

Electronic Mail (E-mail) Policy

Purpose

To set forth policies uniquely applicable to the College's electronic mail services, to clarify points of law associated with such, and to reference links to any related College policies.

Guidelines

1. Provision of Service
 - a. E-mail is a mechanism for official communication within Cabarrus College of Health Sciences.
 - b. E-mail services are provided to administration, faculty, staff and students at CCHS in support of the College's mission statement.
 - c. The College has the right to expect that such communications will be received and read in a timely fashion.
 - d. Official E-mail communications are intended only to meet the academic and administrative needs of the campus community.
 - e. As the steward of this process, the Support Services Division of the College in conjunction with the Technology Task Force, is responsible for defining and directing the use of the official College E-mail system.
2. General Use Cautions
 - a. The forwarding of a message or accidentally responding to a listserv may unintentionally broadcast an e-mail message widely. Have a reasonable knowledge of E-mail senders who direct E-mail to your Inbox.
 - b. Remember that there is no way to guarantee that the purported sender of an e-mail message was in fact the real sender of the message. It is relatively easy to disguise an electronic identity.
 - c. Printed e-mail Official Records should follow the corresponding hard-copy record retention and disposition policies and guidelines.
 - d. Public Records are much more broadly defined than Official Records and may be considered to include, in certain circumstances, any information including all e-mail produced or received on College provided systems.
 - e. Public Records, including e-mail, may be subject to disclosure under state public records law, or other applicable law, including by subpoena, that they:
 - (1) Comply with all state and federal laws.
 - (2) Follow the normal standards of professional courtesy and conduct.
 - (3) Follow the official records retention and disposition policies and schedules.
 - (4) Respect copyright, proprietary rights, privacy laws.
3. College Property
 - a. E-mail services are extended for the sole use of college administration, faculty, staff, students and other appropriately authorized users to accomplish tasks related to and consistent with the College's mission.
 - b. College e-mail systems and services are College facilities, property and resources as those terms are used in College policies and applicable law.

- c. Any e-mail address or account assigned by the College to individuals, subunits, or functions of the College, is the property of the College.
4. Authorized Service Restrictions
- a. E-mail users are required to comply with state and federal law, College policies, and normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct.
 - b. Access to College e-mail services is a privilege that may be wholly or partially restricted by the College without prior notice and without the consent of the e-mail user:
 - (1) When required by and consistent with applicable law or policy
 - (2) When there is a reasonable suspicion that violations of policy or law have occurred or may occur
 - (3) When required to meet time-dependent, critical operational needs.
 - c. Such access restrictions are subject to the approval of the appropriate College supervisory or management authority (e.g., department heads, systems managers, etc.).
 - d. The autonomous operational units of the College should establish or identify these authority levels.
5. Authorized Access and Disclosure
- a. The College may permit the inspection, monitoring, or disclosure of student, faculty, staff and administration e-mail in certain circumstances.
 - b. Users are required to comply with College requests for access to and copies of College e-mail records when access or disclosure is required or allowed by applicable law or policy, regardless of whether such records reside on a computer housed or owned by the College.
 - c. Failure to comply with such requests can lead to disciplinary or other legal action pursuant to applicable law or policy, including but not limited to appropriate College personnel policies or Codes of Conduct.
6. Personal Use
- a. College e-mail services may be used for incidental personal purposes provided that such use does not:
 - (1) directly or indirectly interfere with the College operation of computing facilities or e-mail services (high volume, virus problems, inappropriateness)
 - (2) interfere with the e-mail users' employment or other obligations to the College
 - (3) violate this Policy, or any other applicable policy or law, including but not limited to use for personal gain, conflict of interest or commitment, harassment, defamation, copyright violation or illegal activities.
7. Confidentiality
- a. The confidentiality of e-mail **cannot be assured**, and such confidentiality may be compromised by access consistent with applicable law or policy, including this Policy, by unintended redistribution, or due to current technologies inadequate to protect against unauthorized access. Users, therefore, should exercise extreme caution in using e-mail to communicate confidential or sensitive matters, and should not assume that their e-mail is private or confidential.

