CSR Computer Policy Statement

This is required reading for everyone with a CSR computer account.

General Guidelines

As an employee of the Center for Space Research, you are entitled to a computer account for the purpose of doing professional research, administrative tasks, or other work-related activities. If necessary, you may also be provided with an email account here at CSR. CSR’s computer staff will do everything possible to help you with computer access; however, it is important to understand that the University has strict policies and guidelines regarding the use of computer resources. These can be reviewed on the web at the following address, and you are expected to be familiar with them:

http://security.utexas.edu/policies/aup.html

It is essential that you understand these facts:

Only YOU are authorized to use the computer account that has been issued to you. You are not to give out your password to anyone else. You are ultimately responsible for all activities which occur under your account. You can be held responsible for destructive or illegal activity done by someone other than you who uses your computer account.

CSR computer staff MUST have root and/or administrator access to all computers on the CSR network. Users cannot be allowed to have root and/or administrator access unless it can be specifically shown that it is necessary for them to carry out administrative functions on their systems necessary for the direct business purposes of CSR. Users who bring their own computers to CSR and wish to connect them to the network must first contact the computer support staff in order to obtain clearance to place their computers on the network, as well as having the CSR computer staff secure their computer systems.

You may not be paid, or otherwise profit, from the use of any University-provided computing resource or from any output produced using it. Further, you may not promote any commercial activity using University resources. For example:

- You may not post advertisements.
- You may not post “chain letters.”
- You may not use your account to run or promote a business.

Never use any University-provided computing resource to do something illegal, threatening, or deliberately destructive – not even as a joke. All complaints will be investigated. The Office of the Dean of Students investigates complaints about students; and the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost investigates complaints about UT faculty and staff. Violations can result in disciplinary action, criminal charges, or both. The police and the FBI routinely investigate such matters. Ignorance is no excuse. Please read the Computer Crimes Law found at:

http://security.utexas.edu/policies/computercrimes.html

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No one is exempt from the law, even if you are “just a student” or you were “just playing around.” If you are a student with a part-time job at the University, you may be disciplined as an employee and as a student, resulting in both professional and educational consequences.

In addition to a computer account, you may also be granted direct access to computer systems here at CSR. It is also important to remember that these resources are the property of the University, and it is expected that you take proper care of them.

Violations of any of the above policies will be reported to the CSR Computer Policy Committee, chaired by Dr. Bob E. Schutz. It will be up to the Committee to determine consequences for policy violations.

**Procurement Policies**

All purchases for computer related equipment and software that are to be used within CSR facilities (here at CSR or connected to the CSR network) must first be reviewed by CSR computer staff before procurement can be finalized. Review does not mean that the computer staff decides whether you can purchase that hardware or software product. It simply is a way for the computer staff to make sure they know what type of equipment or software is being ordered to determine if proper support for such equipment can be provided.

Review of purchases will also help avoid mistakes in procurements so that the ordering of wrong or incorrect equipment and/or software can be avoided prior to actual purchase. CSR computer staff will gladly work with all CSR staff to make sure that purchases of any computer related item will work within the defined boundaries of acceptable practices as determined by the Computer Policy Committee.

It is the duty of the CSR purchasing officer to notify the CSR computer staff of all purchasing requests involving computer equipment and/or software. Requests for purchases will not proceed until the computer staff has reviewed the request. In order to assure timely response of purchasing requests, the CSR computer staff will report back to the CSR purchasing officer within twenty-four hours. If, for some reason, the computer staff feels that there is a problem with the purchase of said equipment/software, the Computer Policy Committee and the requestor of the equipment/software will be notified of the reason for this problem in order to seek a quick resolution. Under such circumstances the Computer Policy Committee may be convened to review the request.

**Supported Operating Systems**

The CSR computer staff strives to maintain the highest quality of support for computer systems and software, the highest levels of security possible for the CSR computer network, as well as providing adequate service to CSR personnel. Accordingly, the CSR computer staff will only support the following operating systems:

- UNIX: Red Hat Enterprise Linux
  - Ubuntu Desktop
PCs: Windows 7 and 8  
Macintosh: 10.x

Request for support of other operating systems will be handled on a case-by-case basis, but in general, users should not expect support except for the operating systems listed above. In addition, any operating system NOT listed above requires special clearance from the computer staff prior to connection to the CSR network.

Keep in mind the previously stated policy that CSR computer staff MUST have root and/or administrator access to any system that is connected to the CSR network. This is a major security measure and is not open for discussion or debate.

