

Essentials

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Update to Wireless Network

Summary: Wireless networks don't all work, nor do they work the same way. Engineering upgraded its network to run faster, cover a wider area, and provide encryption. ITS upgraded its wireless network to offer encryption and allow using more types of wireless cards. To use the engineering wireless network, first get your card and computer to work with the campus network, then come to CSS, 1253 SC, and we'll tell you what to add to that profile to work here.



Supplicate: To make a humble, earnest petition; beg. Supplicant: One who supplicates.

In the SC

The College wireless network has just been upgraded in several ways. We have replaced all of the old wireless access points (APs), which supported only the 11 MBit 802.11b standard, with new APs that provide 802.11a/b support.* The "a" standard is the faster 54 Mbit. The new APs have range extender antennas that increase the coverage area as well as

providing the faster throughput. The new wireless infrastructure now covers all general assignment classrooms as well as the student commons, the 2nd floor entry foyer, and the Engineering Library.

The new site identity, or SSID, is **engr-wireless** and it supports Wireless Protected Authentication (WPA) encryption. When you connect to an AP, you provide your engineering account ID and password; in return your computer will be issued an IP address over the network. Then you work as though you have a wired connection to the college network.

The College of Engineering supports the College wireless network in the Seamans Center building that is separate from the ITS wireless network available outside the building. Though the wireless networks are separate, they operate similarly. Read about the ITS service below because you need to get their supplicant software to use the engineering network.

On Campus

ITS has also upgraded its wireless network by purchasing a site license for supplicant software that enables any wireless card to use the WPA encryption standard. This supplicant wedges itself into your computer's network IP stack and, when properly configured, implements the standard 802.1x authentication with the network. You must provide your HawkID and password to establish a connection on the campus wireless network. In the case of wireless this provides an encrypted channel between your computer and the AP.

How to Make It Work

Because both wireless networks use WPA, start by downloading the Aegis supplicant client from ITS. Connect to the campus network using your HawkID and HawkID password. The SSID for the ITS wireless system is **ui-wireless**. Read about the [campus wireless network](#).

Once you can connect to the campus wireless network, come to

the desktop services/consulting office, 1253 SC. We will help create the profile you need to use the engineering wireless network.

Do Not Ignore

Encrypting the wireless communication does not obviate the need for secure communications on the Internet. Users should still use proper precautions like using SFTP for file transfers, SSH for terminal sessions, and SSL for web transactions.
—Doug Eltoft

* The new APs support the g standard as well, but after some testing we decided not to support g standard for performance reasons; it is not reliable. If you want fast, get a card that supports the a standard. If you have a b/g card, set it to use b which works in SC as well as around campus.

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

Software Updates and New Installs

Windows Updates

Since December several utilities and players/viewers were updated and a couple new programs were added to the standard software load. Alternatiff, Flash, Java, iTunes, QuickTime, RealPlayer, and Shockwave were all updated to newer versions. Plug-ins like Alternatiff, Flash, and Shockwave you may notice only when you go to a web site that needs them. Look for iTunes, QuickTime, and RealPlayer in **Start | All Programs | Utilities | Multimedia**. Xvid, a MPEG codec, was added in the Multimedia menu noted above.

WinaXe, a terminal emulation program that allows you to display the HP Unix graphical interface on a Windows computer, was updated to version 6.9. The new version does not default to allow unauthorized sessions. For people working in SC only: with this version you can customize the Winaxe.ini file. Go to **Start | All Programs | Utilities | WinaXe 6.9 | Personal XSettings**.

Matlab is now 7.0.1 and Mathematica version 5.1. Java is 1.5.

CSS continues to update other utility software, such as Nero, WinRAR, and TextPad, as releases come and functionality demands.

Windows - New

Try the new calculator, Calc98. It has its own place on **Start | All Programs**.

New class software includes Delmia 5.13, manufacturing process software; Energy10, energy efficiency design software; Femlab 3.1, a finite element analysis program; HEC- RAS, the river analysis system part of the hydraulic modeling program; and HERS-ST, traffic analysis from the US DOT.

CSS also installed two other new Windows programs: Firefox, a browser, and Thunderbird, an email client that looks and acts like Mozilla Mail. Read the Firefox article on the next page, and the Thunderbird article on page 4.

Unix

Matlab 7.0 and 7.0.1 won't run in the GUI mode so must be run from the command line.

Access Card Reminder: Come to CSS.

In January Seamans Center access card distribution moved to the Computer Systems Support (CSS) main office, 1256 SC. The first card and defective cards cost you nothing; the college pays for the first staff and faculty card; the student computer fee pays for the first student card. Getting a replacement for a lost or damaged card costs \$20 to cover the cost of the card and an administrative fee for clearing the lost card from the electronic system.

