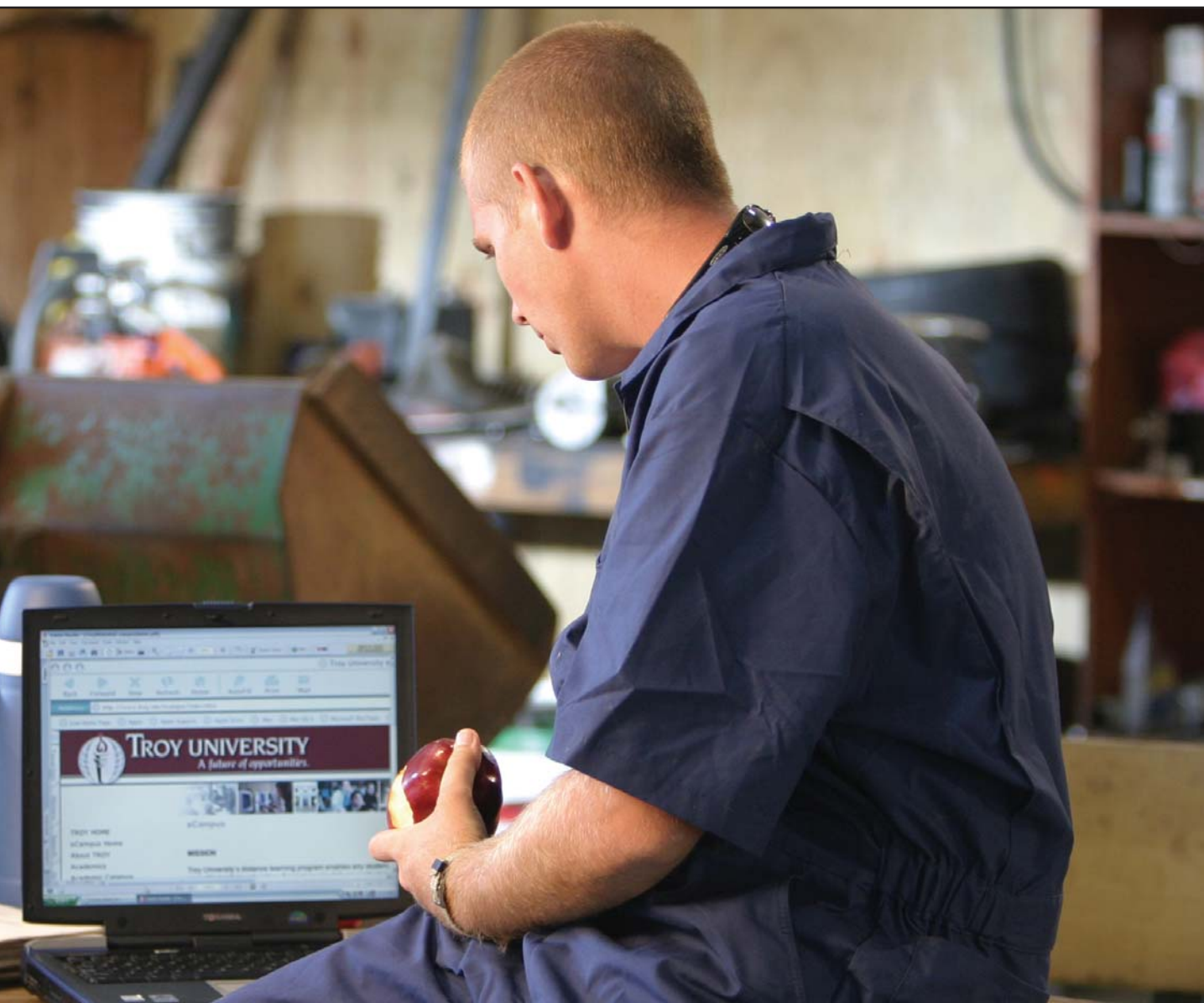
"As the chancellor often says, through the eCampus a student can really start or finish a degree anywhere in the world," said Earl Ingram, vice chancellor of University College, the arm of the University that operates eCampus.

"This consolidation will mean a better, stronger, faster, better-looking distance learning program just like OGU has done for the University overall," he said.

More courses are being developed for online delivery and eCampus may account for up to half of all the University's enrollment in the near future.

A team of instructional designers work with faculty members to take a traditional course and adapt it to the online development. Portable production studios are available for faculty members





to video components of lectures and stream them into the internet course, and a web-based library reserve desk allows students worldwide to access one-of-a-kind documents. Coupled with 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week support systems, students and faculty members can make learning a reality.

Innovations such as Blackboard – the eCampus’ interactive messaging system – interactive video session and chat rooms are putting students in touch with their professors and classmates. Also included in the eCampus are the TROY email system, the toll-free Information Call Center, online chat assistance, informative Web pages, adaptive needs services, online book services including electronic books, a large eLibrary database, a specialized library search

tool called Helot, online student orientation, expanded financial aid services, a writing center and online tutoring services.

An added thrust to eCampus is the SecureExam Remote Proctor, a technology co-developed by TROY distance learning educators and Software Secure, Inc. The aim is to provide an additional level of security for online test takers, further ensuring academic integrity for the eCampus programs.

“It all boils down to adding value to our degrees,” Ingram said. “TROY has long been a pioneer in distance learning and is recognized internationally as a leader in online education. It makes sense for us to continue to take the level of success we’ve enjoyed to the next level for our students.”