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FY 2009 Information Systems Security Course

As of December 12th, over 47,000 completions have been recorded for the FY 2009 Information Systems Security Awareness (ISSA) course. The Department wide average completion rate stands at 37%, but many agencies reported greater than 50% completion, with GIPSA, OBPA and OC reporting that over 80% of their users have now completed this course successfully.

The Course was selected by a Review Group who worked with Team AgLearn and the OCIO Office of Cyber Security. The Review Group was made up of dedicated volunteers from many agencies who provided feedback on last year's training and evaluated all

available courses that met the federal ISSLOB requirements for FY09. The course selected has been deployed in other federal agencies and covers information for both information security and privacy basics in one course.

The training requirement will be satisfied by completing this course and then completing an assessment with a score of 70%.

Efforts of the Review Group have been worthwhile, as the number of Help Desk calls have been only a fraction of last year's requests. Thanks to the dedicated volunteers of this group!

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AgLearn Honored by Industry and OCFO

On September 17, the AgLearn program was recognized with a **Plateau Customer Excellence Award**, bestowed on organizations who have demonstrated innovation and success in leveraging their Learning Management Systems to meet business challenges. The selection of AgLearn for "Best Overall Use of Product" was made from a competitive field of industry and government participants, including Zion's Bancorporation and the Defense Intelligence Agency.



Also in a ceremony on September 17, AgLearn was recognized by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer for **Outstanding Contribution to Cost savings**. Preliminary calculations place the cost avoidance generated by the use of online training resources in AgLearn at nearly \$8 million for FY 2008, which is considerably more than its cost of operation.

Information Systems Security Course *(continued from page 1)*

While this online course has been assigned to all employees, contractors, and partners, there are specific audiences that may require an alternate delivery. We recommend that the online course be completed only by learners with no special access requirements, with alternate courses and deployment available for specific audiences.

Alternate Versions Available

An alternate version of this online content and exam is available for the following audiences:

- Learners with accessibility needs and those reviewing courseware with assistive technology
- Learners with network bandwidth restrictions who previously requested CDROM access
- Learners with no network access requiring a paper based course

There will also be two live presentations in the Jefferson auditorium on January 26th and March 19th. These presentations will also require the successful completion of an exam. For more details, email Sharon Boderick with the Office of Cyber Security at Sharon.Boderick@ocio.usda.gov

Upon launch of the course, instructions similar to those below will appear. Please review these instructions carefully, as you may be asked to support users requesting assistance with an alternate course.

<https://aglearn.usda.gov/scorm-content/JobAids/CommunicationsRegardingReceivingAndCompletingAlternateCourses.pdf>

Please note: The instructions in the link above are a sample of what your agency may use for its deployment communication. Your agency may define other points of contact for receiving alternate course versions. Be sure to check your specific agency communications regarding alternate course deployment.

ISSA Checklist

The AgLearn Help Desk Staff reports that the majority of problems that users encounter with the ISSA FY09 course are due to non-standard PC configurations. If your users report problems with navigation buttons or modules unable to launch, here are a few tips from the Help Desk.

Internet Settings:

- Use Internet Explorer 6 or 7.
- From the **Tools, Internet Options** menu, click the **Advanced Tab**.
- In the **HTTP 1.1 settings** section, make sure boxes for BOTH "Use HTTP 1.1" and "Use HTTP 1.1 through proxy connections" are checked.
- From the **General Tab**, delete **Temporary Internet Files and Cookies**.
- Click **OK**.
- Click **View, Refresh**. (or Press the F5 key).

Screen Resolution - Adjust to resolution of 1280x1084

Java Version - Update to Java 1.6

Flash - Update to version 8 or 9

Toolbars - some users have many additional tool bars in their browsers (Google, Yahoo, etc.) Try disabling the toolbars to increase screen view.

As always, the AgLearn Help Desk stands ready to serve you, and are available, toll free at **866-633-9394** or by email at agLearnHelp@genphysics.com.

