Remote Access to the CIS VLab (307)

This Howto shows to remotely access the CIS 90 Arwen VMs (virtual machines) in the CIS Virtual Lab (VLab). The CIS VLab was developed to remotely provide Distance Education students with online resources for doing lab assignments.
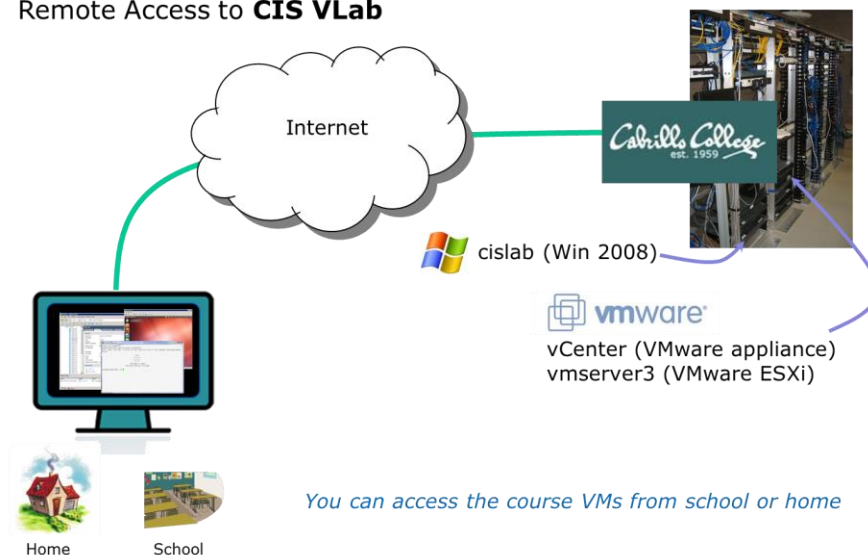
Supplies

- A reasonably fast computer
    - running Windows
    - or a Windows virtual machine on a Mac computer
    - or a Mac using the CoRD application

- A reasonably fast Internet connection

Overview

Students remotely connect to the main CIS VLab server on campus using an RDP client. RDP is already built into Windows but must be added as third party software to a Mac. Once connected the VMware vSphere Client is automatically run which then enables a student to select one of the virtual machines to use.

Preparation

You will need login credentials (usernames and passwords) for VLab and any VMs you intend to use. This information was sent to you in an email by your instructor.

Step 1 – Mac users only – manually connect to VLab

Mac users will need to download and install CoRD from http://cord.sourceforge.net/. Use CoRD to connect to the host: cislab.cabrillo.edu and login using your credentials.

Proceed to Step 4 to continue.

Step 2 – Windows users - download the RDP file

Download the vcenter.rdp file from http://oslab.cabrillo.edu/ to your Desktop or some other location where you can easily find it again.
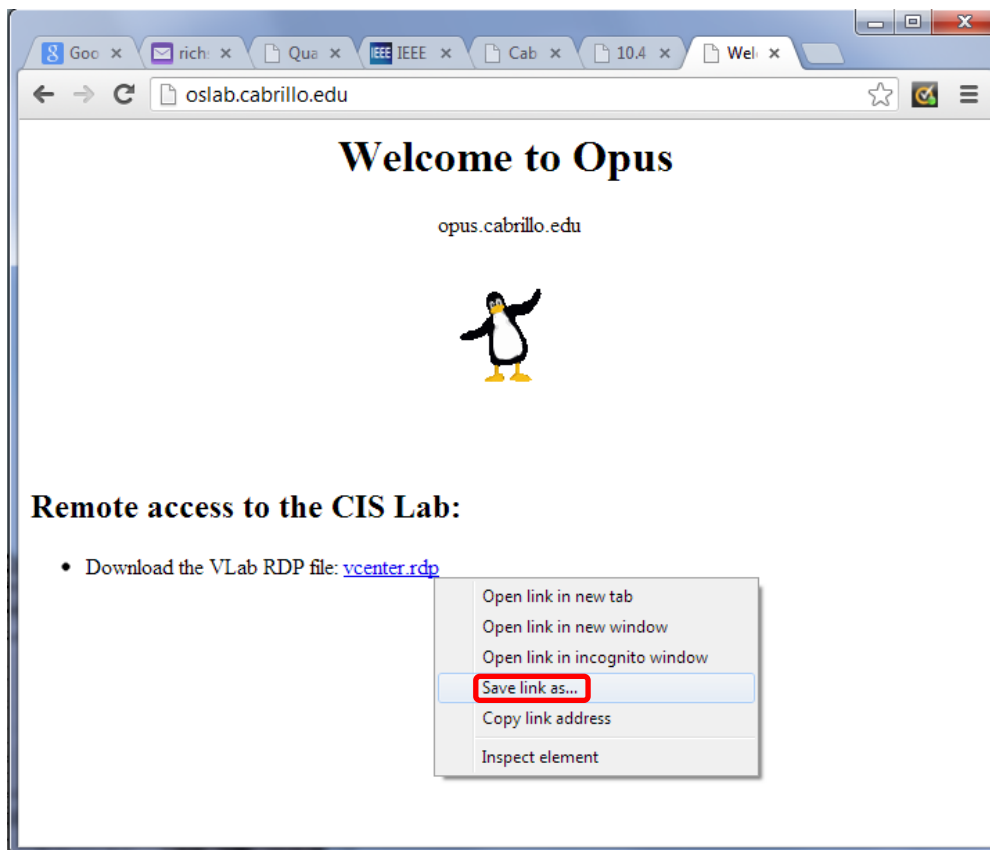

