Texas A&M University
Department of Mechanical Engineering
IT/IS – User Procedure Guide
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Introduction and Scope

This document addresses a number of issues of concern to employees of the Department regarding the use of computing resources. Specifically, this document serves as a policy manual, defining the rights and responsibilities of the employees on the use of computing and information resources available through the Department.

This document does not replicate or supersede other documents published by the University or Department relating to the use of equipment and resources of the University and/or proper use of the facilities made available to the employees and the students – on or off campus.

The MIS/IT division of the Department of Mechanical Engineering is responsible for maintaining the information stores and computing infrastructure of the Department. This includes e-mail systems, internet web servers, intranet web servers, SQL database systems, departmental computing laboratory systems, employee systems, peripherals, and other electronic information devices such as fax and copy machines.

General Guidelines

1. The MIS/IT division maintains a departmental Intranet presence for information pertaining to the MIS/IT division. Users are encouraged to utilize this resource to the fullest potential by attempting to answer their own questions through the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section.

2. The MIS/IT division does not provide scanning, document processing, presentation, or graphics design services, unless employees have a specific need that cannot be addressed elsewhere.

3. Advance e-mail will serve to notify users of upcoming maintenance procedures on departmental file servers/networking equipment. It is important that the guidelines posted by the MIS/IT staff are followed to ensure the most reliable maintenance/upgrade route possible. Users must log out of servers before leaving for the day. This will help ensure that their system does not interfere with any scheduled maintenance operations.

4. The Department provides no automatic backup of office computer files. Users are responsible for contacting the MIS/IT division to devise an appropriate backup strategy for their computing needs.

5. One user account is generated on each Departmental server for employee use. For your protection, and to protect the Departmental servers against outside attack, it is imperative that employees choose effective secure passwords for all accounts. In addition, employees should never give out their passwords to other individuals. See Secure Password Selection section below for proper procedures to select a secure password.

6. Computers are provided to staff and student workers but not to faculty, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Department Head. Faculty members must
procure computing systems through the MIS/IT division under University or Departmental accounts.

7. Faculty members are responsible for developing an annual auditing procedure for research labs and graduate student offices for pirated software. Faculty should remove pirated software immediately from the system and destroy any illegal copies found on disks, tapes, CD-ROMs or other media.

8. General software (i.e., word processing, spreadsheet, presentation) is provided to employees of the Department. One copy is provided for use on office systems. Additional copies may be purchased through the MIS/IT division with an appropriate University or Department account.

9. Due to specific hardware requirements of some software, faculty should always consult with the Department’s MIS/IT staff before making any software purchases. All software purchased by the Department is the property of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. It may not be installed on any equipment not bearing a University, TEES, Research Foundation, Development Foundation or other Texas A&M University System inventory number.

10. Employees are responsible for any personal software purchases. They should read and understand the license agreement, paying specific attention to "right to use" clauses. The Department is not liable for any misuse of applicable licenses.

11. Toner for Departmental printers and staff printers is provided by the Department. Faculty members will charge all toner/ink cartridges for faculty offices, academic labs and research labs to appropriate University or Department accounts. All requests for printer supplies should be directed to the MIS/IT division for purchase and installation.

12. Employees will give requests to install and/or upgrade hardware and/or software at least one (1) week in advance to the MIS/IT division. This time is necessary to properly allocate resources by the MIS/IT division.

13. Computers, peripherals, data acquisition equipment, and software inventoried under the University system shall not be relocated without proper prior notification of the MIS/IT division and the accountable property officer.

14. The Department enforces the bidding process for all purchases governed by University guidelines. Guidelines for maximum amounts (including shipping) are: Local Account: $5000, State Account: $5000, Research Foundation Account: $5000 and Development Foundation Account: $10000. Bidding process time varies; however, one should allow four (4) to six (6) weeks from the date of paper work submission to delivery.

15. The Department guarantees support and compatibility with Department resources for items purchased through the MIS/IT division. Items needing service, and not purchased through the MIS/IT division, are subject to a case-by-case evaluation depending on the service request, while compatibility cannot be guaranteed. In order to purchase equipment or software, an account-project number shall be provided by the principal investigator at the time of order placement.