Books24x7 Now Available to All USDA Employees

Books24x7, is one of the most recent additions to AgLearn's learning resources. In addition to the thousands of courses available in AgLearn, there are over 12,000 books available to AgLearn users via Books 24x7. These books are available in digital format and enable you to read, search, bookmark and browse as much or as little as you need.

How to Access Books24x7

AgLearn provides access to three Books24X7 collections; **BusinessPro**, **ITPro** & **Office Essentials** from the **Resources** tab of your AgLearn Home Page. Once you've accessed the site via this link, you'll see a **Books24x7 Referenceware** item in your Learning Plan and can return to the library directly from your AgLearn Learning Plan.

BusinessPro

The **BusinessPro** collection is a key resource for on-demand learning that accelerates the acquisition of business knowledge, sharpens management acumen and inspires professional development by offering access to thousands of publications from the most reputable publishers and authors in the industry.



ITPro

ITPro provides anytime, anywhere access to the broadest and deepest IT information repository possible. It offers the complete, unabridged contents of thousands of books, documents and other reference materials that span the spectrum of information technology topics.



Office Essentials

The **Office Essentials** collection provides training for beginners through advanced users on popular desktop software including Microsoft Office, Adobe, Lotus, and more. Whether you are developing a presentation in PowerPoint 2007 or working on formulas in Excel 2003, you'll find the right book for you.



Questions?

If you have any Books24x7 access issues please contact TeamAgLearn@usda.gov

If you have any questions about the Books24x7 resources, please contact our SkillSoft Learning Strategist Anita.Heller@skillsoft.com

Thoughts from the Field

Team AgLearn routinely collects and archives user feedback, such as this one from a USDA employee:

"I want someone to know how much I appreciate access to Books 24/7. The library is incredible! I am working on a national mentoring framework for the Agency, so I went to Books24x7 to see what was available on Mentoring. I found several great books. I tried several other topics of interest and I am surprised and pleased with quantity and quality of books available. More great stuff:

I don't have to go through the administrative work to buy a book just to find out it is not what I need. I get immediate access -- I don't have to plan ahead.

Instead of selecting one or two books on a topic, now I can have them all!

Please thank who ever is responsible."

Sampling of the Latest in Books

Not only does AgLearn have the latest courses, but also the latest books! Here's a sampling of what is now available through Books24x7!

175 Ways to Get More Done in Less Time! by David Cottrell and Mark C. Layton

Achieve all the goals you set for yourself with the help of this useful guide. The book is loaded with ways to get things done faster and better so you can accomplish more of your long-term goals.

Loud & Clear: 5 Steps to Say What You Mean and Get What You Want by Karen Berg

Whether you need to get a message through to an employer, team, committee, your staff, your neighbor, teacher, student, or spouse, this essential guide will show you how to get their attention and get what you want.

Outlook 2007 Business Contact Manager for Dummies by Karen Fredricks and Lon Orenstein

Want to make the most of Business Contact Manager? This nuts-and-bolts guide gets you up and running in no time. Take advantage of the latest features-- from customizing fields to integrating with Office Accounting--to keep your business running smoothly.

E-Business Innovation and Process Management by In Lee

Providing researchers and practitioners with valuable information on recent advances and developments in emerging e-business models and technologies, this text covers a variety of topics from e-business models and strategies, to privacy policies and more.

50 Activities for Employee Engagement by Peter R. Garber

Featuring a collection of skill-building activities, this manual will help you understand what employee engagement really means, how it can help your organization and how to create and maintain an engaged workforce.

Tips and Tricks

Consider implementing discussion groups or 'knowledge-sharing' sessions to deepen the learning experience for individuals.

These sessions can also help to market your learning program through "word-of-mouth" from learners to their peers across the organization.

