

Harvey Mudd College Department of Mathematics

Appropriate-Use Policy

The mathematics department makes computing and network resources available to students, staff, and faculty solely for educational purposes and carrying out the legitimate business of the department. Appropriate uses of these resources include instruction, authorized research, independent study and research, and the official work of departmental organizations and agencies.

Users may further use the department's computing resources for other, unrelated tasks (e.g., reading and writing e-mail messages, browsing the web, doing nonmathematical homework) only while pursuing mathematics department projects and only so long as other users working on mathematics-department sponsored projects are not inconvenienced.

Use of the department's computing resources is a privilege extended to users by the mathematics department, and may be suspended at any time, without warning or explanation.

This document explains some of the specific requirements and expectations for use of the department's computer resources. Activities not covered in this document that are later judged to be inappropriate will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Our expectation is that you will behave responsibly and respect other members of the community. Please read the Harvey Mudd College Standards of Conduct (<http://www.hmc.edu/org/ashmc/policies/jb-db.html>) for further guidance on these matters.

1 Eligibility

Use of mathematics department computer resources is extended solely to account holders. You may not allow others to use your account for any purpose without obtaining the prior explicit permission of the department's systems administrator *and* the department's computing committee.

Account requests require the signature of a sponsor who must be a faculty member of the Harvey Mudd College Department of Mathematics; or, in special cases, the department's systems administrator.

2 Commercial Uses

The department's computing resources may not be used for any commercial activity without the explicit approval of the department's systems administrator and the department's computing committee.

The sole exception to this restriction is made for Clinic projects, which are undertaken at the behest of a commercial client, and whose work products may be used for commercial uses by the client on the client's own equipment.

3 Responsibilities of Account Holders

Holding a mathematics department computer account brings with it a number of responsibilities.

3.1 Direct Responsibility for Your Account

You are solely responsible for any activities that are performed with your account. You should choose a password that will protect your account from unauthorized use, change that password on a regular basis, and avoid revealing your password to anyone else. If you discover or suspect that someone else may have made unauthorized use of your account, you should change your password immediately and report the intrusion to the department's systems-administration staff.

3.2 Privacy

You must not seek information about, browse, copy, or modify files or passwords belonging to other people, at Harvey Mudd College or elsewhere, unless specifically authorized to do so by those individuals. If an individual has explicitly and intentionally established a public server or clearly designated a set of files as being for shared public use, you may assume authorization. However, if it is unclear whether some files are intended for public use, you

should assume that those files are private and behave appropriately.

Note that someone sharing files via a web server does not authorize you to make changes to those files even if their permissions would appear to allow you to do so.

3.3 “Cracking”, Physical Damage, and Other Abuses

You may not attempt to decrypt or translate encrypted material without authorization or attempt to obtain system privileges that have not been extended to you. You may not interfere with any supervisory or accounting functions of the systems or perform any action that might result in such interference.

You may not disassemble; modify; install or remove components; remove labels, signs, or other documentation; or move computing equipment without prior authorization from the department’s systems-administration staff.

If you observe such behavior, you must report it to the department’s systems-administration staff.

3.4 Harassment

You must be sensitive to the shared nature of public facilities and not display images, sounds, messages, or other material that could create an atmosphere of harassment for other users. You may not transfer images, sounds, messages, or other material that might be considered harassing to other people in any location. The college’s policies on harassment apply to electronic displays and communication in the same way that they apply to other forms of display and communication.

3.5 Nonsystem Software

Without prior approval by the department’s systems-administration staff, you may not install software on departmental systems that interferes with the normal operation of the machine, provides services not already provided by the department’s

standard software load, or duplicates services already provided by software deployed by the department.

If there is software that you need to do your work or that you feel would enhance yours and others’ experience, please discuss the situation with the department’s systems-administration staff. If the systems administrators agree that the software would be valuable, we will look into obtaining and installing the software for general use.

3.6 Abuse of System Resources

3.6.1 Games

You may not play any games on departmental machines other than those that are installed on the systems by the systems-administration staff.

3.6.2 Chain Letters and Other E-Mail Abuses

You may not send or pass along chain letters or other frivolous or excessively long electronic-mail messages.

3.6.3 Printing

You may not print excessive copies of documents, files, images, or data on department printers.

