

Seminary Software Policy

Purpose

This document will serve as a set of guidelines about what software is installed on seminary-owned computers, who installs it, how it is paid for, and the level of support provided by Seminary Computing Services (SCS).

Licensing and Media

All software purchases for seminary-owned computers should be coordinated with SCS. This allows SCS to

- save the seminaries money by seeking cost-effective multi-user licensing arrangements
- keep all software up-to-date
- protect the seminaries by ensuring license compliance

By keeping track of what software is being used, SCS will also be able to better evaluate whether a given package has become popular enough to consider making it part of the *Supported* or *Standard* categories.

Categories

It is useful to place software applications into one of the following categories:

Standard

These software applications will generally be installed on all seminary-owned computers.

Support: Fully supported by SCS.

Budget: Licensing fees will be paid by the appropriate SCS budget.

Supported

These applications have been designated as the software of choice for specific needs, but will not generally be installed if the need for them does not exist on a specific machine or for a specific user.

Support: Fully supported by SCS.

Budget: Licensing fees will be paid by the appropriate departmental budget for the machine in question.

Unsupported

The applications are approved for installation on seminary-owned systems, but will not normally be installed by SCS staff. Software that has not been specifically been placed in other categories will be considered *Unsupported*.

Support: Not supported by SCS. SCS staff will uninstall *Unsupported* applications if they have reason to believe that the applications are interfering with the function or performance of *Standard* or *Supported* applications.

Budget: Licensing fees will not be paid by SCS budgets.

Disallowed

These applications are not allowed on seminary-owned systems under any circumstances, usually because they constitute an unreasonable security risk, create an undue strain on SCS to support, or both.

Support: SCS staff will not support systems on which *Disallowed* applications have been installed and may take additional steps to protect other systems, such as uninstalling offending applications, closing user accounts, or blocking access to the LAN.

Experimental

From time to time, applications which might otherwise be considered *Approved* or *Disallowed* might be under consideration for *Supported* or *Standard* status because of their potential benefit to the institution or the work of the user. These applications must be specifically identified as *Experimental* by SCS.

Support: Fully supported by SCS.

Budget: Licensing fees will be paid by departmental or SCS budgets as appropriate to the use for which the application is being considered

Piracy

Software piracy (i.e., distribution, acquisition, installation, or use of software without a license or beyond the limits of the license) is neither condoned nor permitted by the seminaries. Employees who engage in software piracy will be subject to disciplinary action as provided for in the appropriate employee Handbook. Doubts or concerns about the legal use of a given software application should be raised with the Director of Seminary Computing *before* proceeding.

Open Source

Seminary Computing Services is very interested in using 'open source' software to improve and extend the technological resources of the seminaries and their communities. Open source software offers the potential of high quality applications that are flexible, community driven, freely distributable, and often available free of charge¹. Therefore, the implications of the Budget and Piracy sections of this document are very different for open source software than for commercial software. However, this should not be seen as *carte blanche* for users to install whatever open source software they like on seminary-owned systems; all of the provisions of this document still apply.

¹ Note that “free” is being used in two different senses here. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_software#Usage for more information on the distinction