

Granite State College Computer & Network Acceptable Use Policy

Part 1

I. Introduction

This acceptable use policy governs the use of computers and networks at Granite State College (GSC). Users are responsible for reading and understanding this document. This document protects the consumers of computing resources, computing hardware and networks, and system administrators.

II. Rights and Responsibilities

Computers and networks can provide access to resources on and off GSC locations, as well as the ability to communicate with other users worldwide. Such open access is a privilege and requires that individual users act responsibly. Users must respect the rights of other users, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, regulations, and contractual obligations. Since electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, users must exercise care in acknowledging and respecting the work of others through strict adherence to software licensing agreements and copyright laws.

III. Existing Legal Context

All existing laws (federal, state, and/or local) and GSC/University System of New Hampshire regulations and policies apply, including not only those laws and regulations that are specific to computers and networks, but also those that may apply generally to personal conduct. Please refer to University System of New Hampshire policy on Operation and Maintenance of Property (USY.VI.F.1.1).

Users do not own accounts on GSC computers, but are granted the privilege of exclusive use. Under the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986 (Title 18 U.S.C. section 2510 et. seq.), users are entitled to privacy regarding information contained on these accounts. This act, however, allows system administrators or other GSC employees to access user files in the normal course of their employment when necessary to protect the integrity of computer systems or the rights or property of the College. For example, system administrators may examine or make copies of files that are suspected of misuse or that have been corrupted or damaged. User files may be subject to search and seizure by law enforcement agencies in compliance with a valid court order.

Note: student files at computer facilities are considered "education records" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Title 20 U.S.C. section 1232g). This Act requires notice and written consent by the student before a personal record can be provided to a third party other than officers of the institution attended by the student or as permitted by law.

Misuse of computing, networking or information resources may result in the loss of computing and/or network access. Additionally, misuse can be prosecuted under applicable statutes. Users

may be held accountable for their conduct under any applicable GSC/University System of New Hampshire policies and/or procedures. Illegal production and/or reproduction of software and other intellectual property protected by U.S. copyright law are subject to civil damages and criminal punishment including fines and imprisonment.

Other organizations operating computing and network facilities that are reachable via the CLL network may have their own policies governing the use of those resources. When accessing remote resources from GSC facilities, users are responsible for obeying both the policies set forth in this document and the policies of the other organizations.

IV. Enforcement

Minor infractions of this policy, when accidental, such as consuming excessive resources or overloading computer systems, are generally resolved informally by the unit administering the accounts or network.

Repeated minor infractions or serious misconduct may result in the temporary or permanent loss of computer access privileges or the modification of those privileges. More serious violations include, but are not limited to: unauthorized use of computer resources, attempts to steal passwords or data, unauthorized use or copying of licensed software, repeated harassment, or threatening behavior.

Any offense that violates federal, state and/or local laws may result in the immediate loss of all GSC/University System of New Hampshire computing privileges and will be referred to appropriate CLL administrators and/or law enforcement authorities.

These are circumstances when a user's access to IT resources may be deactivated or terminated or expectations of privacy may be waived under the following special conditions which fall under the procedural safeguards found in the USNH Online Policy Manual, <http://usnh.unh.edu/OLPM/USY/VI/Prop/htm> (see 4.4)

- Diagnosis: when necessary to identify or diagnose systems or security vulnerabilities and problems, or otherwise preserve the integrity of IT resources
- As required by law: when required by federal, state, and/or local law or administrative rules
- Reasonable grounds: when there are reasonable grounds to believe that a violation of law or policy may have taken place and access and inspection or monitoring may produce evidence related to the violation
- Essential business: when such action to IT resources is required to carry out essential business functions of the College

Documentation and Review:

The process of deactivation or termination is to be documented by the Network Services Manager or designee for subsequent review by the Dean of Educational Technology and Computing and/or the appropriate GSC administrative officer.

Complaints of Alleged Violations:

An individual who believes that they are harmed by an alleged violation of this policy may file a complaint with the Dean of Educational Technology and Computing at GSC for review and action. In addition, the individual may also report the alleged violation to other appropriate GSC officers.

Reporting Observed Violation:

If an individual has observed or is aware of an alleged violation of this policy, they may report this to the Dean of Educational Technology and Computing.

Disciplinary Procedures:

When informal processes do not, or cannot, resolve the infraction(s), alleged violations will be pursued in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary procedures established for students, faculty, and staff. The Dean of Educational Technology and Computing or his/her designee may participate in formal or informal proceedings as necessary.

Appeals:

Users found in violation of this policy may appeal or request reconsideration of any imposed disciplinary action in accordance to established GSC policy and procedures.

Part 2

Conduct which violates this policy includes, but is not limited to the activities in the following list:

- Unauthorized use of a computer account.
- Using the GSC/University System of New Hampshire network to gain unauthorized access to any computer systems.
- Connecting unauthorized equipment to the GSC/University System of New Hampshire network.
- Unauthorized attempts to circumvent data protection schemes or uncover security loopholes. This includes creating and/or running programs that are designed to identify security loopholes and/or decrypt intentionally secure data.
- Knowingly or carelessly performing an act that will interfere with the normal operation of computers, terminals, peripherals, or networks.
- Knowingly or carelessly running or installing on any computer system or network, or giving to another user a program intended to damage or to place excessive load on a computer system or network. This includes, but is not limited to, programs known as computer viruses, Trojan Horses, and worms.
- Deliberately wasting/overloading computing resources, such as printing too many copies of a document.
- Violating terms of applicable software licensing agreements or copyright laws.
- Violating copyright laws and their fair use provisions through inappropriate reproduction or dissemination of copyrighted text, images, etc.
- Using GSC/University System of New Hampshire resources for commercial activity such as creating products or services for sale.

- Using electronic mail to harass or threaten others. This includes sending repeated, unwanted e-mail to another user.
- Initiating or propagating electronic chain letters.
- Inappropriate mass mailing. This includes multiple mailings to newsgroups, mailing lists, or individuals, e.g. "spamming," "flooding," or "bombing."
- Forging the identity of a user or machine in an electronic communication.
- Transmitting or reproducing materials that are harassing, slanderous or defamatory in nature, or that otherwise violate existing laws or GSC/University System of New Hampshire regulations.
- Displaying obscene, lewd, or sexually harassing images or text in a public computer facility or location that can be in view of others.
- Attempting to monitor or tamper with another user's electronic communications, or reading, copying, changing, or deleting another user's files or software without the explicit agreement of the owner.

Note: This policy has been adapted with permission from the University of California, Davis "Computer and Network Use Policy" and the "Acceptable Use Policy for Informational Technology Resources at the University of New Hampshire."