

OCS (now Lync) is a part of the Office Suite which brings instant messaging and presence features to the enterprise.

A lot of you know what instant messaging is already. Presence has to do with those status indicators (for those of you who have seen/used OCS) which can show your availability in real time. Because OCS is tightly integrated into the Office platform, it is taking free/busy information from your Exchange/Outlook calendar and exposing that information through the IM client, Outlook, and even SharePoint

OCS has been available to students for a couple of years now and has been rolling out by request into a few departments, particularly as physical spaces have changes and informal cross team interactions have increased. At this time, all Kellogg faculty and staff are enabled to download the OCS client and begin using it. This is a soft, organic release that we hope will build off of your own ideas and methods for employing the tool to improve workflow and collaboration--we do not have specific scenarios in which you should look to OCS

How do I get it?

This KIS knowledge base page has installation instructions as well as the client download for Windows:

<https://kis.kellogg.northwestern.edu/Pages/OfficeCommunicatorWindows.aspx>

Here is the direct link to the download

<http://webchat.kellogg.northwestern.edu/download/Communicator.msi>

Remember to save the installer to your computer and then run.

There is also an installation page for Macs

<https://kis.kellogg.northwestern.edu/Pages/OfficeCommunicatorMac.aspx> which says that if you have Office for Mac installed, you have Communicator

Finally, here is a general quick reference guide for those who need some additional getting started information

<https://kis.kellogg.northwestern.edu/Pages/OfficeCommunicatorQuickReference.aspx>

You might also note that you can initiate instant messages or collaboration directly from within Outlook or Outlook Web Access by right clicking on a contact within an email (if you see a presence indicator)

What is this for?

Again, there are no specifically defined scenarios in which OCS should be your go-to tool. We are looking to the community to find positive uses and ways in which the additional layer of availability can heighten collaboration across the school. I fully encourage everyone to let myself or the FaStCATS team know about creative or clever uses that they champion within or across teams or departments so that we can use those success stories to build upon the environment

Without too much personal editorial, I will say that instant message should not replace email or phone call as an official communications tool. IM is good for quick pinging and question asking, longer threads that require a history, etc are better left to email generally.

Aren't there additional features beyond IM and presence? (What are you hiding)?

Absolutely, there are additional collaborative features which you are free to explore and share you experiences with.

You'll notice that when you right click a contact within the OCS client, you see options to Call, Video Call, or share your desktop

- The Call functionality is not tied to the standard phone lines (that requires a full "unified communications" strategy and environment which is not on the current roadmap). However, you can call from client to client, through the computer, much like an internal Skype. You do need speakers and a microphone attached to you computer, but many have that
- Video calling is similar with the additional need for a camera, though we recommend that the video calling be used sparingly. Northwestern has an alternative service for desktop video conferencing which we're happy to talk about one-off or en masse.

- Sharing desktop allows you to show your screen to one other person (not a group at this time) in case you need to collaborate on a document or demonstrate a procedure.

Again, you are more than welcome to dive into these features, and the KIS FaStCATS team is happy to provide assistance or answer questions

What is “Lync” (As opposed to OCS)?

The Office Communicator client currently available for download through the KIS knowledge base is version 2007. The equivalent of version 2010 is called Lync.

Lync and OCS have mostly cosmetic differences rather than features and functionality.

All Kellogg community are enabled to use either one, and Lync will supplant OCS as the available to download client in the near future (no need to wait as the upgrade path will be simple)

If you'd prefer to have Lync now, please work with the FaStCATS team to have it installed or obtain a copy to install on your own

Can we instant message outside of the Kellogg community?

There is an add-on which allows an enterprise OCS to be able to link out to 3rd party IM services such as AOL, Yahoo! and MSN. The add-on is fairly cost prohibitive for the limited return, but we're always happy to hear your cases for the ROI in making something like that available

I work in a student facing team/department...won't students start bombarding me with IMs?

Good question—it's technically possible, but we doubt it. If you are in a student facing department, make sure you think this through before having everyone jump into the tool. Staff availability through IM will not be announced or noted to students—whether or not you plan to work with them via IM, and what the

policies around that will be, are truly up to your business unit. We'll certainly help however we can to work through technical logistics with you.