16. The Department provides network connections to visiting faculty and Post Doctoral Fellows through the CIS network. Email services will be provided by the NEO system,
if employed by the University, or through a third party service such as Yahoo, MSN, or Hotmail if not employed by the University. It is the responsibility of the faculty sponsor to provide for their computing needs. This includes, but shall not be limited to, hardware, software and peripherals. Consultation should be made with the MIS/IT staff at least two (2) weeks prior to the visitor(s) arrival.

17. Visiting faculty and/or Post-Doctorial Fellows will charge extensive computational use of the servers to an appropriate account provided by their faculty sponsor.

18. It is recommended that all users, unless highly familiar with data acquisition systems, contact the MIS/IT division or Departmental Electronics Technician for pre-purchase consulting.

19. Support services for data acquisition systems is limited to general support on installation of hardware and software. In addition, programming support is given, but it is not the responsibility of the Department's MIS/IT to design or complete the design of a fully functional data acquisition system.

E-mail / Internet / Networking

1. Use of the Departmental Web is limited to official Department promotion/representation, academic work, student organizations, research groups, research laboratories and consortiums.

2. The Department provides e-mail services for faculty and staff for official University and Departmental business. E-mail services are not for personal use or list serve access other than that pertaining to official academic or research work. Do not propagate chain mail and "spam" mail throughout the Department or University.

3. The Department makes every effort to validate and protect the integrity of user files and e-mail stored on Departmental servers; however, the Department is not responsible for situations that disrupt the integrity of a file or e-mail. Individuals should maintain a hard copy or other backup media for irreplaceable data.

4. The Department provides database services to the following offices: accounting, administration and advising. This data may be published, with prior administrative approval, to any or all members of the Department for general office use and should be considered confidential unless otherwise noted.

5. Network fax services are provided for official University and Departmental business. Personal faxes are not permitted and should be taken off campus for transmittal. Fax charges, based on the telephone charge associated with each fax, are billed at monthly intervals from the accounting department.

6. Private networks, defined as peer-to-peer, shall not be established in the framework of the Department's computing resources. Research groups outside the direct departmental network are exempt from to this rule on a case-by-case basis based on application and need to use.

Network Connections within the EPB Complex

1. All connections within the EPB Complex are single point connections only. It is a violation to install any switch, hub, repeater, router, etc. to any connection. Violation of
this provision will result in a network disconnect for that port. Pricing is based
current CIS gigabit Ethernet connection pricing.
2. The Department provides each faculty/staff member two 1000Base-T connections
per office without charge. Additional connections may be requested by contacting
the MIS/IT division. Additional connections, require fourteen (14) days to complete
from the date of request.
3. Connections, other than to faculty/staff offices in the EPB complex, will be billed to a
University or Departmental account at the time of request at the CIS rate.
Connections will be completed within fourteen (14) days of the request.
4. Moves, reconnects, etc. are billed to a University or Departmental account at the
time of request at a CIS established rate.

Network Connections outside the EPB Complex
1. All connections outside the EPB Complex are single point connections only. It is a
violation to install any switch, hub, repeater, router, etc. to any connection.
Violation of this provision will result in a network disconnect for that port. It will be
the responsibility of the offending parties to contact CIS and request a network
reconnect and payment of any applicable penalty charges.
2. The University Computing and Information Services (CIS) will handle any network
requests outside the EPB complex. Charges will be assessed to an appropriate
University or Departmental account at the time of request based on CIS installation
rates. Connections will be completed within four (4) weeks from the date of request.

Restrictions
In order to protect the department’s resources against attacks from viruses, worms,
hackers and the like; it is important to restrict access to computer resources via the
following mechanisms.

