

IT Acceptable Use Policy

I. Introduction

Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. The principle applies to works of all authors and publishers in all media. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgement, the right to privacy, and the right to determine the form, manner, and terms of publication and distribution. Because electronic Information is volatile and easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical in computer environments.

Violations of authorial integrity, including plagiarism, invasion of privacy, unauthorized access, and trade secret and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community, including students.

This document constitutes a college-wide policy intended to allow for the proper use of all College computing and network resources, effective protection of all individual users, equitable access, and proper management of those resources. This should be taken in the broadest possible sense. This policy applies to the entire college network. These guidelines are intended to supplement, not replace, all existing laws, regulations, agreements, and contracts which currently apply to these services. Access to networks and computer systems owned or operated by the College impose certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to College policies and local, state, and federal laws. Appropriate use should always be legal, ethical, reflect academic honesty, reflect community standards, and show restraint in the consumption of shared resources. It should demonstrate respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, system security mechanisms, and individuals' rights to privacy and to freedom from intimidation, harassment, and unwarranted annoyance.

a. Acceptable Use

Acceptable use of the College's computing and networking resources includes usage for academic, educational or professional purposes which are directly related to official college business and in support of the College's mission.

b. Authorized Users

The following individuals are authorized to use the College's Computer Network and Services:

1. current faculty of the College;
2. current staff of the College; and
3. current students of the College.

a. Acceptable Uses

The College's website, server, and all other related computer equipment and services may be used only for academic, educational, or professional purposes which are directly related to official college business and in support of the College's mission.

b. Unacceptable Uses

1. Obscene Materials

It is an unacceptable use of the College's computer network to view, download, store, or transmit pornographic materials or obscene materials.

2. Partisan Political Purposes

Pursuant to Massachusetts Campaign Finance Laws, no governmental resources (including fax machines, modems, printers, and/or copy machines) may be used by any person in order to promote or oppose a political candidate or ballot question or for the purpose of disseminating materials that promote a particular vote on a ballot question or a political candidate.

3. Game Playing

Recreational game playing is an unacceptable use of the College's computer network.

4. Downloading

No on-line information may be downloaded and installed on the College's computer systems without the authorization of or supervision by OIT.

5. User ID

No person authorized to utilize the College's computer network and all related services may disclose his/her User ID to any other person.

6. Transmission of personal information

Use of the College network for transmission or receipt of credit card information, including the Primary Account Number (PAN), PIN, expiration date or any other identifying information on a personal or business credit card is forbidden. The Federal Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts General Law 93H protect personal and confidential information and prohibit any transmission of unencrypted data. No such data may be transmitted across the network by the use of email, chat, instant messaging service, or any other form.

7. Decoding

A user is prohibited from decoding or attempting to decode passwords of access control information.

8. Disruptive Use

It is an unacceptable use to engage in activity that might be harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, including creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, or damaging files.

9. Copyrighted Software

A user is prohibited from making or using illegal copies of copyrighted software, storing such copies on the College computer system, or transmitting said copies over the College's computer network

10. Wasting Computer Resources

A user is prohibited from wasting computer resources, including placing a program in an endless loop, printing excessive amounts of paper, distributing chain letters or engaging in an activity that is not consistent with this policy's Acceptable Use provision.

11. General Prohibition

A user is prohibited from performing any illegal act, including violation of state and federal civil or criminal laws and regulations.

12. Commercial Use

A user is prohibited from performing any commercial ventures resulting in personal income or profit.

13. Communications

A user is prohibited from intercepting, decoding, blocking, or interfering with any communication intended for other persons.

c. Enforcement

The College reserves the right to deny access to its computer and communications network to any user who breaches this or any other college policy. Further, if it is determined that a user is engaging in unauthorized activity, the College reserves the right to disconnect that user from the network.

All alleged breaches of this policy will be referred to and reviewed by the appropriate student/staff disciplinary committee. No person authorized to utilize the College's computer network and all related services may disclose his/her User ID to any other person.

d. Privacy

To the greatest extent possible in a public setting, the College is committed to preserving an individual's privacy. Electronic and other technological methods must not infringe upon privacy. However, users must recognize that the College's computer systems and networks are public and subject to the Commonwealth's public records law. Therefore, users utilize such systems at their own risk. Further, users of the College's computer network System should have no expectation of privacy over any communications, transmissions, or work performed thereon. The College reserves the right to interrupt a user's use of the College computer network, or access a user's communications or transmissions for routine system maintenance, technical problems or criminal investigations.

e. Electronic Mail

Users of the College's computer network system for electronic mail purposes should have no expectation of privacy over any e-mail communications or transmissions sent or received. Further the College reserves the right to access or interrupt e-mail communications or transmissions for routine system maintenance, technical problems or criminal investigations

Each Massasoit Community College faculty, staff and student receives a college e-mail account which is used for all email communications at the College. Such accounts should be checked as often as may be necessary to ensure that any information is timely received.

f. Internet Access

Access to the Internet has been provided to staff and students for the benefit of the College and students. It allows access to information resources and databases around the world.

Everyone using the Internet from the College represents the College while on the Internet. To ensure that the Internet is used in a responsible and productive manner, the following guidelines have been established for using the Internet.

Acceptable Uses of the Internet

The College's website, server, and all other related computer equipment and services may be used only for academic, educational, or professional purposes which are directly related to official college business and in support of the College's mission. Students may use the Internet to research information or download files to be used in reports or presentations for class work. Students may use available lab systems to access their e-mail or chatrooms on a space available basis. Students that need to access files or applications on the College network will be given preference to use of the lab computers.

