

Duke Office of Information Technology

IM @ Duke

Information for Duke instant messaging users

The instant messaging service provided by OIT is based on the Jabber/XMPP protocol. OIT recommends Pidgin (previously known as Gaim) for Linux and Windows users and Adium for Mac users. However, a wide variety of clients support Jabber/XMPP. This variety also means that some features available for one client may not work on another. Here are some guidelines and answers to questions you may have about using the Jabber service at Duke.

Determining a buddy's address

You must know a buddy's Duke NetID in order to add him or her to your buddy list.

1. Go to [Online@Duke](#) and click the Directories link at the top of the page or under the Directories category, click the link to Search for: Duke person or department. You will need to authenticate using your Duke NetID and password.
2. Enter the user's name in the search field.
3. Retrieve the Duke NetID information from the results of your search.

The complete address for a Duke user is netid@jabber.duke.edu. Be aware that you can also chat with Jabber users at other organizations as long as you know the Jabber address of the user.

Buddy Lists are saved on the server

Some Jabber clients require the full userid (netid@jabber.duke.edu) while others require the short name (NetID without the @jabber.duke.edu) when setting up a Jabber client for the first time. If you set up a client on a new machine and it does not populate with your buddy list, editing the username by either adding or removing the "@jabber.duke.edu" as mentioned above. For example, the Pidgin client saves your Buddy List on the jabber.duke.edu server if you create the account using the short name userid.

Setting up "generic" accounts

One of the most important features of Duke Instant Messaging is its security. When you contact another Duke user via Jabber, you can be certain that the person on the other end of the conversation had to authenticate in order to chat with you. You can be confident of the identity of the other Jabber user at Duke.

At this time, OIT does not support the creation of anonymous users including "generic handles" or role-based identities for interaction with the general Duke population. We

are investigating if we can provide role-based identities in a future release of the Duke Jabber server.

Setting up a conference room or group chat

One of the best features of Jabber is the ability to chat with more than one person at a time. You can effectively hold a meeting without being in the same room. Pidgin provides a button on the main window to join a chat and Adium provides this option by selecting the File > Join group chat menu option. For both of these clients you need to provide a name for your room and you need to confirm the conference server is "@conference.jabber.duke.edu". Use this option to join a group chat that already exists or to create new group chats.

Mac OS X iChat and Jabber

Macintosh users running Mac OS X 10.4 have the option of using the iChat client for Jabber conversations. Be aware that you must configure iChat initially for either AOL or .Mac Instant Messaging. You then can configure iChat for Jabber as well. The biggest benefit iChat gives you is the ability to video and audio conference with other Mac users who are running iChat in a Tiger environment. For configuration, view iChat Setup Instructions [here](#).

Exchanging files

Many Jabber clients provide support for exchanging files between users. However, be aware that this process is complicated by multiple clients and platforms. In most cases, the file is either exchanged as expected or never begins the exchange process at all. If the process fails, you will need to use an alternative method for exchanging files.

Avatars

Several Jabber clients offer the option to choose a custom icon to associate with your account but this icon is not sent to other users participating in a chat. At best, some clients allow you to associate an icon with a particular user on your local machine. This is different from other messaging platforms that exchange icons between chat users and is not supported with Duke Instant Messaging Service.

Buddy list problems

Occasionally, a user in your buddy list may appear to be offline and unavailable when the user is actually online and available. At this time, the best solution is to send a reauthorization request to that buddy if your Jabber client supports this option. Otherwise, you can force the authorization process by removing the user and adding them back to your buddy list.

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