**Basic Computer Configurations for Microcomputers**

CSR computer staff will provide the following for each microcomputer (PC and/or Macintosh) system that will be connected to the CSR networks:

- Operating system – Windows 7 or 8 Enterprise; for Macintosh computers, Mac O/S 10.x
- Application software – Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), virus protection software (Microsoft Forefront for PCs and ClamXAV for Macs), secure shell, ftp client, Aladdin expander (unzip software), and, when necessary, Cygwin for X windowing capabilities.

Any additional software that a user might wish to run on his/her system (compilers, visualization software, mathematical software, etc.) must be purchased under separate licenses by the user (an account must be furnished). CSR computer staff will then install the software on those systems for which it was purchased.

**Printer Policies**

Please keep in mind these guidelines when using the CSR printers:

- CSR printers are primarily for CSR and UT business; occasional use for other matters is acceptable, but such use must be kept to a minimum. **DO NOT abuse the resources.**

- **Use transparencies sparingly** as they are expensive.

- **Make test prints first!** Finding out that you forgot to turn off black & white AFTER you print 20 overhead slides is a terrible waste. Use plain paper to make sure your prints are correct before using the transparencies.

- **Be aware of which printer you are sending output to.** If you send output to a different printer, please still pick up your output rather than just reprinting (especially if the material is sensitive).

- **Be aware of what you are sending to the printer.** For example, do not send a postscript file to the line printer (which does not support postscript printing).
• **Be aware of your printer settings.** Take time to be sure you have not selected transparencies when you want a paper copy, for example.

• Use black and white when color isn’t really necessary (especially for drafts). Color printing is very expensive, so don’t waste it when you don’t need it.

• To help save paper, use the duplex feature when appropriate.

• **Abuses may result in disciplinary action by the Computer Policy Committee.**

**Backup Policies**

The computer support staff oversees backups of critical business systems, and some smaller computer systems in order to maintain business continuity in the event of a catastrophic failure. Included in this are the email server, web server, ftp server, NFS home directory server for UNIX systems, critical working directories on other UNIX systems, and the Windows NT file server. Some desktop systems have folders which are backed up in order to preserve user’s email folders. Backups are not intended to preserve files or data for long periods of time, but, as stated above, are only designed to restore data in the event of some catastrophic failure of a computer system, or files being accidentally deleted.

Backup schedules include a monthly full backup of all above stated systems, then daily and weekly incremental backups of the same systems. This assures that a file that might have existed the day before, and somehow accidentally got deleted, could be restored quickly. Backup tapes are stored securely offsite for a period of four (4) months, at which time they are recycled. If users have data and/or files that need to be permanently archived, they need to contact the computer staff and arrange to have that data and/or files moved over to either a CD or DVD type of storage. When a staff member or student leaves CSR, their files are kept online for at least six (6) months, at which time they are then removed to CD or DVD for permanent archive, thus assuring that at some point in time, if necessary, that data and/or files can be restored.

**Access to CSR Network**

The CSR computer network is a valuable resource. It exists to provide our research staff and faculty the highest possible bandwidth for their projects. The most important thing to remember is that this bandwidth exists primarily to support the business operations of CSR. Use of this bandwidth for operations that are outside the scope of the projects supported for these business operations is, in most cases, inappropriate and, in some cases, may constitute a violation of acceptable use policy. Any such misuse of the CSR network may result in disciplinary action by the Computer Policy Committee and the University.

Prior to connecting any computer system, printer, or other device which has an Ethernet adapter to the CSR network, you MUST contact the computer staff and obtain proper authorization. This is to insure that the proper resources necessary to support that device exist on the network, as well as to help maintain a high level of security necessary to insure safe operations of the network.
FTP Server

CSR maintains a ftp server for the purpose of allowing outside users to pick up important data and documents from CSR, as well as allowing outside users to drop off important data and documents. Guidelines for the ftp server are as follows. The incoming directory is for short term delivery of data and documents to CSR staff. CSR users who expect to receive data from an outside source that is placed on the incoming directory have 15 days to get the data off of the server before it is removed. Data and documents that are for outside users to pickup can be placed in the outgoing directory, but they will be purged after 60 days. A daily cron job is run to remove files older than the limits for both of these directories. Data and/or documents that need more permanent placement on the ftp server for outside users to pickup should be placed in the pub directory.

Questions or Comments?

Questions or comments regarding any of the above policies should either be addressed to Dr. Bob Schutz (schutz@csr.utexas.edu) or Steve Williams (williams@csr.utexas.edu)

If, at any time, you need help with any computer resources, you can contact the computer services staff directly, or send an email to remark@csr.utexas.edu.