



IT UPDATE

November 2006

Passphrases Replacing Passwords

Passwords are used every day to protect extremely important information, but are one of the weakest links in the security process. Any experienced hacker can crack a password in a relatively short amount of time. Therefore, University Information Technology Service (UITS) has increased the character length requirements for our IU network authentication. The longer, more secure, passphrase is easier to remember, easier to type and more difficult to crack.

As of October 28, 2006, all new accounts will use passphrases. Also, users wanting to change their passwords will be prompted to create a passphrase. Passphrases are used the same way as passwords and need to follow the rules below (also listed at <https://passphrase.iu.edu/>).

Passphrases MUST :

- Contain at least 15 and no more than 127 characters
- Use at least four different characters (letters, numbers, or symbols)
- Use at least four words. A "word" is defined as 2 or more distinct letters separated by one or more non-letters

Passphrases MUST NOT:

- Contain your name or username
- Contain the at sign (@)
- Contain the number sign (#)
- Contain the double-quote mark (")
- Be a common phrase (such as "to be or not to be" or "april showers bring may flowers")
- Be based on predictable patterns such as the alphabet or the layout of a standard keyboard

Passphrases may contain spaces and other characters except those specifically listed above. Examples of acceptable phrases are *May the stars and stripes 4-ever wave from sea 2 shining sea.* or *Deer begin 2 look 4 food at dusk!* Choose one of your favorite lines from a book, song or movie (as long as it isn't too common) and try substituting a number for some of the letters or words. Make it something you can easily remember and easily type.

Get creative and help secure your information and that of the university. To replace your password with a passphrase, visit: <https://passphrase.iu.edu/> .

Spam Filter In Place

Have you noticed a decrease in spam arriving in your inbox since the new filtering system was implemented on October 17th? Or have you experienced an increase of that pesky e-mail? Users have come in on both sides on this question. In reality the total amount of spam coming into the system has increased. UITS reports that approximately 70% of all e-mail coming into the IU system is spam.

The good news is the new spam filter should be catching most of your spam—you can probably determine whether that is the case by looking in your Junk E-mail folder. The filter system continues to be tweaked to catch new varieties of spam, but it is nearly impossible to catch it all, as new forms are created every day.

CD-R, CD-RW, or USB Drive?

Several options are available for storing data files for transport. But some may be better than others for use on campus.

Faculty requiring students to turn in assignments on a CD should encourage their students to use CD-Rs. This allows the data file to be read on most any other computer. CD-RWs are okay for single computer use, but don't always transport to other PCs well.

USB flash drives, or thumb drives, are convenient and very easy to use. They easily transport to any computer and allow easy writing and deleting of files.

Reminder: Do not store *sensitive* data on any type of media as it can be too easily misplaced or stolen.

Wednesday Nights

Remember to leave your office computers powered ON, but logged OFF when you leave on Wednesday. IT uses this night to remotely install patches and system upgrades from central servers to office computers in order to minimize interruption for you during the day.

IT's recommended best practice is to *Restart* your computer at the end of every day. (Select *Start*, then select *Restart*.) This logs you off and reboots your computer.

We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our campus computers updated and secure.

Information Technologies
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Beverly Church, Editor

New Microsoft Products

Two new products from Microsoft are on the horizon. The new operating system, Windows Vista, and a new office productivity suite, Office 2007, have been in beta test and are scheduled to be released sometime in early 2007.

Windows Vista

Several IT staff members are participating in a university-wide beta testing of Vista. This new operating system will require more memory and video RAM than what exists on most campus computers, but all future computers purchased will be Vista capable. **IT plans to implement Vista in the student computer labs no sooner than Summer or Fall 2008.** However, installation on faculty/staff computers may begin earlier than that depending on the results of the evaluation and testing.

Office 2007

Enhancements in Office 2007 include new menus and toolbars which are expected to help users more easily find the commands they need. Testing and evaluation will begin in the next month to determine how soon moving to this new product on campus is feasible.

Watch for future bulletin board announcements regarding deployment of these new products on campus.

Help Save A Tree!

Printing in the student computer labs has increased significantly in the past few years. You can help reduce costs and save a tree by following, or encouraging your students to implement these suggestions:

- Select duplex printing whenever possible—this is available in all IT labs.
- When printing PowerPoint slides for note taking, print three or more per page.
- Print long documents only if absolutely necessary and print a small number of pages at a time to avoid tying up the laser printer. Though this doesn't directly conserve paper or cartridges, it alleviates the problem of other users abandoning their print jobs due to the long wait only to come back later to print again.
- Check documents carefully for errors before printing.
- Provide handouts through the bookstore when possible.
- Place documents on reserve in library when feasible.

Help use our resources responsibly.

Turn off classroom projectors

Please help us conserve energy, save money and prolong lamp life by turning off projectors when leaving the classroom.

IT Helpdesk

DW1245

Hours:

8:00 am—8:30 pm, Mon-Thurs.

8:00 am—5:00 pm, Friday

www.iusb.edu/~sbit

Phone: 574-520-5555

E-mail: helpdesk@iusb.edu

New IT Employees in User Support



Phil Suphal joined us in April as the Student Lab Assistant Manager, replacing Andrew Puchala. Phil has worked for IT in the past as a student consultant and more recently as a Helpdesk hourly consultant. He has over 15 years of experience in supporting computer users. Phil has also worked for Extended Learning Services as a computer training instructor.

Kyle Paulk joined our team in June as the Technology Consultant for Classroom Technology Support replacing Tiernan Armstrong-Ingram. He previously worked at IU South Bend for Instructional Media Services, and before that for Arts as the Resident Stage Manager. Kyle comes to us with more than 15 years of experience in the field.



George Quinton joined our team in September as the Helpdesk Hardware Consultant replacing Hoy Henry. He has an associates degree in Computer Science from IU South Bend and 8 years of experience in supporting computers.