

Quick Links

SEARCH

[About Us](#)[Admissions](#)[Academics](#)[Alumni](#)[Athletics](#)[Offices & Services](#)[News & Events](#)[Student Life](#)[OFFICES & SERVICES](#) ▼

- [Academic Advising Center](#)
- [Academic Affairs](#)
- [Academic Success Centers](#)
- [ACCESS](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Adult Learning in the Fitchburg Area - ALFA](#)
- [Alumni](#)
- [Athletics](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Police](#)
- [Capital Planning & Maintenance](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [Center for Italian Culture](#)
- [Center for Professional Studies](#)
- [Center for Teaching and Learning](#)
- [CenterStage](#)
- [Chartwells Dining Services](#)
- [Counseling Services](#)
- [Development](#)
- [Disability Services](#)
- [Distributed/Distance](#)

Your Location: [FSC Home](#) > [Offices & Services](#) > [Information Technology](#)

Information Technology: Acceptable Use Policy

The Information Technology Department supports computing, networking and information resources for the students, faculty, and staff of Fitchburg State College (herein referred to as FSC). Computer facilities and services are offered in support of teaching and learning, research and public service. Access to the computer systems and networks owned and operated by FSC imposes certain responsibilities upon users, in accordance with existing FSC policies and local, state and federal law. Users accept the responsibility for utilizing services in ways that are ethical, that demonstrate academic integrity and respect for others who share this resource. This policy is established in an effort to help users understand what is expected of them. It sets guidelines regarding the issues of privacy and respect for property, ownership of data, system security, and misuse of the system.

Academic Integrity

Just as in any other aspect of a student's academic work, FSC expects that students will use computing and network resources in ways that are honest and ethical. Actions that constitute academic dishonesty include:

- Turning in someone else's work as your own.
- Allowing someone to represent your work as his or her own.
- Several people working on one paper and submitting it individually, as if each had done the paper alone.
- Using another's work without proper acknowledgment.

A Shared Resource

FSC's computer and network services are available to all faculty, staff and students. Because there are so many individuals who utilize this shared resource, respect for the rights and needs of others is central to this policy. To ensure access and service for all users, users must refrain from any of the following SPECIFICALLY UNACCEPTABLE USES:

- Use for for-profit activities (sales, consulting for pay, and so on) or use by for-profit institutions unless covered by the General Principle, or as one of the Specifically Acceptable Uses.

- [Learning](#)
- [Education Unit / Educator Licensure](#)
- [Expanding Horizons](#)
- [Extended Campus Center](#)
- [Facilities](#)
- [Finance and Administration](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Financial Services](#)
- [Gifts & Bequests](#)
- [Graduate & Continuing Education](#)
- [Grant Center](#)
- [Hammond Campus Center](#)
- [Health Services](#)
- [Housing and Residential Services](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [Human Subjects Committee](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Institutional Research](#)
- [International Education](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Mail Center](#)
- [Math Center](#)
- [Meeting the Challenge/OSERS](#)
- [Multicultural Student Services/ACCESS](#)
- [Newman Center](#)
- [One Card Office](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Payroll](#)
- [Peer Assisted Student Support](#)
- [Placement Testing](#)
- [Print Services](#)
- [President's Office](#)
- [Public Relations](#)
- [Recreation Services](#)
- [Registrar](#)

- Use for private or personal business in violation of College policies.
- Chain letters, or any illegal schemes or activities.
- Mailings to large numbers of people that contain unwanted solicitations or information. These mailings are often referred to as "spams".
- Communication that constitutes illegal harassment.
- Anonymous mailings, or mailings which impersonate another individual.
- Allowing anyone else to use your account.
- Any communication which adversely impacts the communications of the College by over-loading the network.
- Knowingly acting in a manner that will disrupt normal operations of computers or the network.

Privacy

Technology should not be used in a manner that infringes upon an individual's right to privacy. The following restrictions are imposed to protect your privacy, as well as the privacy of others. Users are prohibited from:

- Using computer or network services in a way that violates copyrights, patent protections or license agreements.
- Gaining unauthorized access to information that is private or protected, or attempting to do so.
- Running programs that attempt to identify passwords or codes.
- Interrupting programs that protect data or secure systems, or attempting to do so.
- Monitoring or tampering with another person's e-mail.
- Reading, copying, changing or deleting another person's work.
- Using another person's password, or allowing others to use yours.
- Attempting to gain network privileges to which you are not entitled.

Respectful Exchange of Ideas and Information

Computer systems and networks allow for a free exchange of ideas and information. This exchange serves to enhance learning, teaching, critical thinking and research. While the constitutional right of free speech applies to communication in all forms, we encourage civil and respectful discourse. College policy and local, state and federal law do prohibit some forms of communication, to include:

- Obscenity.
- Defamation.
- Advocacy directed to incite or produce lawless action.
- Threats of violence.
- Disruption of the academic environment.
- Harassment based on sex, race, disability or other protected status.

- [ROTC](#)
- [Student & Academic Life](#)
- [Student Accounts](#)
- [Student Conduct, Mediation and Education](#)
- [Student Development & Hammond Campus Center](#)
- [Student Escort Service](#)
- [Student Support Services](#)
- [Teaching American History Program](#)
- [Tutor Center](#)
- [Upward Bound](#)
- [Wallace Civic Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

- Anonymous or repeated messages designed to annoy, abuse or torment.

Personal Responsibility

Each individual who obtains a computer/e-mail account, or uses the computers and network resources made available by FSC, must understand that he/she is accountable for the policies set forth in this document. In addition, users assume responsibility for:

- Protection of his or her password.
- Reporting any breach of system security.
- Reporting unauthorized use of his or her account.
- Changing his or her password on a regular basis.
- Frequently making back-up copies of your work to ensure against loss.
- Clearly label works and opinions as his/her own before they are widely distributed.

Authority

The FSC Information Technology Department may access other's files for the maintenance of networks, computers and storage systems. In all cases, individual's rights to privacy will be respected to the greatest degree possible. Office staff may also routinely monitor and log usage data, such as network connection times, CPU and disk utilization for each user, security audit trails, and network loading. Data collected may be reviewed and further investigated should evidence of violation of policy or law occur. If necessary, staff may monitor the activities and files of specific users on their computers and networks. Any staff member who believes such monitoring is necessary should discuss the problem and strategy for investigation with the appropriate Information Technology Director.

FSC's Information Technology Department will review alleged violations of this Acceptable Use Policy on a case-by-case basis. Violations of policy will result in appropriate action, such as: loss of electronic mail privilege, loss of computer privilege, loss of network privilege, or referral to appropriate authorities.

Disclaimer

All parties submitting materials to the Information Technology Department network represent and warrant that the submission, installation, copying, distribution, and use of such materials in connection with the Information Technology network will not violate any other party's proprietary rights. The user understands and agrees that FSC is not responsible for any errors created in or damage to materials as a result of the installation or maintenance on the

Information Technology network servers, or their use by anyone accessing FSC servers. All use of the Information Technology network must be in accordance with existing FSC regulations for computer use. Official Information Technology network pages may contain links to other pages not sanctioned by the college.

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