Download the vcenter.rdp file using right-click "Save link/target/file as…" (wording depends on your browser) to your Desktop. You only need to download this RDP file once. It can be used over and over whenever you want to connect to VLab.

Fall 2013 Workaround - note, you may see two choices of RDP files to download. This is a temporary workaround until the school DNS issues get resolved. The second vcenter-ip.rdp file uses a hardcoded IP address.
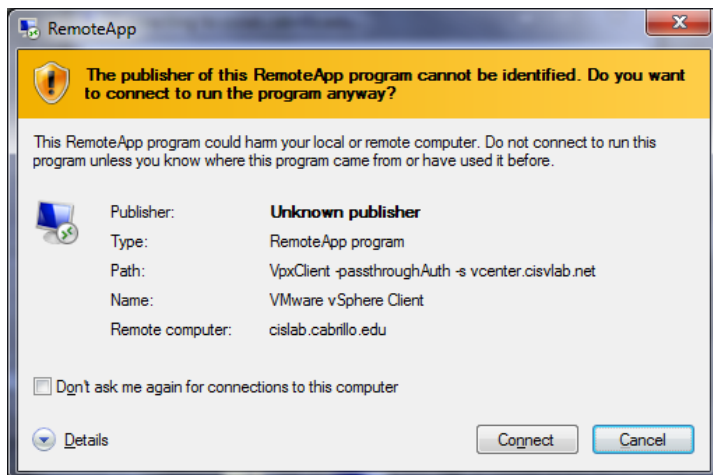
Step 3 - Connect to VLab using the RDP file (Windows)

Locate the downloaded RDP file on your Desktop and open it to start the connection.
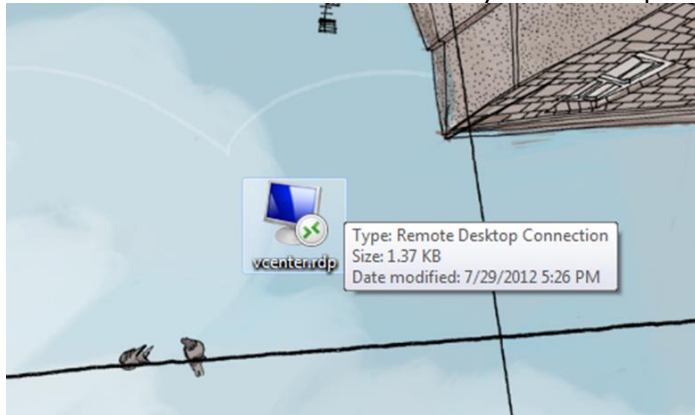
The downloaded RDP file shown on the Desktop
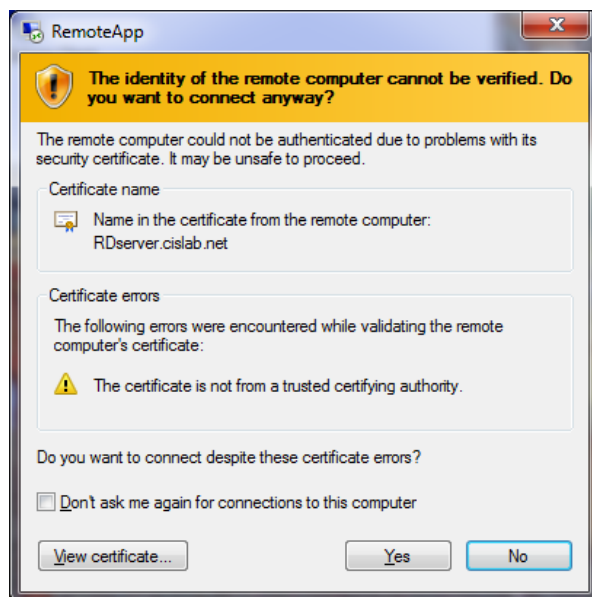
You may see this warning:

