

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY Information Technology Division

OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Worth a Look This Month:

- Cybersecurity resources and complete training
- Laker Assist (new virtual tech assistance tool) launches October 30
- macOS 27 Golden Gate now available for GVSU devices
- Workday Student key dates, training reminder & what's changing
- October and November tech training opportunities
- And more!

OCTOBER IS CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH!



Staying safe online starts with everyday actions. Taking a moment to check an unexpected email, verify a request for sensitive information, or report a suspicious message helps protect our GVSU community.

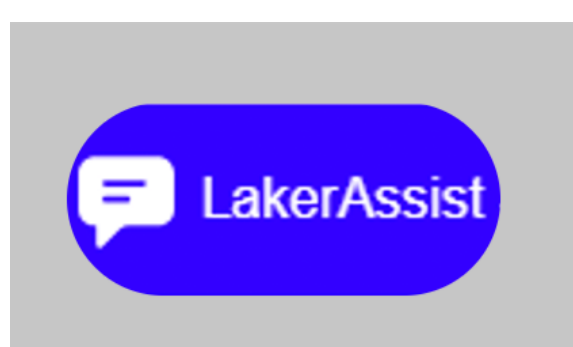
We encourage faculty and staff to pause before clicking links, be cautious with unexpected attachments, and stay alert to requests that create a sense of urgency. October an opportunity to build awareness, learn to recognize common signs of phishing and other cyber threats, and strengthen habits that help protect GVSU information year-round.

You should have already received information on how to complete mandatory cybersecurity awareness training in October. The training offers practical guidance for recognizing common threats and protecting university and personal information. Please watch for details on how to access and complete it.

Thank you for helping keep GVSU's information and community secure.

[Explore Additional Cyber Security Resources](#)

Meet Laker Assist: Your 24/7 Virtual Tech Support Tool New help feature in Service Portal & Zoom App starts October 30



Need IT help? Starting October 30, **Laker Assist** will provide 24/7 virtual IT support, helping you get answers and complete common tasks whenever you need them.

Laker Assist is a new virtual agent available through [the Service Portal](#) and as an app in Zoom.

- Password resets with secure, prompt identity verification
- Finding answers through IT knowledge base articles
- Guidance with common IT tasks and questions

How to use Laker Assist

Starting October 30, look for the **chat icon in the lower corner of the Service Portal**. Enter your question, and Laker Assist will guide you through the available solutions.

Laker Assist complements and expands our existing IT Service Desk support options by providing 24/7 self-service assistance. IT staff will continue to be available during standard business hours as usual.

We'll continue to improve and expand Laker Assist's capabilities and the types of requests it can handle. Give it a try starting October 30 and share your feedback on your interaction through the chatbot. To see Laker Assist in action, [view the Laker Assist overview video](#).

Driving Student Success and Retention Through Data: Outreach Application Pilot Launches



A new predictive analytics tool is helping advisors identify students who may benefit from additional support earlier in the semester. The IT Data and Analytics team is partnering with Student Success and university leadership to use data to support more proactive student outreach.

On September 28, the teams launched the Student Success Outreach Pilot application for more than 90 Academic Advisors and Success Coaches. The application uses predictive and prescriptive analytics to help advising teams identify students who may benefit from outreach and prioritize their efforts.

The application acts as an early-warning tool, using algorithms based on student performance and engagement, including:

- Real-time course grades and peer benchmarks
- Learning management system (Blackboard) engagement
- EAB Navigate Advising Alerts and other indicators

Supporting earlier outreach

Rather than manually searching for individual risk signals, advisors and Success Coaches can use a centralized view to identify and prioritize students who may need additional support. The goal is to help advising teams connect with students earlier in the semester, potentially before midterms or finals, when timely support can make a difference.

"This tool is a game-changer for our advising teams. By turning real-time data into prioritized insights, our advisors and coaches can reach struggling students weeks earlier than before. Huge thanks to IT for partnering with us to drive student success and retention."

— Cathy Buyarski, Sponsor and Student Success Executive Director

Explore macOS 27 Golden Gate: Now available for GVSU devices + Mac experience improvements



macOS 27 Golden Gate is now available for GVSU-managed Macs. This release brings improvements to Siri, Safari, Mail, Apple Intelligence and accessibility.

Ready to upgrade? You can upgrade at a time that works for you. In spring 2027, GVSU-managed Macs that haven't been upgraded will be prompted to do so. For instructions, review the [How IT Updates Your Mac and Applications Knowledge Base article](#).

