

Your Responsibilities as a Member of the Chowan Network

Chowan University provides access to its computer network to members of the campus community, and promotes the development of a community of electronic learners with rights and responsibilities. The Chowan computer network is essential to meeting the educational, informational, operational, and financial needs of the institution. The university provides access to the network with the understanding that network use, like other areas of campus life, will be guided by the university mission statement. Chowan's mission statement is:

Chowan University is a four-year coeducational institution committed to excellence in teaching, learning, and service. The university provides the environment for students to become learners who possess the skills, knowledge, creativity, and ethical values necessary to survive and flourish in a rapidly changing, culturally diverse, global society. Chowan University, as a church-related institution, was founded upon and is dedicated to Judeo-Christian values. Consistent with this heritage, the university is guided by the historic principles of religious and intellectual freedom, academic excellence, the dignity and worth of each individual, an atmosphere of open dialogue, freedom of inquiry and expression, and a moral commitment to the pursuit of truth.

The university fulfills its mission with a careful blend of both liberal arts courses and professional courses. Recognizing that such a blend of knowledge and experience is particularly suited to the needs of contemporary society, Chowan takes as a priority the need to connect general education with specialized education, theoretical learning with practical learning, and intellectual skills with vocational skills. These connections are emphasized throughout the four years normally required to satisfy graduation requirements.

The university meets the academic, social, and spiritual needs of its students by affording personal attention in a caring context, providing extracurricular opportunities which facilitate positive life experiences, furnishing diverse programs maintained in appropriately appointed physical facilities, promoting and supporting the ideal of responsibility to self and others, and employing a qualified and diverse faculty and staff who are committed to the mission of the institution.

The campus computer network is part of that "environment" in which the university expects students to demonstrate their developing "skills, knowledge, creativity, and ethical values." When you use the

campus computer network, you do so as a member of a community of learners who share “a moral commitment to the pursuit of truth.” Responsible participation in this community requires respecting the values inherent in the university’s mission and abiding by policies that ensure the mutual benefit of all members of the community.

Respecting the Values Inherent in the University’s Mission

In accordance with its mission, Chowan upholds certain standards of community decency, promotes the development of ethical values, and emphasizes personal responsibility. The values inherent in the university’s mission statement have specific implications for how the university’s computer and other resources will be used. These include:

- a. *Academic Excellence*—To insure that computer resources are used in ways that promote academic excellence, educational use has priority over other uses. Use of the network in ways that limit others’ educational use—such as time-consuming or multiple-terminal-consuming game playing or excessive message-sending during peak lab hours—violates the university’s commitment to academic excellence by interfering with others’ use of the computers to pursue educational goals. Talking and noise making in the computer labs also diminishes others’ opportunity to use the computer resources for educational purposes. Computer labs are designated only for Chowan students, faculty, and staff. Children and unauthorized guests are not allowed in the computer labs.
- b. *The Dignity and Worth of Each Individual*. Each member of the network community is expected not only to respect the basic rights of others, but to act in ways that respect the equal dignity and worth of all persons regardless of race, class, sex, or creed. Accessing or sending racially or sexually degrading or harassing materials is not in keeping with the dignity and worth of individuals.

Pornographic materials, because they tend to reduce persons to objects, fail to respect the dignity and worth of whole individuals. Viewing such materials in the computer labs is not only offensive to the decency of others, but can also create an atmosphere of sexual harassment.

- c. *An Atmosphere of Open Dialogue.* Open dialogue is essential to learning. Therefore, every member of the network community has a right to enter into dialogue without fear of harassment. Practices such as “flaming,” personal attacks, and sending harassing messages diminish the possibility of open dialogue.
- d. *Freedom of Inquiry and Expression.* All members of the network community possess a basic right to freedom of inquiry and expression, and a responsibility to exercise that right within the bounds of decency and ethical responsibility. Members of the network community will at all times respect the intellectual property rights of others and will conduct themselves in keeping with copyright and other laws.
- e. *A Moral Commitment to the Pursuit of Truth.* Participation in the network community is guided by our common commitment to the pursuit of truth. Because all information available through computer networks is not equally worthy of attention, network members will need to exercise discernment in the acquisition and dissemination of information via the computer network just as they do in the classroom.

Abiding by Policies for the Mutual Benefit of All

The Chowan University “Policy on Use of Computers and Data” has been devised to ensure that the university’s computer resources are utilized in ways that ensure the greatest possible benefit to all

users and to the institution. Responsible membership in the network community requires abiding by the rules and guidelines set forth in the Policy statement.

Approved and endorsed by the Director of Information Technology, Jay Howell 10/17/2006