Go ahead and Click on Connect button

When prompted for credentials, select "Use another account" and type **cislab***username* in the first field. Type your *password* into the second field.
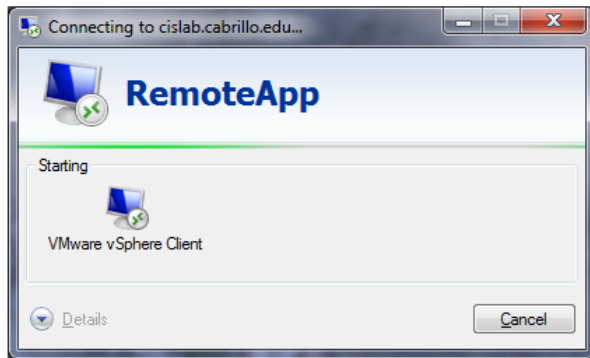
cislab*username*

Click OK to continue. **Don't check** *Remember my credentials* if taking multiple CIS courses since different classes may have different VLab logins.
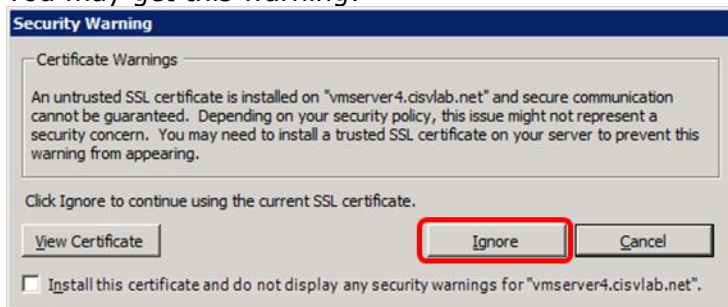

You may get this warning:

Click Yes to continue

The connection process will automatically start up the vSphere Client using your VLab credentials:

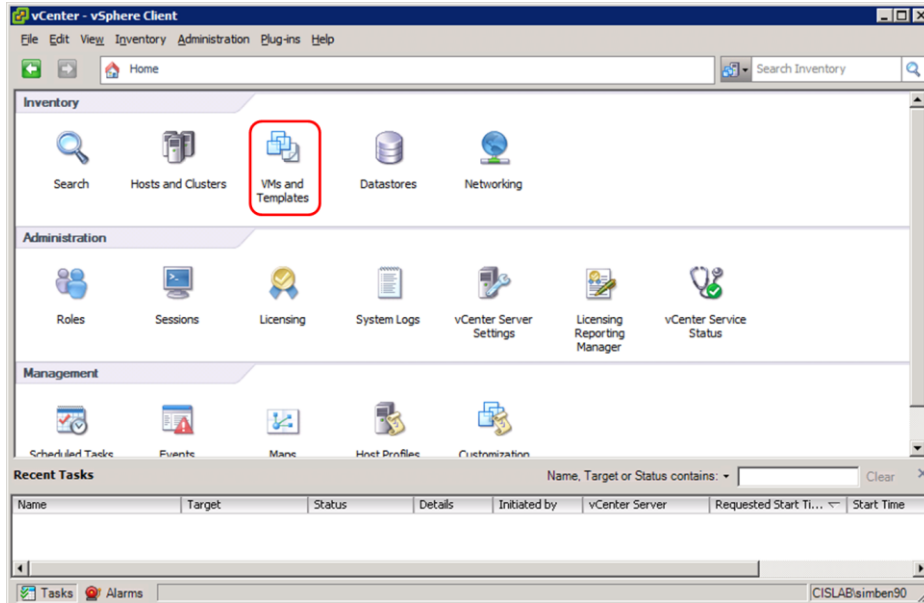Just be patient as this can take a few seconds …