Staff may use the Internet in the course of their daily activities to access resources of the Commonwealth or research information to be used in the performance of their position. Databases may be accessed for information as needed and e-mail used for business contacts.

Unacceptable Use of the Internet

The Internet shall not be used for personal gain or advancement of individual views. This includes advertising for a personal non-college related business or sending e-mail to people to convince them of your opinion of a particular topic. In this case, the user should obtain an account from an Internet Service Provider (ISP) at their expense. Pursuant to Massachusetts Campaign Finance Laws, no governmental resources (including computers, fax machines, modems, printers, and/or copy machines) may be used by any person (including a public employee, whether during work hours or otherwise) in order to promote or oppose a political candidate or ballot question or for the purpose of disseminating materials that advocate a particular vote on a ballot question or a political candidate. Further, in addition to a prohibition of any type of political fundraising on State property, a public employee is further prohibited from soliciting or receiving, directly or indirectly, any contribution for any political purpose.

The Internet shall not be used to prevent others from being productive or disrupt the operation of the College networks. This encompasses e-mail spamming, sending harassing or threatening e-mail, or sending messages under an assumed name. Harassment of any kind is prohibited. No member of the community, under any circumstance, may use the College's computers or networks to libel, slander, or harass any other person. The following shall constitute computer harassment: (1) using the computer to annoy, harass, terrify, intimidate, threaten, offend or bother another person by conveying obscene language, pictures, or other materials, or threats of bodily harm to the recipient or the recipient's immediate family; (2) using the computer to contact another person repeatedly with the intent to annoy, harass, or bother, whether or not any actual message is communicated, and/ or where no purpose of legitimate communication exists, and where the recipient has expressed a desire for the communication to cease; (3) using the computer to contact another person repeatedly regarding a matter for which one does not have a legal right to communicate, once the recipient has provided reasonable notice that he or she desires such communication to cease; (4) using the computer, to disrupt or damage the academic research, administrative, or related pursuits of another; and (5) using the computer to invade the privacy, academic or otherwise, of another or the threatened invasion of privacy of another.

g. Social Networking

Information technology resources provided by the College are the property of the College. Users shall have no expectation of privacy when using such resources. The use of all college information technology resources for social media activities, including but not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, blogs or other forms of social media, shall be limited to academic, educational or professional purposes, which are directly related to official College business and in support of the College's mission.

All such uses shall comply with the College's computer use policies. Use of the College's information technology resources for personal social media activities is prohibited.

h. Accessing "Linked Pages" from the College's Web Site

The College is not responsible for, nor does it maintain any control over, any pages that may be linked to its website.

i. Harassment

No member of the community, under any circumstances, may use the College's computers or networks to libel, slander, or harass any other person. The following shall constitute computer harassment: (1) using the computer to annoy, harass, terrify, intimidate, threaten, offend, bother another person by conveying obscene language, pictures, or other materials, or threats of bodily harm to the recipient or the recipient's immediate family; (2) using the computer to contact another person repeatedly with the intent to annoy, harass, or bother, whether or not any actual message is communicated, and/or where no purpose of legitimate communication exists, and where the recipient has expressed a desire for the communication to cease; (3) using the computer to contact another person repeatedly regarding a matter for which one does not have a legal right to communicate, once the recipient has provided reasonable notice that he or she desires such communication to cease; (4) using the computer to disrupt or damage

the academic research, administrative, or related pursuits of another; and; (5) using the computer to invade the privacy, academic or otherwise, of another or the threatened invasion of privacy of another.

j. Intellectual Property

A user is prohibited from infringing on any intellectual property, copyright or trademark rights. Users are responsible for recognizing (attributing) and honoring the intellectual property rights of others.

k. Academic Dishonesty

Users should always employ computing resources in accordance with the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating) is a violation of such standards.

l. Responding to Security and Abuse Incidents

All users have the responsibility to report any discovered unauthorized access attempts or other proper usage of the College's computers, networks or other information processing equipment. If you observe, or have reported to you, a security or abuse problem with any College computer or network equipment, including violations of this policy, please notify the Help Desk at x1139 immediately.

m. Security

Users are solely responsible for all materials viewed, stored, or transmitted by way of the College's computer system. The College expects, however, that users will comply with all College rules and state and federal laws related to Internet use. Failure to do so may result in the suspension or revocation of a user's access privileges. Further, users should have no expectation of privacy over e-mail transmissions, and the College reserves the right to access e-mail accounts for routine system maintenance, technical problems or criminal investigations.

n. Violations

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, as well as civil and criminal liability, and/or a violation of the Electronic Communications Privacy Act or 1986, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Massachusetts Wiretap and/or Privacy Laws, defamation, copyright and/or trademark infringement laws and state or federal sexual harassment or discrimination laws.

If you have any questions or need help from the IT organization, please call the ITS Help Desk at 508-588-9100 x1139.

Specific Laboratory Use

The General Use Policies are designed for all faculty, staff, administrators, and students in most working or learning areas. However, specific laboratories, the library, and work areas will need to develop policies specific to their unique environment.

Library Internet

Massasoit Librarians and Staff support student access to the internet by the adoption of the American Library Association Standards and Codes listed below:

- The EDUCOM "Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for Electronic Learners;"
- ALA "Library Bill of Rights;"
- ALA "Freedom to Read;"
- ALA "Code of Ethics;"
- ALA "Freedom to View;"
- ALA "Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights;" and
- ALA "Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights."

Copies of these standards are available online. If you have any questions about this policy, or any of the library's policies, please speak to a librarian.