



entials

the newsletter of
Computer Systems Support
December 2002, v. 3 No. 4

Winter Break Schedules ————— Database Access over Break

Winter Break Downtime

December 26, Thu: No printing from Windows XP Thursday morning. No email 1pm - 6pm.

December 27, Fri: All Unix applications and some Windows classroom applications will be unavailable from 8am - noon.

December 27, Fri. 5pm - December 28, Sat. evening: No access to your home directory (H: drive). The file servers will be down for hardware and software upgrades, and account moves. All computers will be rebooted when the CSS work is completed. Please log out before you leave Friday (or earlier).

Winter Break Lab Schedule

Elder Lab, 1231 SC: Closed **5pm Friday, 20 December - 8am Monday, 13 January**, for hardware upgrades, XP conversion, and cleaning.

Hering Lab, 1220 SC: Closed **December 26-27;** and **8am Monday, 13 January - 8am Tuesday, 21 January**, for cleaning.

1245 SC classroom: Closed **5pm Friday, 20 December - 8am Tuesday, 21 January**, for hardware upgrades, XP conversion, and cleaning. Call CSS, 5-5751, if you want to use this room during winter break.

Because of CSS system maintenance over the winter break, the engineering databases will be unavailable as listed below. Please contact me as soon as possible if any of these times present a problem for you; we will discuss possible alternatives.

December 26 - 27, Thursday & Friday - brief outages of an hour or two.

January 6-8, possibly 9th (Monday - Wednesday, Thursday)

The ID card database will be available during this time. The engineering databases will be unavailable while CSS installs a new data base server workstation and upgrades the database server and applications software. It is possible that some database services will be available on the 8th and 9th, but please don't count on using them those days.

~ Jim Cramer



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The domain "ICAEN" will not exist after Friday, 20 December 2002. (Fortunately for CSS, we already changed our name and we will continue to be functioning and available as usual well beyond that date.) How this might affect you and what to do follows.

Replaced with

When CSS started working with Windows XP and Active Directory (a campus-wide project), we created the engr (or ENGR) domain. All Windows XP computers that CSS has installed are in the engr domain. (All college-administered Windows NT computers were in the ICAEN domain.) If you are **not** using a college-administered Windows XP computer, you may need to change drive mappings and printers. If you use Windows NT, ME, 98, or 2000, and you use CSS services, such as a home directory, or if you login remotely and map your home directory, you will be affected by this change if you have not yet changed drive mappings.

Drive Mapping

When you map a network drive, use this form:

```
\\name.drive.engr.uiowa.edu\name
```

where *name* is your login ID or share name. If you are then prompted to Connect As..., enter:

```
engr\yourname
```

and your password where *yourname* is your login ID, not the share name. You'll need to remap all drives that you map now using winserv0, winserv1, or winserv4. The drive mapping for the Windows applications server, formerly winserv4 is:

```
\\winapps.engr.uiowa.edu
```

If you use the IP address (128.255.xx.xxx) to specify servers, such as winserv1, and services, you must also change those mappings because the old IP addresses will not work after 20 Dec.

Printers

Printers will not be serviced through Printer0, as in the ICAEN domain. Printers in the engr domain are on server56. You can reconnect by using `\\server56\printer` where *printer* is the printer name you want to print to. If your computer is not in the engr domain, call CSS, 5-5055, for help adding printers.

Help

Call or visit the consultants for help with your computer. They are in 1253 SC, at 335-5055.

You can change the drive mappings and printer connection any time, so there is no need to wait until December 20.

Print Accounting Returns

Some students have noticed that since early in the semester CSS has not charged for printing in the Hering and Elder computer labs. Happily for us, the print accounting software will be functioning once again on Thursday, 26 December. On that date all printing will once again be charged against your print quota. Students are given a \$6/semester quota, but can add to that amount when necessary. Read the web page on print quota http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/tools/etudes/printing_print_quota.html for information on printing, adding to your print quota, and more.



What CSS Will Do over Your Vacation

The semester breaks are always the busiest for CSS, and this winter break is no different. In fact, we have an agenda of things to accomplish more ambitious than usual. For people who use our systems you'll notice the temporary down times on 26-27 December (Thursday & Friday) and the longer time from 5:00pm Friday, 27 December, until Saturday evening, 28 December. You will also notice that there will no longer be Windows NT computers in the Elder lab; the Windows computers there will all be running Windows XP when the lab re-opens Monday, 13 January. Some of you will notice that certain applications and some processes are faster.

Here are some details about what CSS will be doing during your vacation. We are:

- installing newer, faster servers for mail, web, databases, applications, backups, and the gatekeeper.
- installing operating system updates to HP-UX (Unix) for several Unix servers.

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Software News

Mathematica at Home

Our Mathematica license now allows faculty and staff to install Mathematica on a home computer. To get a copy of the home use version, contact Tracey Schmidt at ITS: tracey-schmidt@uiowa.edu or 5-6069. Tell her you are employed by the Engineering College. There is no additional charge for the home use version.

Software Upgrades at Break

CSS will install release 6.3 of Abaqus and a new Signal Processing Toolbox for Matlab 13 on Unix. On Windows, we will upgrade Matlab and all toolboxes from release 12.1 to release 13, which will include the new Signal Processing Toolbox.