You may get this warning:
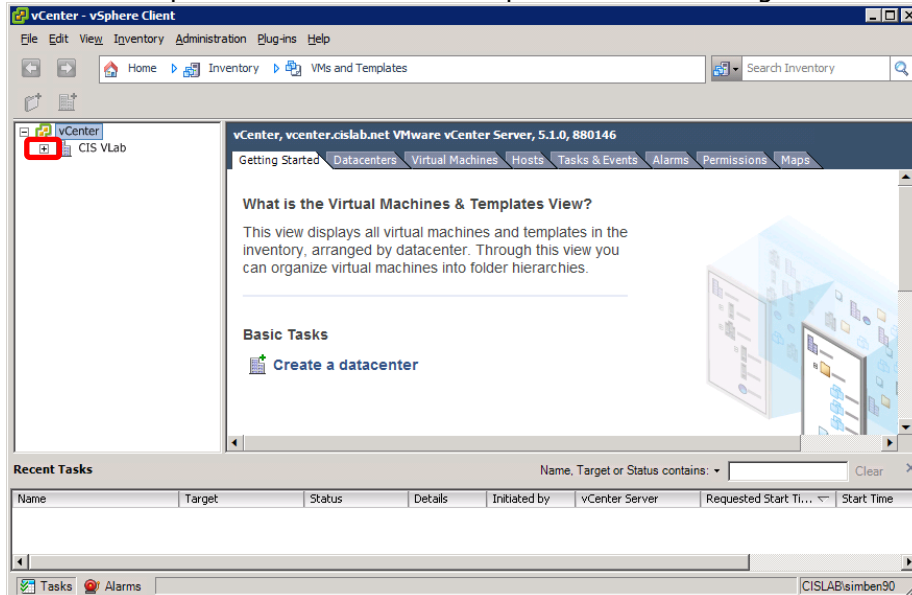

Click Ignore to continue

Step 4 – Navigate the VLab CIS 90 folder and Arwen VMs

After the connection is complete you will have successfully logged into VLab! At this point you will be running the vSphere Client and attached to the vCenter server:
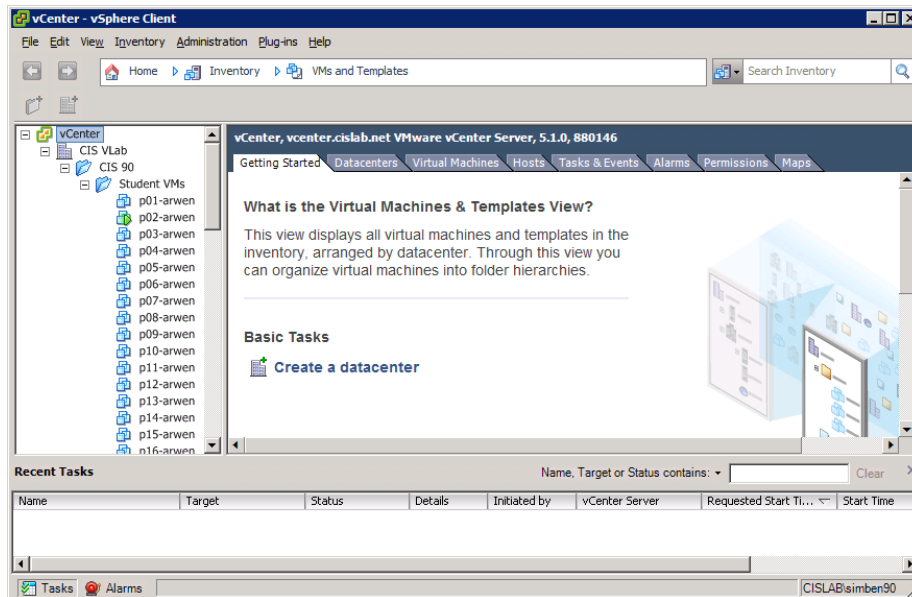
Click the "VMs and Templates" icon to continue.