1. Peer-to-peer file sharing software (i.e., KazaA, Morpheus, Bear Share, etc.) is not
permitted on any University owned computer system or any computer system
attached to the network inside the Engineering/Physics Building.
2. Peer-to-peer file sharing through the use of Microsoft’s NetBEUI protocol or any
other peer-to-peer file sharing protocol is not permitted on faculty/staff computers
in the department.
3. Port 80, HTTP Protocol, is unavailable to all systems in the Engineering/Physics
Building except for the department’s web server(s) and mail server.
4. Security notices shall be posted, as needed, by IT management. Some security
notices will include steps users must take in order to correct software flaws. The
steps indicated in the security notices must be implemented within the timeframe
given in the notice. Failure to comply with the security notices will result in
deactivation of the network port assigned to the system(s) which are not properly
patched. A reconnection fee of $80 will be accessed to a University account once the security steps have been implemented.

5. Personal computers, systems not owned by the University, will not be eligible to connect to the University network.

**Licensed Software**

The following section supplements System Regulation 21.99.10 and TEES Regulation 21.99.10.E1. Each employee must sign and return, within one week of hire, the Software Licensing Code of Ethics form found on the Department’s Intranet Site. If the employee is unwilling/unable to sign this document, the employee must submit a formal letter of explanation as to why they are unwilling/unable to sign the document.

**General**

All computer software under the control of and used by the Department of Mechanical Engineering (MEEN) must be appropriately licensed. There are varying degrees of copyright protections afforded different classes of computer software. All MEEN employees are expected to be familiar with the licenses on the software they use. The licensing agreements for software packages purchased and installed on faculty and staff office systems, network servers, and academic laboratory systems shall be maintained by and is the responsibility of the MEEN network administrator. Software purchased by and installed on research laboratory systems and graduate student computers shall be maintained by and is the responsibility of the principal investigator.

**Control and Responsibilities**

1. No computer software may be copied, altered, transmitted, or stored, except as permitted by law or by the contract, license agreement, or express written consent of the owner of the software license. The use of software on a local network or on multiple computers must be in accordance with the license agreement.

2. When an employee or researcher leaves employment with MEEN, the department head shall instruct the departing employee or researcher to return all software under the control of or used by MEEN, and all copies thereof, and to deliver to the department head a certification that the software has been returned and that all copies located outside the control of MEEN have been deleted or destroyed and its use discontinued.

3. There are significant penalties both criminal and civil for noncompliance with copyright laws for computer software. These penalties can be applied to the department and/or the employee.

4. The Department Head delegates responsibility to the MEEN network administrator to insure that all computing software on faculty and staff office systems, network servers, and academic laboratory systems is appropriately licensed and complies with System Regulation 21.99.10. The MEEN network administrator shall conduct regular checks of computing resources, including microcomputers at least annually or when general maintenance is conducted on each piece of equipment. Any
violations of this Rule or System Regulation 21.99.10 shall be reported to the
Department Head who is authorized to take, and shall take, reasonable action to
implement and enforce correction of any violation discovered.

5. The Department Head delegates responsibility to individual faculty members to
insure that all computing software on research laboratory computers and graduate
student computers is appropriately licensed and complies with System Regulation
21.99.10. The faculty member shall conduct regular checks of computing resources,
including microcomputers at least annually. Any violations of this Rule or System
Regulation 21.99.10 shall be reported to the Department Head who is authorized to
take, and shall take, reasonable action to implement and enforce correction of any
violation discovered.

TAC 202.71 Regulations

Pursuant to TAC 202.71 the Department of Mechanical Engineering makes the following
assignments:

TAC 202.71(c)(1)(A):
The Department of Mechanical Engineering formally assigns custody and access controls
to the offices within the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The offices are then
responsible for implementing control procedures for access approval. The offices are
business office, advising office, and individual researcher offices/labs.

TAC 202.71(c)(1)(B):
The Department of Mechanical Engineering uses the purchase price of the equipment as
the resource’s asset value.

TAC 202.71(c)(1)(C):
The Department of Mechanical Engineering, through resources provided by TEES and
TAMU (i.e., TrainTraq, etc.) and through employee education within the department
conveys data control requirements to users and custodians.