- b. Users may not access, use, or disclose personal or confidential information without appropriate authorization, and must take necessary precautions to protect confidentiality of personal or confidential information encountered in the performance of their duties or otherwise.
8. Security and Preservation
- a. E-mail to users and operators must follow sound professional practices in providing for the security of e-mail records, data, applications programs, and systems programs under their jurisdiction.
 - b. Users and operators must guard against storage media deterioration and rapid technological changes which render e-mail records inaccessible due to hardware or software obsolescence.
 - c. Users are responsible for safeguarding their identification, login names, and passwords, and should use them only as authorized.
 - d. Students are required to maintain their E-mail accounts by:
 - (1) Checking E-mails regularly (at least twice per week) especially during periods of high information dissemination (beginning and end of semester, mid-term, inclement weather, etc.)
 - (2) Archiving E-mails that may be of importance on their home computer systems.
 - (3) Deleting E-mails from their Inbox, Deleted Items Folder, and Sent Items Folder that have no direct relation to College activities.
 - e. Recommended hardware/software specifications include:
 - (1) Pentium III or equivalent processor
 - (2) 256 Mb RAM or greater
 - (3) 10 GB HDD or greater
 - (4) CD/DVD ROM
 - (5) Sound Card
 - (6) 56K modem, 10-100 Ethernet, or wireless access to the Internet
 - (7) Private Internet Account (Cable or DSL preferred)
 - (8) Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher
 - (9) Windows 2000, XP, or higher
 - (10) Microsoft Office 2003 Professional recommended
 - (11) Special Software – Antivirus (Norton's), SpyBot or AdAware, Adobe Reader, Winzip, and Media Player software e.g. Windows Media Player v.9 or higher, QuickTime, and Real Media Player
9. Violations:
- a. Using e-mail for illegal activities is strictly prohibited.
 - b. Failure to follow state law with regard to the disposition of mail records can lead to criminal charges.
 - c. College e-mail services may not be used for commercial activities not approved by the appropriate supervisory College personnel consistent with applicable policy.
 - d. Associated College policies include, but are not limited to, those policies and guidelines regarding personnel, intellectual property, or those regarding sexual or other forms of harassment.
 - e. E-mail users shall not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of the College or any unit of the College unless expressly authorized to do so.

- f. College e-mail services may not be used as a medium for the resolution of grievances nor appeals.
 - g. College e-mail services may not be used to access, read, use, transfer or tamper with accounts or files that you are not authorized to use.
 - h. College e-mail services may not be used to alter system software or hardware configurations without authorization.
 - i. College e-mail services may not be used to libel or otherwise defame others via e-mail.
 - j. College e-mail services may not be used to participate in illegal activities such as making threats, harassment, theft, breaching security measures, gambling or violating other applicable law or policy.
 - k. College e-mail services may not be used to engage in commercial activities not approved by the appropriate authority.
 - l. College e-mail services may not be used to engage in activities for personal financial gain except as permitted under applicable academic policies.
 - m. College e-mail services may not be used to violate College policies and guidelines.
 - n. College e-mail services may not be used to send or forward chain letters, letter-bombs, inappropriate jokes, or spam.
10. Discovering and Reporting Incidents involving E-mail violations:
- a. Suspected or known violations of CCHS E-mail policy or law should be confidentially reported to the appropriate supervisory level for the operational unit in which the violation occurs.
11. Penalties
- a. According to the severity of the offense, proper disciplinary action will be initiated that will include, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:
 - (1) Due process
 - (2) Written warnings
 - (3) Loss of E-mail privilege
 - (4) Removal from the college.
 - (5) Referral to law enforcement agencies

*** Reference NEMC Corporate Policy – Electronic Mail/Messaging Systems, Filing No. 29-04, Revised Mar. 2004.

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