~ Susan Beckett

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- installing operating system updates for Windows XP users; this work includes Windows XP Service Pack 1, which is a large group of XP system patches that will fix various problems, some of which you have noticed and commented on.
- getting ready to install a storage area network (SAN) sometime in the future; this is the sort of thing that will not affect users except that eventually it will mean an increase in disk quota. But for us the SAN means it will be easier to manage all the data we store.
- enhancing our linux.engineering.uiowa.edu web site. If you don't know about this site and use Linux, read the article on this page. Or connect to the site and see what is available there.
- re-activating the print accounting software in the Hering and Elder computer labs. This means that students will, once again, have a print quota.

If you have questions or comments about these changes and what they mean for you, please let us know. Send email to suggestion@engineering.uiowa.edu or consultant@engineering.uiowa.edu

~ Diana Harris



— linux.engineering.uiowa.edu

No jargon summary: *Linux is an operating system used increasingly by all sorts of people. CSS has made it easy to keep Red Hat Linux patched and updated. This article is really quite lucid. Don't be afraid of the title.*

linux.engineering.uiowa.edu is the site that contains the College of Engineering's customized version(s) of Red Hat Linux, known as CSS Enhanced Red Hat Linux, abbreviated as CSS Linux. It also contains errata announcements, updates, and some network scanning tools that can be used by engineering students and staff. The distribution has grown very popular over the past year and has been downloaded by companies such as Dell, IBM, Cisco, HP, Motorola, etc., as well as many other research universities and organizations and home users.

What is CSS Enhanced Red Hat Linux?

Well, Linux is a free (as in freedom AND as in beer) Unix-like operating system created by Linus Torvalds in the early 90s. Red Hat is a company that sells and supports a set of programs, packages, and configurations based on the Linux operating system. CSS is the College of Engineering's computer support organization that has taken Red Hat's latest offerings and tweaked them into our own custom distribution.

What have we done to differ from Red Hat's distribution?

Red Hat Linux, like any other distribution, requires updates, security patches, and bug fixes to remain stable and safe in a networked or multi-user environment. Currently there are gigabytes of updated packages for the various versions of Red Hat Linux. We have developed a technique to work these patches into the latest distributions so that end users don't have to download all the patches after an installation, which can be time-consuming and sometimes cumbersome, especially if you're new to Linux. Also, just as with any other distribution, the default installation is not always the most sensible or secure. CSS Enhanced Red Hat Linux has added to the default installation some packages that clean up services that don't need to be running, fix some permissions that don't necessarily need to be set the way they are, and enable the user to choose to install these CSS-specific packages themselves during installation.

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It's quite a docile and powerful system that eases installations and usability for everyone from highly experienced system administrators to first-time users.

Why did we bother to create CSS Enhanced Red Hat Linux?

Linux is becoming a very popular alternative in the research and development, server, and desktop realms of computing. It offers a great deal of functionality, reliability, security, and usability while being based on open source licensing, making it free to download, use, and change. It runs on the same hardware Microsoft Windows runs on, only with lower minimum system requirements. For these and many other reasons, Linux is a very powerful and effective tool for engineers around the world. CSS was beginning to see more and more use of Linux, and with this increased use came increased numbers of questions, problems, and security issues. We created CSS Linux to get researchers off to a good start when installing Linux, and to help ease our load when doing large numbers of installations. We decided, in the spirit of open source software, to offer CSS Linux to the rest of the world. It has been a large success. Several organizations at the University of Iowa use

linux.engineering.uiowa.edu for patching and maintaining their systems, and everyone from students in the dorms to researchers in the UIHC are downloading from the site.

It sounds super cool! How do I get it?

Go to linux.engineering.uiowa.edu to see the resources available. You can download ISO images (really large files that you can write to a CD) or individual packages. If you have a quick network connection (such as those in the Seamans Center or dorms), you can install the distribution over the network. If you don't have a quick network connection or don't have a CD writer, stop into the consulting office, 1253 SC, with 3-5 blank CDs (depending on if you want source code or not) and we'll help you get the right stuff.

If I have questions, whom do I ask?

Currently, the CSS consultants answer a few questions regarding Linux on machines we do not manage. They'll help you get the distribution downloaded and point you in the direction of better documentation. If you have other questions, feel free to email me (Christopher Weis <ccweis@engineering.uiowa.edu>). I regularly answer Linux questions in my spare time.

~ Chris Weis

Essentials is a publication of Computer Systems Support (CSS) in the College of Engineering at the University of Iowa. Essentials is published during the year whenever there is sufficient news to report to the user community. You have permission to reprint all or part of this newsletter for nonprofit purposes if you 1) acknowledge this source, and 2) send a copy of your publication with the reprinted material to: Newsletter Editor, Computer Systems Support, 1249 SC, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

This issue:

Editor: Diana Harris. Contributors: Susan Beckett, Jim Cramer, Diana Harris, Chris Weis



Jargon Rating: 0-2 ++. No image means there is no jargon and it should be easy to read and understand. Two plus signs mean lots of jargon. One plus falls between. All 2 plus articles include a no jargon summary at the top.

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Hours

Computer Labs — The Hering (1220 SC) and Elder (1231 SC) labs are open 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, except for maintenance. With an access card, you can enter the building and the labs after the building closes.

Consulting, 1253 SC — M-Th 8am – 9pm; F 8am – 5pm; Sun 5pm – 9pm

CSS Main Office, 1256 SC — M-F 8am – noon, 1-5pm

Web Sites

This newsletter is published first to the CSS web pages at

<http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/news/essentials>

The CSS pages are found at

<http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu>

The College of Engineering pages are at

<http://www.engineering.uiowa.edu>

The University of Iowa pages are at

<http://www.uiowa.edu>

CSS mission: to provide a secure and productive computer environment that supports the ability of the College of Engineering to achieve its educational mission.