PROFILES @UMassMed Is Here!

Multi-disciplinary, multi-institution, collaborative teams are becoming increasingly important in biomedical research. As a result, there have been a number of software programs developed to facilitate scientific collaboration. UMassMed, under the sponsorship of the UMassMed Center for Clinical & Translational Research, has implemented the PROFILES¹ research networking software. This system replaces the faculty web page administration application in place since 2000.

What you need to know:

- PROFILES is currently available as a UMassMed intranet site. The URL for PROFILES is http://profiles.umassmed.edu. We encourage you to browse the site. The site will be open to the internet on November 28, 2011.

- The PROFILES application replaces the original Cold Fusion-based faculty page content editor. (Cold Fusion technology has been retired at UMASS Medical School. The faculty page content editor was one of the few remaining Cold Fusion applications in production.)

- On November 16th, access to the old faculty web page administration application was suspended to enable synchronization of data. The web pages are still available on the internet. If any changes need to be made to faculty pages at this time, please contact the IS Help Desk for support. IS staff will assist you to ensure that changes are properly propagated to the new PROFILES system. Information Services is able to update your content in PROFILES through December 5th and after that will provide training and support for you or your proxy to continue to make updates.

- On November 28th, faculty PROFILE pages will be available on the internet. Existing links for faculty pages are preserved and web browsers will automatically be redirected to the new PROFILES web pages.

- Based on feedback from the project pilot, faculty preferred tutorial documentation rather than face to face training sessions. The tutorials are available from http://inside.umassmed.edu/is/profiles/tutorials.aspx. Additional support, if needed, can be scheduled through the Help Desk (umwhelpdesk@umassmed.edu). Department face to face training sessions are also available by request.

At UMassMed, PROFILES imports and analyzes “white pages” directory information from HR, publications from PubMed, and web page narratives to create and maintain a complete searchable library of web-based “electronic CVs” and professional networking information. The PROFILES software

¹ PROFILES (http://profiles.catalyst.harvard.edu) is an open source web-based application for research networking and scientific collaboration developed by Harvard Catalyst, the Harvard Clinical and Translational Science Center (HCTSA).
automatically identifies networks of related people and concepts ("passive" networking). Users can also create "active networks" with specific colleagues. The software has built-in search, network analysis and data visualization tools that allow users to find potential collaborators, discover relationships among individual researchers at different parts of an organization, and analyze the factors that contribute to successful collaboration. PROFILES uses sophisticated matching algorithms to build a publication history automatically for each researcher in an institution. This "Disambiguation Engine" self-populates the individual researcher overviews in PROFILES, and identifies the specific keywords that characterize each researcher. Faculty (or their proxies) can easily add any missing publications by doing a PubMed search from within PROFILES or manually entering publications that do not exist in PubMed. The Disambiguation Engine learns from these changes to improve the results of the next literature analysis and update.

Phase 1 of this project includes all faculty members of the medical school. For faculty with existing web pages, web page content has been migrated to their PROFILES page. For faculty without current web pages, PROFILES will just display directory information, affiliations, and PubMed publication data. Faculty can easily edit their individual profiles, manage bibliographies and even assign proxies. In Phase 2, Center for Clinical and Translational Research members from the other UMass campuses will be added.

Future work includes federation of the UMassMed PROFILES system with the other Massachusetts CTSAs (Harvard, BU and Tufts). Additionally, UMASSMED PROFILES will join the DIRECT network (http://direct2experts.org). DIRECT (Distributed Interoperable Research Experts Collaboration Tool) was developed by the national CTSA Research Networking Group. DIRECT is a federated search tool that can query different research networking platforms, including Profiles and other products like VIVO, Elsevier’s SciVal (Collexis), Iowa’s Loki, Stanford’s CAP, and Indiana’s CTSA HUB.