TAC 202.71(c)(1)(D):
The Department of Mechanical Engineering designates the information custodian
responsible for applying appropriate controls to protect the information resource from
alteration as outlined in TAC 201.71(c)(1)(D).
**TAC 202.71(c)(1)(E):**
The Department of Mechanical Engineering designates the information custodian responsible for ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of the data as outlined in TAC 201.71(c)(1)(E).

**TAC 202.71(c)(1)(F):**
The Department of Mechanical Engineering permits the information custodian to implement the necessary security and controls. The information custodian is given guidance as to best practices to follow the regulations of this TAC.

**TAC 202.71(c)(1)(G):**
The Department of Mechanical Engineering relies on the information custodian designated to document security risk management decisions.

**TAC 202.71(c)(1)(H):**
The Department of Mechanical Engineering, where applicable, allows exceptions – with Department Head approval – for any exception controls to security procedures.

**TAC 202.71(c)(2)(A-B,D):**
The Department of Mechanical Engineering does not outsource information to third party entities. Each information custodian is required to document physical safeguards for the data. Cost effectiveness of these measures is based on the type of data and its sensitivity as classified by the information custodian.

**Departmental Computing Laboratories**
The Department maintains two laboratories for student use: the UGSCL (Undergraduate Student Computer Lab) and the GSCL (Graduate Student Computer Lab). Access to these labs is limited to students actively pursuing a degree in the Department. Research activities not directly tied to a degree are not permitted in these laboratories.

**UGSCL**
1. Hours of Operation: Twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. Closed during official University Holidays.
2. Students login with their University NetID credentials.
3. Each eligible student is allocated a non-creditable printing quota of $65 per semester. Students are charged at the following rate: $0.08/monochrome print, $0.80/color print, $1.00/plot.
4. Common software such as word-processing, spreadsheet, CAD, mathematical and graphics packages are provided by the Department for legitimate academic use.

5. Faculty may request additional software be installed in the UGSCL for courses offered by the Department. Faculty must consult the MIS/IT staff regarding the operation of such software before deciding to use the software in courses. Any software or hardware installed in the UGSCL must be purchased through the MIS/IT division. Software not purchased through the MIS/IT division is not accepted for installation in the UGSCL. Since some software requires the use of high performance processors, large amounts of memory or hardware keys for proper operation, installation of such software can potentially cause compatibility issues with existing equipment. Requests must be submitted to the MIS/IT division at least one (1) month in advance of the expected use of this software and must include a University or Departmental account to charge for the cost of the software and/or licensing fees. This time is necessary to adequately test the application to be certain it performs as expected. While every effort is made to make available such software, not all software will work within the framework of the laboratory. Thus, alternative locations may be needed to run such applications.

6. Faculty must submit requests for extended laboratory hours in writing to the MIS/IT division no later than three (3) working days prior to the date the extended hours are needed. The request must include the course number, section number, and the reason why normal operating hours are insufficient to complete the assigned task. The request must come from the faculty member instructing the course. While all requests are considered, not all requests are fulfilled due to restrictions in laboratory assistant availability to work the requested extended hours. Extended hour requests are not applicable during official University holidays.

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**GSCL**

1. **Hours of Operation:** Twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. Closed during official University Holidays.

2. Students login with their University NetID credentials.

3. Each eligible student is allocated a non-creditable printing quota of $65 per semester. Students are charged at the following rates: $0.08/monochrome print, $0.80/color print, $1.00/plot.

4. The GSCL is for academic use only. Research activities not leading directly to an advanced degree are not permitted.

5. Common software such as word-processing, spreadsheet, CAD, mathematical and graphics packages are provided by the Department for legitimate academic use.

