
Effective Date: July 15, 2014

POLICY

ETHICS, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Conditions of Use and Policy on Computing Ethics

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Office of the Vice President Information Services and Technology

Conditions of Use

In the Policy below, the term “computing facility” means any and all forms of computer-related equipment, tools, and intellectual property. This includes computer systems, personal computers, computer networks, and all forms of software, firmware, operating software, and application software, which are owned, leased, or arranged for by the University or which the University possesses, has custody over, or controls. To be clear, “computing facility” includes cloud or internet-based services arranged for by the University or generally available cloud or internet-based services that you use to conduct University business or store University data.

By using the University's computing facilities, you agree and are on notice that the University has made no representation as to the privacy of any communication or data stored on or sent through these facilities; that the University has reserved the rights set forth below and in the Boston University [Information Security Policy](#) and Policy on Computing Ethics; and that the use of these facilities is limited to University-authorized purposes.

The use of the University's computing facilities in connection with University activities and de minimis personal use is a privilege extended to various members of the University community; it is not a right. Users of the University's computing facilities are required to comply with, and by using such facilities agree that they are on notice of and agree to comply with, be subject to, and grant the University the right to implement, the Boston University Information Security Policy, the Policy on Computing Ethics and these Conditions of Use. Users also agree to comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws and to refrain from engaging in any activity that is inconsistent with the University's tax-exempt status or that would subject the University to liability. The University reserves the right to amend these Conditions and Policies at any time without prior notice and to take such further actions as may be necessary or appropriate to comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

To protect the integrity of the University's computing facilities and its users against unauthorized or improper use of those facilities, and to investigate possible use of those facilities in violation of or in aid of violation of University rules and policies, Boston University reserves the right, without notice, to limit or restrict any individual's use, and to inspect, copy, remove or otherwise alter any data, file, or system resource which may undermine the authorized use of any computing facility or which is used in violation of University rules or policies. Boston University also reserves the right periodically to examine any system and any other rights necessary to protect its computing facilities.

The University is not responsible for loss of data or interference with files resulting from its efforts to maintain the privacy and security of those computing facilities, system malfunction, or any other cause.

The University reserves the right to amend these Conditions of Use at any time without prior notice and to take such further actions as may be necessary or appropriate to comply with other published policies and with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Policy on Computing Ethics

Thousands of users share the computing facilities at Boston University. These facilities must be used responsibly; misuse by even a few individuals has the potential to disrupt University business or the work of others. You are therefore required to exercise responsible, ethical behavior when using the University's computing facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. You must use only those computing facilities which the University has authorized you to use. The unauthorized use of computing facilities, whether by providing false or misleading information for the purpose of accessing computing facilities or otherwise, is prohibited. You must not use University computing facilities to gain unauthorized access to computing facilities of other institutions, organizations, or individuals.
2. You may not authorize anyone to use your University accounts for any reason. You are responsible for all use of your University accounts. You must take all reasonable precautions, including password maintenance and file protection measures, to prevent use of your account by unauthorized persons. You must not share your password with others, and you should change your password regularly. You are responsible for any and all actions taken using your password regardless of whether you were the one performing those actions.
3. You must use the University's computing facilities only for the University-related purposes for which they were authorized. As with all University equipment, use of the computing facilities, including the Campus Network, for private or commercial purposes is prohibited, except as expressly authorized. You must not use the University's computing facilities for any unlawful purpose, including but not limited to the collection, installation or distribution of fraudulently or illegally obtained media files or software. Use of external networks or services – including cloud services – must comply with the policies of acceptable use published both by the University and by the organizations providing those networks or services.
4. You must not access, alter, copy, move or remove information, proprietary software or other files (including programs, members of subroutine libraries, data, and electronic mail) without prior authorization from the appropriate University data trustee, security officer, or other responsible party. You must not copy, distribute, display, or disclose third-party proprietary software without prior authorization from the licensor. Proprietary software must not be installed on systems not properly licensed for its use.

5. You must not use any computing facility irresponsibly or in a way that might needlessly interfere with the work of others. This includes transmitting or making accessible offensive, annoying, or harassing material, or materials such as chain letters, unauthorized mass mailings, or unsolicited advertising; intentionally, recklessly, or negligently damaging any system, material, or information not belonging to you; intentionally intercepting electronic communications or otherwise violating the privacy of others or accessing information not belonging to or intended for you; intentionally misusing system resources or making it possible for others to do so; or loading software or data from untrustworthy sources, such as freeware, onto administrative systems.
6. You are encouraged to report any violation of these guidelines by another individual and any information relating to a flaw in or bypass of computing facility security to BU Information Security, the Information System & Technology Help Center, or the Office of Internal Audit.

The unauthorized or improper use of Boston University's computing facilities, including the failure to comply with the above guidelines, constitutes a violation of University policy. Any questions about this policy or of the applicability of this policy to a particular situation should be referred to BU [Information Security](#), the [Information System & Technology Help Center](#), or the [Office of Internal Audit](#).

The University reserves the right to amend this Policy on Computing Ethics at any time without prior notice and to take such further actions as may be necessary or appropriate to comply with other published policies and with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

END OF POLICY TEXT

Additional Resources Regarding This Policy

Related Policies and Procedures

- [Policy on Access to Electronic Information](#)

- [Website Policy](#)

- [Listing of related BU TechWeb Policies](#)

This Policy is also a part of the [**Faculty Handbook**](#) section on [**Ethics and Activities**](#).

Categories: Acceptable Use, Ethics, Faculty Handbook: Ethics and Activities, Information Management, Information Technology Use, Access, and Security, Student Codes of Conduct, University Policies Affecting Student Life, Workplace Keywords: Acceptable Use, E-mail, Email