

Protecting Your Files by Saving on the Server

The College's fileserver, ACS, provides secure storage space for your files. Computing Services strongly encourages all faculty and staff to store their files on the server for the following reasons:

Security

- Many faculty and staff in the College work in areas where computer resources are shared or other people have access to their equipment. Unlike files stored on your hard drive, files stored on the server will be accessible from your computer only when you are logged into the server. As long as you disconnect from the server by either logging out, shutting down, or restarting your computer when you leave, when you are away from the office your files will not be accessible to others.
- Should your computer become inaccessible, either due to hardware failure or theft, your files will be stored on the server and you will be able to access them from other computers.
- Files stored on the server are backed up nightly and can be restored if needed.

Virus Protection

- Saving files on the server will help you to avoid the destruction of valuable work should your computer become infected by a virus.
- It will take ACS staff less time to remove the virus and restore your computer to working order if your files are stored on the server.
- Virus protection software on the server is updated weekly.

Protection from Hardware Failure

- Computer components can fail without warning. Hardware failure can be caused by such common occurrences as power surges and flood damage, as well as many other environmental situations that are usually out of your control. Files stored on the server will be protected from damage that results from hardware failure of the local machine.
- Nightly backups of data stored on the server protect it from damage due to server hardware failure.
- Computing Services cannot guarantee that data stored only on local drives will be recovered if they are damaged due to hardware failure.

Remote Access

- Files stored on the new College server are accessible from remote sites (home and abroad) by a variety of methods including FTP. This means you can use your web browser to download files from the server to your computer at home. Information about connecting to ACS from a remote site is available at www.arhu.umd.edu/technology/acs/documentation/acconnect.html

Reliability of Server Resources

It is extremely rare that the server is down due to any kind of software or hardware failure. As with all computers, however, occasional outages should be expected. When this happens you will not have access to files stored on the server and you will not be able to print using the networked printer in your department. An unplanned power outage such as one that results from an electrical storm, for example, will cause the server to be down until such time power is restored to Francis Scott Key Hall (where the servers reside).

Unplanned Outages

The following protections have been established to reduce the risk of major unplanned outages:

- The server is designed with redundancy of every major component, which substantially reduces the risk of long-term outages due to hardware failure.
- The maintenance contract for the server hardware provides for 24x7 coverage with a maximum four-hour response time.
- The server operating system is actively maintained and supported by a 24x7 support contract with the LAN Services unit in OIT, which substantially reduces the risk of failure due to software problems.

Planned Outages

Planned outages take place for a variety of reasons, but most frequently to apply a minor upgrade or patch to the server operating system for maintenance reasons. Planned outages are scheduled for times when the disruption to the College will be minimal (e.g., nights, weekends, holidays, or semester breaks). Major upgrades of the operating system or the hardware are always scheduled for times, such as semester breaks, when classes are not in session. All planned outages are announced in advance via the arhu-all listserv list. The following are the most common reasons for planned server outages.

- Periodic maintenance of the operating system is needed and sometimes requires the server to be re-booted, disrupting access for a short period of time (normally less than fifteen minutes). Server re-boots are typically scheduled either for very early in the morning or very late at night.
- Major server operating system or hardware upgrades can require outages that are four to eight hours in length. Such outages are scheduled well in advance and always during a semester break or holiday.
- The server will be unavailable during planned power outages in Francis Scott Key scheduled by the Campus to allow facilities work to be completed. Such work is required rarely and is scheduled at times that will cause the least possible disruption to the College.

Occasional Inaccessibility

There are sometimes problems with the Campus network that may interrupt your access the server, although the server itself is not malfunctioning. Network outages in either your building or Francis Scott Key will interrupt access. Although there will undoubtedly be times when you will not have access to files you have stored on the server, the majority of the time you should not experience any problems. The value of storing your work in a secure and protected environment should far outweigh the frustration that may be caused by occasional inaccessibility.

Locations for Saving Your Files

All desktop computers in the College have been configured to connect to ACS. The following information is provided to help you determine where to save your files based on the type of computer you are using. If you would like an ACS staff member to come to your office to show you how to save your files on the server, please call 5-2104 to request assistance.

If you are using a machine that is running a Microsoft Windows operating system, the following drive mappings are set each time you log into the server:

- F:** = Your home directory – your dropbox and personal files are stored in this directory.
- G:** = Share – shared files are stored in this directory. Departments can use this space to setup shared folders for small work groups or to provide documents that are accessible to all members of the department.
- H:** = Home – This is where you will find home directories for all units in the College so you can place items in other people's dropboxes. User home directories are organized by department. Dropboxes are located within user's home directories.

If you are using a computer that is running a Macintosh operating system Computing services staff created a shortcut to your files server spaces for you at the time your computer was initially configured to connect to ACS. If you cannot find these shortcuts you can recreate them.

If you do not have an alias or shortcut on your desktop to connect to the server you can:

- Go to the Apple menu and select Chooser
- From the Chooser select appleshare.
- You will be provided with a box for entering an IP address. Enter 129.2.44.214 (or acs.umd.edu)
- You will then be prompted to enter your username and password.
- From the following window choose the volume USERS
- When the USERS volume is mounted on the desktop double click on it then select home, then your unit (four letter abbreviations), and finally your username. You can create a shortcut to your home directory on your desktop to avoid the need to follow each of these steps to connect in the future.

If you have problems connecting or need help to create a shortcut, call extension 5-2104 for assistance.

Things to Remember

- The College fileserver, ACS, does not provide email or web services. If you are having problems connecting to your email or to a web site it does not mean ACS is down. If you maintain a web site on the College web server, it is hosted on the server Calliope, not ACS.
- For security reasons and to ensure that backups are effectively completed, at 3:00 a.m. all users connected to ACS are automatically disconnected from the server. This means that you must log into the server each day. You cannot expect to remain connected even if you do not turn your machine off or log off of the server before you leave the office. If you do not log in each day, you will not have access to the files you store on the server and you will not be able to print to your department's networked printer. If you want to leave your machine running over night it is best to restart it to clear your connection to the server before you leave the office.
- All user accounts are set with a default server disk space quota of 100 Mb. If you find that the amount of space allotted to you is not sufficient, call 52104 to request modification of your disk space quota. In most cases requests for additional storage space will be granted.