Biostatistics Linux FAQ: Ask the Cheese Wiz!

Q1. In emacs, how can I use the common key presses, for Cut, C-x, Copy, C-c, and Paste, C-v?

A1. If you want to have the common definitions of Cut/Copy/Paste (i.e. the usual Human Interface Guidelines (HIG) definitions used by Mac, Windows and GNOME), then call the following function at the end of your ~/.emacs file...

```
(cua-mode)
```

For more info, type F1 f cua-mode Enter

Note the name of the mode suggests Common User Access (CUA), i.e. IBM/DOS definitions, rather than HIG but apparently that is a common misunderstanding and the name of the mode stuck.

Q2. In emacs, the TAB key indents a line of SAS code, but I want the TAB key to just be a traditional TAB.

A2. If you want to edit .sas programs and have the TAB key behave like a typewriter, i.e. TAB takes you to the next tab stop (and C-TAB takes you to the previous), then define the following variable at the end of your ~/.emacs file...

```
(setq ess-sas-edit-keys-toggle t)
```

For more info, type F1 v ess-sas-edit-keys-toggle Enter

Q3. With emacs, how can I smartly view LaTeX error messages?

A3. For example, suppose I have the following document named example.tex

```
\documentclass{article}

\begin{document}

\errornocommandnamedthis

\nocommandnamedthiseither

\end{document}
```

Place the cursor, at the top, and then compile it with
LaTeX. In the mini-buffer, you should see the message:
LaTeX errors in ‘*example output*’. Use C-c ‘ to display.

So, now if you press the key as mentioned, i.e. C-c ‘
where the ‘ is called backtick or grave accent, the
following happens.

1) The example.tex buffer is split; usually over and
under where the file is at the top and the first error
message is on the bottom.

2) The bottom buffer looks like this...
ERROR: Undefined control sequence.

--- TeX said ---
1.5 \errornocommandnamedthis

--- HELP ---
TeX encountered an unknown command name. You probably misspelled the
name. If this message occurs when a LaTeX command is being processed,
the command is probably in the wrong place---for example, the error
can be produced by an \item command that’s not inside a list-making
environment. The error can also be caused by a missing \documentclass
command.

3) In the upper buffer, the cursor is placed at the first error,
i.e. if you suppose underline is the placement of the cursor, then you
will see on line 5: \errornocommandnamedthis_

4) Now, if the upper buffer does not have focus, then click on
its tab in the tab-bar. In any case, when the upper buffer has
focus, then type C-c ‘ again. Now, in the lower buffer you will
see...
ERROR: Undefined control sequence.

--- TeX said ---
1.7 \nocommandnamedthiseither

--- HELP ---
TeX encountered an unknown command name. You probably misspelled the
name. If this message occurs when a LaTeX command is being processed,
the command is probably in the wrong place---for example, the error
can be produced by an \item command that’s not inside a list-making
environment. The error can also be caused by a missing \documentclass

command.

5) Pressing C-c ‘ again will produce the following message in the mini-buffer: No more errors.

6) You can return to the upper buffer and fix the errors and compile once again.

7) Some times this misbehaves. Often you can get this working again if you delete the LaTeX auxiliary and the log files, i.e. example.aux and example.log, and try again.

Q4. When I am running a resource intensive job, how do I prevent it from over-whelming the entire system?

A4. The ’nice’ command is helpful for running resource intensive batch jobs in batch while not destroying the interactive responsiveness of the system for others. However, note that ’nice’ does not need to be used with SAS; the script ’/usr/local/bin/sas’ determines whether you are running a batch or an interactive SAS job and provides ’nice’ automatically for batch jobs. But, for other commands that are not so smart like R or MATLAB, you need to nice them manually. For example, here is how you would run an R job in batch with nice:

```
% nohup nice R no-save < input.R > output.Rt &
```

For more info, see the man page, i.e.
```
% man nice
```

or

```
% info coreutils ’nice invocation
```

Q5. How do I access files on gouda with WiFi and the SMB protocol?

A5. As some of you know, you can access your files via the SMB protocol either via an ethernet
(wired) connection or via WiFi from home with VPN. Now, the same access is available via WiFi in the office. For Windows MCWCorp laptop users, it is seamless. For non-MCWCorp laptop users, whether Windows or otherwise, you just have to provide your domain with your username and password: on Windows, use MCWCORP\username and for Mac/Linux, username@mcwcorp.net