
MATH FACULTY COMPUTING FACILITY (MFCF)

MFCF's newsletter with updates on the Math Faculty computing environment.

Fall 2021...Remote file storage advice; mixed-mode teaching support; software updates for Mac, Windows, and Linux; MATLAB licences; and more

MFCF staff changes

Just as we finished the Fall 2020 newsletter we learned that Martin Lysy would become the new MFCF Director and Associate Dean, Computing starting in January this year. Our thanks to Steve Vavasis for his leadership in the role until then, and to Martin for jumping into the deep end with the pandemic still underway.

In April we welcomed new staff member Dale Kentner to our virtual hallway. Many of you will recognize Dale from his previous job as a repair technician with Campus Tech Shop. Dale is filling the position left open by the retirement of Chris Roth. We're happy to have him aboard.

We said goodbye in July to Wendy Zehr who stepped in for a while and really helped us a lot with the administrative and financial side of things.

New servers

Since the last issue, we have deployed several new servers.

- **files.math / files.student.math:** We switched over smoothly to a new NetApp central file server in February. Many of you have commented on the significant speed-up.
 - **GPU server:** A machine with four NVIDIA A100 GPUs and two 32-core AMD EPYC CPUs has been added to the pool. See details at <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/services/service-catalogue-research-linux/overview-specialty-machines>
 - **Windows servers:** One new server has been added to the research pool (windows.math) and the teaching pool (windows.student.math).
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Mixed-mode course delivery in Fall 2021

MFCF is proud to offer technological support to the 40 or so instructors who will be delivering course content to a mixed audience of in-person and online attendees in the

upcoming Fall semester. If you are interested in experimenting with the mixed-mode technology MFCF is offering but have not informed us of this yet, it's not too late! Simply contact mlysy@uwaterloo.ca. Detailed operating instructions for the available technology are now available on the MFCF web site at <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/online-teaching/mixed-mode-teaching>

Software updates

macOS

We previously advised against installing macOS version X "Big Sur" because of problems with printing and the campus VPN. Those issues have been resolved, so go ahead and upgrade (after doing a back-up, of course).

For those of you with the latest hardware using the M1 CPU rather than Intel, you may find that some things work better when Rosetta2 compatibility mode is enabled. If things that used to work in Terminal are failing strangely now, that's probably it.

Windows

Machines that have been powered off for extended periods can fall behind on Windows and application updates. When you return to the office and power on your machine, your work might be interrupted while all outstanding updates are installed. Some reboots might also be required for Windows security updates to be applied.

Central Linux and Windows servers

Major applications such as R and MATLAB will be updated to newer versions at the start of term.

Remote storage solutions for your work files

In addition to providing secure online storage and backup of important work documents, remote storage provides a convenient method of accessing these documents from multiple devices, e.g., home and office computers. A detailed comparison of remote storage solutions available to members of the Faculty of Mathematics is now featured on the MFCF web site at <https://uwaterloo.ca/math-faculty-computing-facility/services/desktop-services-staff-and-faculty-admin-appointments/remote-storage-solutions-individual-work-files>

Prepare your printers and UPSes

Some people have observed that their printers don't work after so many months without being used. The ink dries up or clogs. You should plan to test your printers and order new ink/toner cartridges if needed before large-scale return to office. Call Retail Services for university-managed printers.

Most desktop printers these days come with wi-fi service enabled by default. Printers offering wi-fi service interfere with Eduroam and make wi-fi worse for everyone. Please be sure to turn off wi-fi on the printer unless absolutely necessary. There may be more than one spot in the printer's set-

up menu where this needs to be done. Print the status/configuration page and check to ensure that wi-fi service is completely disabled.

If you have a UPS (uninterruptible power supply) in your office, its batteries may have depleted over the many months we've been away, so that's another thing that may need refreshing.

Campus IT system changes

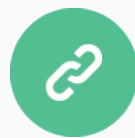
UW has arranged a site licence for Zoom. For the time being, MFCF will continue to support only Microsoft Teams for thesis defences.

UW's site licence for MATLAB has been extended to August 31, 2022, thanks to Math, Science, Engineering, and IST. Details about the extension are published on IST's web site at <https://uwaterloo.ca/information-systems-technology/news/expanding-campus-license-matlab>

If you have questions about these projects, you can ask us, or contact the IST Service Desk at helpdesk@uwaterloo.ca, ext. 44357

Help us help you

Questions or problems to report? Do you know a way we could make math computing better? Is there something you'd like to hear about in these newsletters? Do you want to write an article? Email Lori Suess at lsuess@uwaterloo.ca or fill out a request at <https://rt.uwaterloo.ca/SelfService/Forms/MFCF/>. We'd love to hear what you have to say!



MFCF Webpage



MFCF Help

