

Use Of Computers and Data Policy
Chowan University, Murfreesboro, NC

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define responsible and ethical behavior of all users in order to preserve the availability and integrity of university resources.

Chowan University provides and maintains computing and telecommunications technologies through the Office of Information Technology and various departmental computer systems. The university relies heavily upon these systems to meet educational, informational, operational, and financial needs. These systems and machines must be protected from misuse and unauthorized access. Chowan's computers, computer systems, and computer networks, as well as the data they store and process, must be operated and maintained in a secure environment and in a responsible manner.

This policy applies to all university computer systems and refers to all hardware, data, software, and networks associated with these computers. This policy covers all computers and servers ranging from single user personal computers to those connected to any university network. Academic departments may have individual policies in addition to this general policy. In addition to this acceptable use policy, users of these computer systems are subject to applicable state and federal laws.

Computing resources are provided to support the education, research, and work of its students, faculty, and staff. The priorities for use of these resources are:

- HIGHEST:** All education, research, and administrative purposes of Chowan University.
- MEDIUM:** Other uses indirectly related to Chowan's purposes with education or research benefit, including personal communications.
- LOWEST:** Recreation, including game playing.
- FORBIDDEN:** Includes, but is not limited to, selling Chowan's resources, commercial activities not sanctioned by the President's office, intentionally denying or interfering with service, unauthorized use or access, reading or modifying files without proper authorization, using the technology to impersonate another, violations of laws or other Chowan policies.

II. Computer Use Guidelines

To ensure continued compliance with computer usage guidelines, Chowan University designates certain personnel to investigate alleged computer abuses. The university reserves the right to examine files in such cases.

A. Use of Chowan Facilities

All users (students, faculty, staff and authorized others):

- should report any malfunction to the person on duty or to the organization responsible for the facility immediately. Do not attempt to move repair, reconfigure, modify or attach devices to the systems.
- are requested to finish any food or drink before using computing facilities.
- are to recognize that academic use of the workstations have priority over all other uses. Recreational use in computing facilities is permitted during periods of light usage; however, you may not play games or engage in other recreational activities when others are waiting to use the workstations for academic purposes.
- must realize that individual computing center facilities and other university facilities may post additional operational rules and restrictions that are considered part of this policy.
- must not load or modify any software onto any hard drive without specific prior permission of the system administrator or custodian of the files.

B. Authorization and Security

For each user, authorization to computer resources includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail, administrative records, library services and departmental-specific programs.

Each user:

- must have a valid, authorized account and may only use those computer resources which are specifically authorized;
- may only use his/her account in accordance with its authorized purpose;
- is responsible for safeguarding his/her computing accounts and should change passwords often

to ensure privacy and security.

C. Honor Code

Users:

- must not use the computer systems to violate any rules in the *Employee Handbook* or the *Chowan University Student Handbook* or any local, state, or federal laws.
- should disclose to the appropriate authorities misuses of the computing resources or potential loopholes in computer systems security and cooperate with the systems administrator in the investigations of abuses.

III. Common Forms of Computer Abuse

Misuse or abuse of the university's computers, computer systems, computer networks, programs and data is forbidden. Violations in the areas listed below will be considered academic misconduct, misdemeanor, or felony as appropriate to the situation and will be dealt with accordingly (see Section IV of this policy).

A. Privacy

Violations of the university's or another user's privacy include, but are not limited to, the following:

- attempting to access another user's computer files without permission;
- supplying or attempting to supply false and misleading information or identification in order to access another user's account;
- the unauthorized "borrowing" or examination of another user's output;
- deliberate, unauthorized attempts to access or use the university's computers, computer facilities, networks, programs, data, or any system files other than those designated for public access;
- connecting a wireless access point to the network without authorization by the Information Technology department;
- the unauthorized manipulation of the university's computer systems, programs, or data;
- the unauthorized capturing of computer network data directly from the network backbone or networking media.

B. Theft

Violations in this area include, but are not limited to:

- abusing specific computer resources such as the Internet
- attempting unauthorized access to computers outside the university using the university's computers or communication facilities;
- removing any computer equipment (hardware, software, data, pictures, articles, or books) without proper authorization;
- copying, attempting to copy, or distributing copyrighted or licensed software, data, pictures, articles, or books without proper authorization.
- abusing printing resources such as printing material that is not academic related or pertaining to university business.

C. Vandalism

Alteration or attempted alteration of programs, digital data or other files, as well as resource or equipment destruction or disruption is considered vandalism. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- the installation of software or the intentional spreading of viruses which causes harm to computer systems or to another user's account;
- tampering with or obstructing the university's computer systems;
- inspecting, modifying or distributing data or software without proper authorization or attempting to do so;
- damaging computer hardware and software.

Any intentional attempt to harm or destroy data or equipment will result in immediate cancellation of user privileges and require restitution.

D. Copyright Issues

The university owns licenses to a number of proprietary programs. Users who redistribute software from the computing systems break agreements with the university's software suppliers as well as applicable federal copyright patent and trade secret laws. Therefore, the redistribution of any software from computing systems is strictly prohibited except in the case of software, which is clearly marked as being

in the public domain. Chowan University will not provide legal defense for individuals who may be accused of making unauthorized copies. If the university is sued or fined because of unauthorized copying or use by students, faculty or staff, it may seek payment from the individuals as well as subject them to disciplinary action that may include expulsion or dismissal.

Violations include, but are not limited to copying, transmitting or disclosing data, software or documentation without proper authorization.

E. Harassment

Harassment of others may be the sending, viewing or printing of unwanted messages or files.

Violations include, but are not limited to:

- interfering with the legitimate work of another user;
- the sending of abusive or obscene messages via computers;
- the use of computer resources to engage in abuse of computer personnel or other users.

F. Games, Chain Letters and Miscellaneous

Unethical, inappropriate, or illegal use is prohibited. Uses commonly considered unethical include, but are not limited to:

- sending chain letters or unauthorized mass mailings. Chain letters and unauthorized mass mailings may be prohibited by State and Federal law;
- using the network for non-professional or illegal activities, which may include obscenity, pornography, threats, harassment, copyright infringement, defamation, theft, or unauthorized access.

IV. Penalties

Misuse or abuse of computing services is not simply unethical; it can be a violation of user responsibility as well as Federal law. Therefore, Chowan University will take appropriate action in response to user misuses, unethical use, or abuse of computing services. Actions may include, but are not limited to the following:

- access to all facilities and systems may be suspended temporarily or removed permanently;
- legal action may be taken to recover the damages;
- referral to law enforcement authorities outside Chowan University;

Alleged abuse or misuse of computing services by students, faculty or staff will be referred to the Director of Information Technology. If evidence of a violation is found, the matter will be dealt with by the Director of Information Technology or referred to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and/or the Vice President of Student Affairs and be treated as misconduct, misdemeanor, or felony as appropriate. After referral to the appropriate office, violations, depending upon their gravity, will result in sanctions ranging from the following:

- suspension of the user's account until the user has a conference with the Director of Information Technology.
- suspension of the user's account for a period of one week.
- suspension of the user's account for the remainder of the semester
- preliminary suspension
- suspension from the university
- expulsion from the university

A user has the right to a fair hearing by the appropriate disciplinary committee concerning the policy violation and the disciplinary action recommended.

V. Distribution of this Policy

Chowan University will ensure that all users are aware of the policy by publishing and distributing it in appropriate media to reach all faculty, staff and students.

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