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CYSE 200T  
October 6, 2025  
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# Tour of ODU Data Center

## BLUF

Bluf: Today as a class we went on a trip to the Old Dominion University (ODU) Data Center where we would learn more about what security is like at ODU and see the server room.

## Data Recovery Site

Our guest presenter, Mr. John Pratt, who is the Executive Director for Research and Cloud Computing here at Old Dominion University (ODU), talked about the Data Recovery Site out in Suffolk. Mr. Pratt talked about the offsite recovery site, which is Old Dominion University Virginia Modeling, Analysis, and Simulation Center (VMASC), which is located in Suffolk in case of an emergency or destruction of the data that is on our main site here at ODU campus. Mr. Pratt talked about how they are slowly transitioning to a new and more effective way to keep data, which is through cloud services. The cloud, according to Mr. Pratt is more effective for many reasons, including: the size of data it can hold and the cost efficiency of using the cloud over having an offsite building.

## Data Labs: Nagios and Solarwinds

Mr. John Pratt, before taking our group to the server room, took us to a room where there were people watching over all the systems here at ODU. We were told about how in this office they use three programs, being: Nagios and Solarwinds. Nagios “monitors network devices,

servers, storage devices, and virtual devices” (Nagios, 2025). Solarwinds is “designed to help organizations eliminate tool sprawl, ensure availability, improve visibility, and reduce remediation time across the entire IT estate” (Solarwinds, 2025). We were told about how these two combined is how they keep track of any failures in the system and fix them before we are able to know there was an issue with the system. Another thing they do in that room is keep track of the cameras in buildings to make sure nothing shady is going on.

## **Server room**

When we finally entered the server room, we were informed about how the servers are separated by their use. We were told about how they have to keep everything cool in the room as the heat is too much for the servers to handle. They have installed many AC systems in the data labs that run constantly to combat the heat in the room. As another safety precaution, they added lifted floors to have the wires to the system underneath so nothing gets accidentally unplugged or tied up. Under the lifted floors, they added another source of cooling, which would be cooling in the floors to help keep the bottom of the servers and the room cool. A way they make sure everything is running is through a light system that indicates whether there has been a problem with the power or not.

## **Conclusion**

I believe that this trip was very informative and those who were there were very helpful. They taught us things we need to know as a cybersecurity major if we’d like to get in their line of work. We were also taught about whether they do more virtualization or containerization. I believe that these types of trips are something we should do as a class more often.