Firefox: Browser



Firefox is a browser written by the Mozilla group. Mozilla is a browser that is part of the standard software load on the college computers. Why distribute another browser? Firefox is only a browser, unlike the Mozilla browser which also includes Mail for email and Composer to help you create web pages. Because Firefox is just a browser, it is smaller to download and faster to install. Firefox imports bookmarks/favorites from other browsers (Mozilla, Internet Explorer).

Extras

Even though Firefox is only a browser, it includes features not found in other browsers. Search tools are built into the toolbar. From the built-in search bar, you can easily search Google, Yahoo, AltaVista, Amazon, CDDB (CD Data Base), Creative Commons, Dictionary.com, eBay, IMDB (Internet Movie Data Base), Ask Jeeves, Webster, and Wikipedia. Popup windows are automatically blocked, but you can change the setting in **Tools | Options | Web Features** to allow those annoying ads. You can read why others think this is a great browser in several places on the web include [Mozilla's own page](#) and the [Internet Tourbus site](#).

Extensions

But for me the best thing about the new (version 1.0, which is what CSS installed) is that you (no administrator needed) can add extensions to your browser. Extensions are add-ons that add functionality. My favorite is

ForecastFox, which displays the weather on the browser toolbar or status bar. As I write this article ForecastFox shows me that it is partly cloudy and 27 degrees in Iowa City, the high will be 30 today, and tomorrow the weather will be a wintry mix of precipitation with a high of 35. Other extensions that I like and use are Launchy (opens links with other applications; I use this when a web site demands IE, for example), and the Clusty toolbar (Clusty is a search engine). Go to [the Firefox page](#) to see all the available extensions and a brief description of what each does.

Try It

You'll find Firefox from **Start | All Programs | Web & Web Tools | Mozilla Firefox**. If you want help adding extensions, please talk to a consultant in 1253 SC, 335-5055. With all of the security issues around using Internet Explorer, you should try Firefox and maybe make it your default browser.

CSS will demonstrate Firefox and adding extensions at the College's April 7th Research Open House.

— Diana Harris



Working from Home: Remote Desktop

Microsoft Remote Desktop allows you to connect your local (home) computer to a remote (your SC office) computer. Remote Desktop can be tuned to the specific type of connection you have – cable modem, DSL, dial-up – and is moderately secure.

To use Remote Desktop, you need to know the name of your office computer. (That information is usually on a label on the monitor or the CPU. If you don't know your computer's name, talk to Desktop Services, 335-5753.) When you connect, you enter the computer name of the form d-coexxx.engr.uiowa.edu, where d-coexxx is the name of your office computer. To use Remote Desktop, go to **Start | Run | mstsc** and enter your office computer's name in the Remote Desktop Connection dialogue box. From the Start menu, you'll have an icon for Remote Desktop in the recently used programs area. You can right click to Pin to Start menu or Copy to your desktop for easy access in the future.

For additional information about Remote Desktop settings and working with home directory files from home, see the web page [Using Home Directory Files Remotely](#).

Back issues and the current issue of this newsletter are on-line:
<http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/news/essentials>

Quotas Raised

At the beginning of 2005, CSS increased home directory disk quota and mail quota. The new home directory disk quotas are:
faculty & staff — 1.6GB
engineering student & engineering student organization — 800MB
class account s— 1 GB

The new email quotas are:
faculty/staff — 250mb
students — 60mb

These increased quotas are the result of reorganizing work done during the 12/23/04 downtime.

Turnitin, Plagiarism Detector

The University of Iowa has licensed a plagiarism detection tool, Turnitin, available to all instructors. If you are an instructor, visit the support area for [instructors](#). If you are a [student](#), there is a support area for students.

Direct comments or questions to [Ken Clinkenbeard](#) at ITS-Academic Technologies or call 335-6043.

Thunderbird Email

What

Thunderbird is a graphical mail client that runs on Windows machines. It was written by the Mozilla group, which also created Firefox. Why another email client? Thunderbird looks a lot like Mozilla Mail, but is a stand-alone mail program; if you use Mozilla Mail it will be easy to adjust to Thunderbird. You can install it and run it without being the administrator of your computer. You can customize its look and the toolbar. Thunderbird includes junk mail filters and settings. It has a built-in RSS reader. And, like Firefox, you can add extensions, small add-ons that add specific functions.



Try It

To start Thunderbird from Windows, go **Start | All Programs | Mail & Scheduling | Mozilla Thunderbird**. For help configuring Thunderbird, see the consultants, 1253 SC, 335-5055, or send the consultants email.

CSS will demonstrate using Thunderbird at the College's April 7th Research Open House.

—Sarah Williams

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

Need to demonstrate software in a general assignment classroom? Use demo.engr.uiowa.edu. Talk to CSS, 1253 SC, about how to use it.

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 re-print 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, College of Engineering, Computer Systems Support, 1256 SC, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

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