A few examples of discussion group implementation methods:

- "Brown-bag" or "Lunch and Learn" sessions
- Web discussion forums through your agency's intranet (if available)
- Facilitated coaching sessions before or after a learning event for follow-through



New and Improved AgLearn SF-182 Form

Recent Improvements have been made to the SF-182 form in AgLearn. The modifications are as follows:

- A header was added to the top right corner of both the online and printed version of the form, that reads "SF-182 Request ID #####"
- The Vendor list now sorts alphabetically instead of by internal ID
- Several default field values were added:
 - Direct and Indirect Cost value fields now have a default value of 0.00.
 - The Training Accreditation Indicator field now has a default value of N
 - The Training Credit field has a default value of 0
 - The Non-Government Contribution field has a default value of= 0.00
 - The default Continuing Service Agreement (CSA) Required Indicator is now N/A.
- Swapped the Organization Address data field and the Home Address data field. This will allow the user the flexibility to modify Organization Address when appropriate.

Ask TeamAgLearn

Dear TeamAgLearn: I'm doing performance evaluations for my staff and went into AgLearn to see if they had completed their IDPs. Apparently things have changed in AgLearn and I can't figure out how to access their individual IDPs. Help!

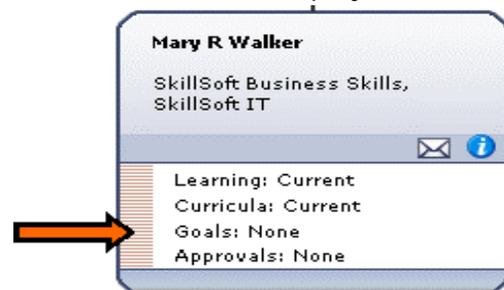
There are two places you can go.

First, if you are a manager simply trying to approve an IDP, you access the approval screen from your Personnel page in AgLearn. Click on the link that states "You have Subordinate Plans that require Review and Approval."

However, if you need to view the draft or approved IDP of an subordinate, follow these steps:

1. Click on the **My Employees** tab on the dark blue navigation bar. This will display the **Dashboard**.
2. Click on the submenu **Subordinates** (or Organizational chart)

3. In the chart displayed, locate the box associated with the employee whose IDP you wish to view. Click the **Goals** hyperlink associated with that employee.



4. If the employee has one or more individual development plans (IDPs), they will be listed. To examine the details of the IDP, click on the **View Plan** button associated with the plan that you wish to review.
5. When complete, click on the **Return to Org Chart** hyperlink.

Ninth House Courses Now Available in AgLearn

AgLearn's newest acquisition is the **Ninth House** courseware library. Founded in 1996, Ninth House is an innovator in using technology to create engaging learning experiences. Ninth House has partnered with the most well-recognized business leaders in the world and has co-developed engaging tools that are web-based and easily utilized by learners.

Ninth House courses are designed for learners to solve realistic work problems using skills such as innovation, teamwork, change management, conflict management, retention, advanced communication, performance management, retention of top talent and customer satisfaction. Click the link below to view a sample clip from the course titled Managing Change:

http://www.ninthhouse.com/video/route.asp?web_video_id=295&os=1&browser=1

Ninth House also has a library of almost 500 mini-modules with practical steps to use just in time. These modules, called Instant Advice, help to reinforce skills from the online learning experience with quick tools to sustain new behaviors. Instant Advice is 3-4 minutes in length. The delivery method is skits, core leadership actions and downloadable advice on critical performance topics such as coaching, performance management, emotional intelligence, addressing difficult people effectively, setting goals, and business acumen among others. Click the link below to view a sample module of Instant Advice on the topic of Identifying Your Points of Power. <http://www.ninthhouse.com/iademo/powerless-ie>

To access the Ninth House course library, login to AgLearn and scroll through the items on the **Resources** Tab on the left side of your AgLearn Home Page. Click the **Ninth House** icon to view the library of courses. Select any of the courses to launch the course or add the course to your Learning Plan.



ninth house[®]