3.6.4 Storage

Server disk space is a limited, shared resource. You must avoid using excessive amounts of disk space, where “excessive” is defined as usage that is proportionally larger than that of the other users in your user class.

You may not store files in locations other than your home directory unless those files are part of an approved project or you have obtained prior permission to do so from the systems administration staff.

If your disk-space needs are dramatically different from those of your colleagues, you should consult with the systems-administration staff to find a workable alternative that will not result in a degradation of system performance for other users.

Short-term usage, such as performing large downloads for work-related reasons, in which the downloaded files will be moved off the department's systems before the nightly backups run, will be acceptable so long as the usage does not result in problems for others.

3.6.5 Reserving Systems

Lab systems are available on a first-come, first-served basis. No reservations can be made for a particular time or machine.

You may not leave a machine logged in with a screensaver running on it or place a note on a machine to reserve that computer for your use without obtaining prior permission from the department's systems administration staff.

You may leave yourself logged in for short periods of time (long enough to use a restroom). Any machine left logged in for more than about 10 minutes will be assumed to be available for use by another user, and any processes you have left running on that machine may be terminated.

If a class requiring the use of the lab systems is about to start and you have left a machine with its screen locked, your session may be terminated immediately.

3.6.6 Remote Use of Machines

The primary user of a machine is the person sitting at its console. If you are logged in remotely and running a job that disrupts a local user's session, your process may be terminated without notice by a member of the mathematics department's systems-administration staff.

Remote use of machines for computationally intensive jobs is allowed provided that

1. The jobs are part of a research project that has been approved by a faculty supervisor and the department's systems administrator.
2. Systems staff are notified in advance about the existence of the research project, the names of processes that are part of the project, and the machines on which the processes are to run.

3. The jobs are *nice*d so that the console user gets the lion's share of processor time when the machine is in use.

Jobs that fail to meet all of these criteria may be terminated or *nice*d by systems staff without prior notice.

3.6.7 Computer Viruses, Worms, and Other "Malware"

You must not create or knowingly distribute viruses, worms, or other computer code that is designed to replicate itself.

3.6.8 Servers and Peer-to-Peer Software

You may not run peer-to-peer or server software on department systems without prior approval by the systems administrator.

3.7 Respect for the Integrity of Licensed Software

The department's computers may provide programs and data sources that have been obtained under contracts or licenses that may limit your right to copy, disassemble, modify, or reverse engineer them. You are solely responsible for ensuring that you do not violate these license agreements.

3.8 Backups of Data

If you create or maintain electronically stored data that is important to your work or to the department or college, you are responsible for maintaining backups of that data.

The department does make and retain periodic backups in order to guard against the consequences of catastrophic failure of its general-access systems. However, due to limited resources and the nature of backup media, you must judge whether those backups provide a sufficient level of protection for your data, and maintain your own backups if you decide they do not.

3.9 Electronic Mail

Messages, sentiments, and declarations sent as electronic mail or as electronic postings (to newsgroups, websites, etc.) must meet the same standards for distribution or display as if they were tangible documents or instruments.

You are encouraged to publish your own opinions freely, but they must be clearly and accurately identified as coming from you unless you are acting as the authorized agent of some group, in which case they should be clearly and accurately identified as coming from that group.

You must not falsely attribute or forge the origin of electronic mail, messages, or postings.

Creating, altering, or deleting any electronic information contained in or posted to any campus computer resource or to any computer resource on an attached network will be considered to be forgery if an analogous action to a tangible document or instrument would be considered forgery.

4 Consequences

Users are expected to avoid actions that might cause the system to malfunction or that might significantly reduce its effectiveness in providing computing power to other users. Abuse or misuse of the system, in the judgement of the mathematics department's systems staff, will result in one or more of the following, in order of increasing severity:

1. A written warning to the offender
2. A restriction of machine access to specified times for a specified term
3. A revocation of all machine privileges for a specified term (which may include a permanent suspension)
4. A statement of charges to the appropriate disciplinary body at your home college or institution
5. Reporting an offense to local, state, or federal law-enforcement authorities

5 Changes to Departmental Policies

Changes to this policy may be made by the mathematics department's systems staff and will be posted as system notices, on the department's computing resources website, or by electronic mail.

Users are responsible for reading and complying with all such policy statements.

6 Questions and Comments

Questions, comments, and other matters may be addressed to the department's systems-administration staff at system@math.hmc.edu.