GVSU IT is also making it easier to set up and use your managed Mac. This includes:

- **Simpler computer setup:** [Set up a new computer](#) or [reset your current Mac](#) when needed.
- **Temporary administrator access:** [Request temporary administrator access](#) when you need it.
- **Easier Wi-Fi access:** Later this year, GVSU-managed Macs will automatically connect to the GVSU network without requiring a Wi-Fi password.
- **Simpler sign-in:** Later this year, accessing GVSU apps and services will require fewer sign-in prompts.

These improvements are part of our ongoing effort to make GVSU-managed Macs easier to use and more secure. Questions? Contact IT Services at it@gvsu.edu.

Join the AI Collective and XR Collective Communities: No AI or XR experience needed!



Curious about artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and how these emerging technologies transform teaching, learning, and work at GVSU? Join colleagues from across the university to pioneer the future at our upcoming AI Collective and XR Collective meet ups, hosted by the IT Innovation + Research team.

AI Collective

The AI Collective provides a welcoming space to connect, collaborate, and experiment with AI. Since launching in April 2026, the group has grown into an exciting community, centered around sharing ideas and growing AI responsibly. Our next meet up will be held on **Friday, October 30, from 1–2:30 p.m.** on the City Campus in the John G Russell Leadership Building. [Register to attend the October 30 AI Collective.](#)

XR Collective

The XR Collective brings together faculty and staff interested in virtual and augmented reality, simulation, and immersive learning. Since 2025, the group has grown into an active community of practice supporting curricular applications in Criminal Justice, Seidman College of Business, Nursing, Legal Studies, Sim Center, and the Language Resource Center. Our next meet up will be held on **Friday, October 30, from 10–11 a.m.** on the City Campus in the X>STUDIO located in the futurE|lab. [Register to attend the October 30 XR Collective.](#)

No prior experience with AI or XR is required - come with curiosity and an interest in creating the future - exploring what's possible at GVSU.

Timely Reminders, Resources, and Updates

Workday Student: Key Dates, Training Reminder & What's Changing

The Workday Student project is moving into a new phase this fall and winter, with several key milestones ahead. **On October 26, new functionality will begin rolling out in the current Workday system.**

You may notice new features, including student profiles, menu and navigation options, student-related tasks, reports and search results. You may also see both a worker profile and a student profile when searching for student employees or employees who are current or former GVSU students.

No action is required for most employees at this time, [other than registering for applicable training](#) by **October 23**. Training begins in early November, depending on your role.

Stay up to date by visiting the [Workday Student Key Dates webpage](#) for important upcoming dates and activities.

Want to know what's changing? The [What's Changing webpage](#) provides details about upcoming changes and is regularly updated. Search by topic or user group to find the information most relevant to you.

The 2026 GV Technology Summit Is Almost Here!

The 2026 GV Technology Summit is coming up on November 3. Registration is now closed but stay tuned for post-event updates and future opportunities to engage with technology-related events and activities at GVSU.

If you're registered to attend the Summit, watch for event details coming to your inbox soon. You can also [visit the event webpage](#) for updates. Questions? Email techsummit@gvsu.edu

Don't Forget: Training Opportunities for October and November

Each month, the IT eLearning team offers webinars covering a wide range of technology-related topics. Most sessions are offered as live webinars via Zoom, providing an opportunity to learn new tools and strategies and ask questions in real time.

Upcoming topics include digital accessibility, Blackboard best practices, Adobe Express, Padlet, podcasting, media assessments, Microsoft 365, and more.

Visit the [eLearning Technologies training website](#) to explore additional upcoming sessions and register

Of Note: Check out the [Using AI with Intention: Policies, Practices, and Prompting course](#), hosted by the AP Committee on November 2. This is open to all GV faculty and staff.

Meet Jesse Rowe System Analyst, IT Enterprise Applications

Jesse Roe is a Systems Analyst on the IT Enterprise Applications team and has been at GVSU for six years. He primarily develops web applications, supports single sign-on (SSO) across the university and develops student and employee data integrations for Workday and other university software.



Jesse enjoys helping people across the university access the data they need and making the software they use a little less frustrating. Solving problems for different departments is especially rewarding because he gets to see the difference his work makes.

A 2016 GVSU graduate with a degree in Computer Science, Jesse enjoys playing and watching soccer, traveling around the U.S. and Europe with family and friends, and tackling car and home restoration projects outside of work.

Need IT Assistance?

Service Portal:
services.gvsu.edu
Phone: (616)-331-2101 or (855) 435-7488
Email: it@gvsu.edu



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