American Council on Education (ACE) CREDIT

SkillsSoft is one of a select number of organizations that have had curricula reviewed by the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT). CREDIT is a program of the ACE Center for Lifelong Learning that pioneered the evaluation of education and training attained outside the traditional classroom. A team of content specialists from college and university faculty reported that 373 SkillsSoft courses are comparable to college level courses and may be used as transfer credit at various colleges and universities. All of these courses will be available through AgLearn. USDA has also recently become an ACE Authorized Instructional Site which allows AgLearn users to receive ACE college credits from successfully completing one of the approved courses on AgLearn without having to go to a proctoring site.



AgLearn Semi-Annual Strategic Workshop

On November 19th and 20th, Team AgLearn hosted their Fall Strategic Workshop for Training Officers, AgLearn Leads and administrators. Topics presented included content integration, competency development, administrator online training, administrator role configuration and IDP best practices and lessons learned.

Presentations, including audio files, can be downloaded from an Adobe Connect Meeting Room located at: <http://usda.na4.acrobat.com/fall08workshop/>.

Agencies Awarded for AgLearn Contribution



Stan Gray, AgLearn Program Manager, presented Tom Montgomery of the Farm Services Agency with two awards: an award

for his contribution to enhancing the AgLearn online SF-182 and an award for FSA's achievement of taking the most discretionary training on AgLearn.

Rural Development's Artina Swilley was also presented with an award for RD's achievement of taking the most mission related training on AgLearn.

Congratulations to both!



Workshop Proposed Objectives

On November 20th workshop participants were asked to identify objectives that they would like to see Team AgLearn pursue in 2009. Of the more than thirty proposed objectives, here are the Top Ten objectives that Team AgLearn will be considering for 2009:

1. Provide full ad-hoc reporting capability
2. Coordinate posting of department-wide training in AgLearn
3. Improve the 30 day timeframe to put learning content into AgLearn
4. Allow reporting of issues to Team AgLearn via telephone versus a ticketing system
5. Include AgLearn administrators and the training community in discussions regarding the revision of USDA Departmental Regulations (DR)
6. Fit the printed SF-182 form on one screen
7. Provide virtual classroom training for key needs via Adobe Connect
8. Create enhancements to ticketing system
9. Include field annotated on-screen Help for the SF-182 form
10. Allow agencies to put new content in Staging for testing purposes prior to submitting to Team AgLearn for production approval

Team AgLearn is now reviewing the objectives submitted and will present a Level of Effort estimate for each of the objectives to AgLearn agency leads.

Upcoming Attractions: SkillSoft KnowledgeCenters

SkillSoft KnowledgeCenters are user-friendly learning portals that combine technology, tools, and content in a way to maximize your ability to quickly access the training you need, in the ways you want. Each KnowledgeCenter includes material specifically chosen to help you build knowledge around a topic as quickly and efficiently as possible. Thirteen KnowledgeCenters will soon be available for all AgLearn users in two primary areas—Business KnowledgeCenters and IT KnowledgeCenters.

Business KnowledgeCenters will include Project Management, Leadership, Management, Professional Foundations, HR Professional, MS Office, MS Office 2007, Call Center, and Six Sigma.

IT KnowledgeCenters include IT Security, MS MCSA/MCSE, MS Office, Office 2007, Oracle, and Visual Basic.

Learning assets available in SkillSoft KnowledgeCenters include:

- Books Content from Books 24x7
- SkillSoft Courseware
- Featured topics updated monthly by subject matter experts
- Practice labs
- Scenario-based vignettes designed to address common business problems
- Role-based content designed to enable problem analysis and solution definition
- Mentoring services where a SkillSoft subject matter expert provides real time responses to user questions (available on select KnowledgeCenters)

Note: SkillSoft Knowledge centers can be accessed via the tabbed interface on your AgLearn homepage.

HAVE A SAFE AND WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON AND A HAPPY 2009!