

Since the fall of 2009 the college has been engaged in a program to remove Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from our computers. Most of this PII is in the form of student social security numbers, although it also includes credit card information and bank account numbers.

During the course of this program it has become clear that many faculty and staff have their own personal data on college computers. Tax returns are common as are Word and Excel files containing financial or personal information. It is important that this data be protected in some way, either removed from the computer or protected through encryption with a file or folder password.

Fortunately Word, Excel and PDF files can all be password protected. Folders or collections of files can also be password protected. In general these methods produce "pretty good" encryption and will prevent a PII search program like Identity Finder from scanning them. If the computer is stolen or infected with spyware the data would be secure from all but the most determined hacker.

If you choose to protect files in this way please note that once you password protect a file or folder OIT will be unable to help you recover that data in the case that you forget the password.

Windows:

To password protect Word and Excel 2003 files:

1. With the file open, choose Tools > Options.
2. When the Options box appears click the Security tab.
3. Next to "Password to open" type in a password of your choosing. The default encryption is fine.

To password protect Word and Excel 2007 files:

1. With the file open, use the menu option (the office button in the upper left): Prepare > Encrypt Document
2. Enter a password of your choosing. You'll be prompted to enter it a second time for confirmation.

To password protect PDF files:

1. Open the file with Adobe Acrobat Professional (this can be downloaded from oit.williams.edu/software if you don't have it yet).
2. Advanced menu > Security > Password Encrypt....
3. For Compatibility: choose the highest level of Acrobat for the best security.
4. Click the "require a password to open this document" checkbox.
5. Enter the encryption password. You'll be prompted to enter it a second time for confirmation.

To password protect entire folders:

There are many ways to do this using third party programs. The simplest is probably to use a program called 7-Zip. Winrar and Winzip can also do it.

Installation:

1. From a web browser go to www.7-zip.org
2. Download 7-Zip for Windows 32-bit or 64-bit (what version do you need? For college computers Windows XP and Vista use 32-bit, Window 7 use 64-bit.)
3. When the download is complete, run the downloaded file, which will have a name similar to 7z465.exe
4. Take the defaults for all prompts.

To encrypt a folder:

1. Right-click the folder to encrypt.
2. Choose 7-Zip > Add to Archive...
3. Make Archive format be zip
4. Encryption method should be ZipCrypto
5. Enter the password you want
6. The zip folder will be created in the same location as the original folder.
7. After you verify you can open the zip folder AND open the individual files inside you can then delete the original (or move it off your college computer).
8. This zip folder can be moved or copied to other computers and opened even if that computer does not have 7-zip installed *as long as ZipCrypto was chosen as the encryption method*

Mac

To password protect Word or Excel 2004 files:

1. Open the document that you want to protect.
2. On the Word menu, click Preferences.
3. Click Security on the left.
4. In the Password to open box, type a password, and then click OK (you don't need a password for "Password to Modify").
5. In the Confirm Password dialog box, type the password again, and then click OK.
6. Click Save.

To password protect Word or Excel 2008 files:

1. Open the document that you want to protect.
2. On the Word menu, click Preferences.
3. Under Personal Settings, click Security.
4. In the Password to open box, type a password, and then click OK (you don't need a password for "Password to Modify").
5. In the Confirm Password dialog box, type the password again, and then click OK.
6. Click Save

To password protect PDF files:

1. You do NOT need Acrobat Professional for this.
2. Open the file with Apple Preview

- a. How to open with Apple Preview? Open the Applications folder. Run Preview. File > Open. Navigate to your PDF.
3. Once open, choose File, Save As.
4. Check the Encrypt box and enter a password. If you save the file with the same name it will overwrite (replace) the unprotected original.

How to encrypt entire folders, or collections of files:

The Mac OS comes with a program named Disk Utility which can be found in Applications > Utilities. You can use Disk Utility to create an encrypted *disk image*, which can hold files and folders. Once created, the Disk Image is stored as a file, which can be moved or copied just like a regular file.

1. Run Disk Utility, select File > New > Blank Disk Image...
2. Enter a name for the new image in the Save As box. Put the same name in the Name field.
3. Choose a location to save the image (the Documents folder or the Desktop folder would be logical).
4. Select a reasonable size for the new disk image that's large enough to hold the files you plan to encrypt. 40mb is probably plenty for word, excel and acrobat files.
5. Mac OS Extended (Journaled) for Format.
6. Choose 128-bit AES from the encryption menu.
7. Partitions should be No partition map.
8. Select Sparse Disk Image for the Image Format to minimize the size of the file.
9. Click the Create button.
10. When prompted, enter an encryption password. Make sure to uncheck the Remember password (add to keychain) box so that the disk image isn't automatically decrypted when you open it.
11. The disk image will mount automatically on the Desktop as a disk after it's created.
12. You can drag folders or files into the disk image to encrypt them. Note that dragging copies the files, so the unencrypted originals are still on the harddrive. Wait until you have verified that you can mount the disk and open and edit files in the disk image before moving or deleting the originals.
13. To unmount the disk select the image and choose File > Eject. Or drag the disk icon to the trash (sounds scary, but that is how Apple does things).
14. Double-click on the encrypted file to mount it. The name will consist of the image name + .sparseimage.