6. Faculty may request additional software be installed in the GSCL for courses offered by the Department. Faculty must consult the MIS/IT staff regarding the operation of such software before deciding to use the software in courses. Any software or hardware to be installed in the GSCL must be purchased through the MIS/IT division. Software not purchased through the MIS/IT division is not accepted for installation in the GSCL. Since some software requires the use of high performance processors,
large amounts of memory or hardware keys for proper operation, installation of such software can potentially cause compatibility issues with existing equipment. Requests must be submitted to the MIS/IT division at least one (1) month in advance of the expected use of this software and must include a University or Departmental account to charge for the cost of the software and/or licensing fees. This time is necessary to adequately test the application to be certain it performs as expected. While every effort is made to make available such software, not all software will work within the framework of the laboratory. Thus, alternative locations may be needed to run such applications.

**Photocopy Billing (PaperCut System)**

PaperCut is a cost recovery system for copying and faxing within the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

**Accounts**

1. The accounting office provides accounts with adequate funding to each employee of the Department. The accounting office generates, maintains, bills and removes these accounts. This account grants each individual the means to make copies and send faxes in the Department for official University business only.
2. Unique accounts are given to each employee of the Department. For your protection, this account should remain confidential to prevent unauthorized use.

**Billing**

1. Copy charges are billed out quarterly. The cost for copy services is $0.08 per monochrome copy / $0.16 per color copy. Copy charge slips must be returned to the accounting office within five (5) working days of receipt.
2. Users must first present disputes regarding account charges, number of copies, faxes, etc. to the accounting office. If not resolved after a reasonable amount of time, users must refer them to the Department Head for final adjudication.

**Training and Support**

1. The MIS/IT coordinates all Departmental training sessions for generalized applications such as word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and database. These sessions are intended to assist employees in achieving a higher productivity level.
2. Course instructors are responsible for properly integrating the software into the instruction of their courses. The Department does not provide training to students for specific course application packages.

**Inventory Control**

1. Packing slips for all purchases should be submitted to the accounting office immediately after receiving shipment. These need to include account and project number, principal investigator and equipment location.
2. Employees must submit hardware/software checkout requests in writing to the accountable property officer along with a duplicate copy to the MIS/IT division no later than five (5) business days before the requested checkout date. This request must include name, address, telephone, inventory number and/or serial number of equipment and reason for checkout.

3. Notification must be given to the MIS/IT division and accountable property officer before movement of any inventoried equipment. e-mail is the most effective method for this, and should include the inventory number, source and destination locations.

4. The accountable property officer is responsible for disposal of equipment. Disposal requests should include name, inventory number and/or serial number and location. A duplicate copy must be submitted to the MIS/IT division.

IOS Device Location Finder / Mobile General

All mobile devices with location services must have the service enabled and registered to a valid email account (preferably a @tamu.edu address).

Secure Password Selection

In order to protect your security, the Department of Mechanical Engineering has certain rules for choosing passwords. Please read the following rules so that you will know how to choose a good password:

The following rules apply to all passwords:

• The password must be at least eight characters long, and can contain letters, numerals, and punctuation.
• It cannot contain spaces.
• It must contain at least one alpha character [a-z; A-Z].
• It must contain at least one numeric character [0-9].
• It must contain at least one special character from the following list: ` ! @ $ % ^ & * ( ) _ = + ] ; : ' " , . > / ?
• It cannot begin with an exclamation point (!) or a question mark (?).
• It cannot contain your login ID.
• The first three characters cannot be the same.
• The sequence of the first three characters cannot be in your login ID.
• The first eight characters cannot be the same as your previous password.
• Passwords are treated as case sensitive.

Examples of invalid passwords:

• Your account name
• Names of coworkers, pets, family, etc.
• Phone numbers, license numbers, or birthdays
• Simple passwords like "asdf" (adjacent keys on a keyboard)
• Dictionary words
• Examples of strong passwords:

(The following is for example purposes only. Do not use any of these examples as your actual password.)

• Use a name, modified slightly, like "Bob*1Smith" or "Bobby$123"
• Use a phrase you can remember, like "hello world" modified to "hello1@World2"
• "ttL*hi?wur5" (contains lowercase letters, capital case letters, special characters, and numbers)

Thank you for supporting your security by following these password guidelines. If you have any questions about these password guidelines, please contact the Departmental System Administrator.