

How to set up your computer as a statistician

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1:00-2:00 PM

VEC 903

Speaker: Jeff Goldsmith

Student Panel: Safiya Sirota, Ziyi Wang, Zhengyong Chen

Moderator: Safiya Sirota

I. Welcome

II. Presentation by Jeff Goldsmith

A. Desktops

1. Have designated “desktops” or “screens” on computer for certain applications (e.g., email always open on Desktop 5)
2. Having too many windows open at a time at the same screen can be distracting

B. “Inbox Zero”

1. Think of your inbox as a to-do list
2. Once you’re done, delete the emails or move them to a different folder

C. Magnets

1. Magnets allows you to automatically reshape windows on a Mac

D. Alfred

1. Alfred is an application you can download to search for things on your computer, much better than the Spotlight Search that comes with the Mac

E. LaTeX vs. Powerpoint

1. Uses Microsoft Suite for most things now (e.g., PowerPoint and Word)
2. Used to use Beamer/LaTeX for presentations

F. Zotero

1. Uses it for citation management and adding bibliographies to Word documents

G. Using GitHub/Dropbox

1. You can use them in tandem
2. Might not be able to do this if there are privacy concerns with certain datasets, but sometimes helpful if you are working from multiple computers

III. Panel

A. Introductions

1. Ziyi, 3rd year PhD, uses a Mac and iPad
2. Zhengyong, 2nd year MS, uses a Mac and iPad
3. Safiya, 5th year PhD, uses Mac and iPad, used to have a PC

B. What are some essential softwares you have on your devices?

1. Notability
 - a) Useful for classes, especially for writing on slides
2. Microsoft Word
3. Notion
 - a) Useful for organizing and planning, for courses and even personal life, to have everything in one place
 - b) Has calendar templates
4. Google Calendar/iCal
 - a) Block time on calendar instead of setting reminders
5. Overleaf
 - a) Cloud for LaTeX files
 - b) Useful for presentations, homework, papers, and resumes
 - c) Compiles LaTeX files quickly
 - d) Log in using your Columbia email to get a free premium account
6. Zotero
 - a) Citation manager that allows you to organize papers and annotate papers in the app
 - b) Can add a Chrome plugin to download information/pdf of paper
 - c) Can add a Word plugin to automatically create bibliographies

C. What do you use to write papers?

1. In LaTeX
 - a) Can use Overleaf to collaborate with coauthors, you can use track changes and comments, just like in Word
 - b) Templates are useful for formatting
2. Word with Dropbox
3. RMarkdown
 - a) For coding projects and papers for class, it's useful to use RMarkdown because you can add code snippets, figures, and LaTeX all in one document

D. How do you take notes? What are useful note-taking apps?

1. Notability
 - a) Can download on iPad and Mac so the notes are sync'ed
 - b) Maybe don't use computer for taking notes, but can review iPad notes on the computer
2. Goodnotes
 - a) Maybe a prettier interface with more features, but Notability might be simpler/cleaner
3. OneNote

- a) For PC, can handwrite on a tablet, or type notes easily on the computer
- 4. MarginNotes
- 5. Apple notes
 - a) Can sync through iCloud, free and easy

E. Do you have suggestions for websites where you can find templates for Overleaf?

- 1. Overleaf website has a template search page
- 2. Computing club website has templates for LaTeX and Beamer
 - a) <http://cu-biostats-computing-club.org/resources.html>
- 3. Ask friends or professors to share templates

F. What advice do you have for organizing files on your computer?

- 1. Create folders for projects
- 2. Include dates in filenames
- 3. Can have aliases for files/folders to save on storage but make things easier to locate
- 4. Be consistent with naming conventions

G. How do you keep track of your tasks?

- 1. Calendar app
 - a) Block out time for tasks throughout each day, be consistent and focus on the task you have designated
 - b) Be flexible and willing to adjust
- 2. Goal-setting framework
 - a) Daily to-do list (3-5 things), weekly task list, and list of long-term deadlines

H. How do you take notes during department seminars?

- 1. You don't always have to take notes
 - a) Some topics will be out of your depth, if note-taking doesn't help you focus, you don't need to do it
 - b) Can always write down the name of the speaker and title of the talk to search after
- 2. Write down key concepts
 - a) Keep track of terms to look up later
- 3. Have ChatGPT open
 - a) Type in terms to understand topics broadly
- 4. Can go to working groups in our department to learn about certain areas
 - a) Precision medicine, functional data, causal inference
- 5. Take pictures of slides to remember the talk