Use the left panel in the VM and Templates view to navigate to VMs:

Click the small "+"s as necessary to open the vCenter folders

Browse pods by clicking the "+" and "-" as to navigate the various CIS 90 VMs:

CIS 90 folder open showing Arewn VMs

Step 5 – Select your VM

Every CIS 90 student has their own Arwen VM to use during the semester. Check http://simms-teach.com/docs/cis90/Pod-Assignments-90-fa13.pdf to see which one is yours.

Step 6 – Use the VMs

Feel free to use your VM at any time. If the VM is powered off you can power it back on again by right clicking on the name and selecting Power > Power On.
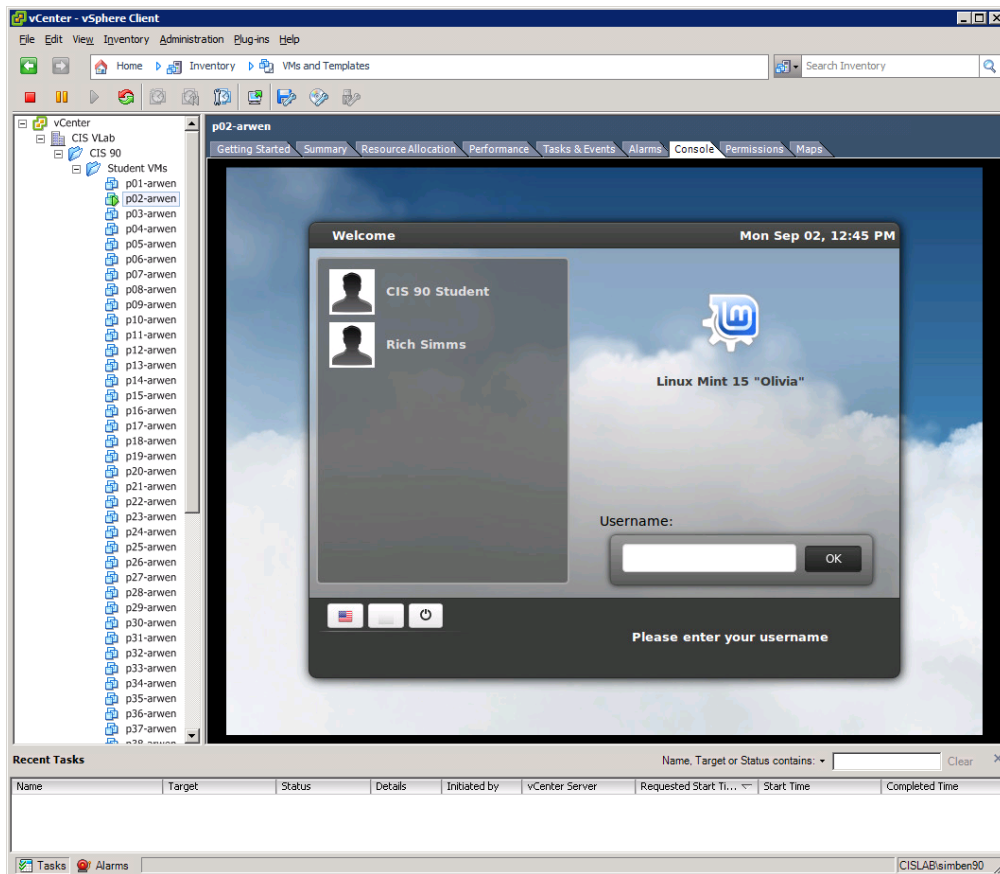
The P02-Arwen VM

Some tips for using VMs:

- Use "CIS 90 Student" when logging into the graphical desktop. This is the cis90 account.
- Hold down the Ctrl and Alt keys to release the mouse from a VM.
- Open a separate console to see more of the VM.
- While holding down the Ctrl, Windows and Alt keys tap the space bar, then F1-F7 to select a virtual terminal (tty1 to tty7).

Step 7 – Disconnect from VLab

To disconnect, use File > Exit or just click the upper-right "X" to close the VMware vSphere Client. You will then be disconnected from VLab. If you are finished with a lab assignment please shutdown your VM. If you want to continue later just close the vSphere client and your VM will continue to run.