To all UNITS representatives and NUIT staff:

In the interest of creating a more secure e-mail environment at Northwestern, NUIT has implemented SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) encryption technology on its main e-mail servers.

SSL is being implemented in place of Kerberos password encryption software and plain-text password processing. Although Kerberos has been used for some time at Northwestern and is an effective network security tool, SSL's superior features prompted its implementation by NUIT.

SSL encrypts passwords, making them extremely difficult to decode. Currently, e-mail messages and the passwords used to access them are transmitted in plain or "clear" text, which make them vulnerable to "sniffing" by anyone interested in breaking into the NU network.

To help ease the transition for the University community, NUIT is phasing out Kerberos and Kerberized POP (Post Office Protocol) over the next 12-15 months, as well as plain-text password processing. As part of the process, NUNet account holders may need to upgrade their e-mail software to assure compatibility with SSL.

SSL software configuration instructions can be found at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/email/config/.

Questions can be directed to consultant@northwestern.edu.

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