Acceptable Use of Information Resources

(4.1.3 Acceptable Use of Information Resources)

Preamble

The University of Maine System (all of its Campuses and subordinate components) endeavors to develop and provide access to collections, services, facilities, equipment, and programs which meet the information and educational needs of the University community, and to advance the research, instruction, and service missions of UMS.

In fulfillment of this purpose, and in response to advances in technology and the changing needs of the community, UMS supports open access to information resources, including the Internet, to the greatest extent possible. In return, the University expects users of information resources to be aware of and act in compliance with all relevant federal and state laws, local ordinances, and University policies. It further expects its users to be familiar and to behave consistently with the several general principles which together constitute appropriate, responsible, and ethical behavior in an academic environment, particularly in regard to the use of the University's information resources. Those principles include: Freedom of Expression, Respect for Privacy, Respect for Property Rights, Respect for Personal and Cultural Differences, Freedom from Harassment, Respect for and Compliance with Intellectual Property Rights and Copyright Law.

While the University of Maine System respects the need for privacy, users can expect the files and data he or she generates to be private when information systems are functioning properly unless they have taken action to reveal it to others. User should be aware that no information system is completely secure as there constant attempts to compromise these systems by external parties and others.

The University of Maine System affirms that it will be a partner with users in promoting education and understanding of the appropriate, efficient, and successful use of information resources.

Responsibilities

All users of University of Maine System information resources are expected to behave responsibly, legally, and ethically in their use of all information resources. To that end, it is the responsibility of those users to:

- honor all state and federal laws, copyright provisions, Board of Trustees policies, and software licensing agreements to which the institution is a party;
- be aware of and comply with University and the University's agencies' procedures and regulations for accessing and operating computer and related hardware, software, and other information resources;
- cooperate with legitimate requests by University staff;
- take precautions to protect accounts and passwords by selecting obscure passwords, changing them frequently, and not sharing such information or the use of the accounts with others;
download information from computers to disk whenever possible, and limit printing and photocopying to what is directly needed in order to conserve paper and to make the most efficient use of resources;

properly logoff or logout whenever leaving a computer in an area which is accessible to others; treat others with dignity and respect; respect the privacy and confidentiality rights of others, including their files and accounts; use UMS information resources only for purposes which are legal and consistent with the University's mission.

Consistent with the above, unacceptable uses and behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- damaging or attempting to alter computer equipment;
- violating, or attempting to violate, computer system security;
- violating, or attempting to violate, software license agreements;
- incurring unauthorized or unreasonable costs for the University;
- accessing files, data, or passwords of others without authorization;
- disrupting or monitoring electronic communications without authorization;
- harassing other computer users or University staff;
- violating the privacy of others;
- libeling or slandering others;
- using any University workstation for any illegal purpose;
- copying or distributing copyright-protected material without legal right or authorization;
- intentionally and unnecessarily exposing others to material they may find personally unsuitable.

Information Technology Assets (Desktops, Mobile Devices, etc.) provided to employees (Faculty and Staff) are for University Business and limited personal use consistent with Board Policies on Intellectual Property (www.maine.edu/pdf/intprop.pdf) and Conflict of Interest (www.maine.edu/system/policy_manual/policy_section410.php).

Results of Inappropriate Behavior

It is important to recognize that inappropriate behavior has an adverse effect on the work of others, on the ability of University staff to provide good service, and/or on information resources themselves. Thus it is expected that users of information resources at UMS will be constructively responsive to others' complaints, and receptive to University staff's reasonable requests for changes in behavior or action.

University staff will attempt to resolve differences and problems among information users by asking for the cooperation of those involved, and for compliance with University policies.

The University will pursue infractions or misconduct that cannot be resolved informally with the general means it has available to it within the University and with law enforcement, as appropriate.

Serious infractions or misconduct may result in temporary or permanent loss of access privileges.

Guiding Principles

The University of Maine System supports the democratic principle of freedom of access to information for every citizen. The University endorses: the American Library Association (ALA)'s Library Bill of
Rights: ALA’s Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, adopted by ALA in 1996.

UMS does not attempt to limit access to, or otherwise protect users of information resources from any particular materials available in any format, beyond the choices it makes in selecting materials or providing electronic links to information sources of particular merit. UMS does limit access to Compliant and Business Sensitive Data based on a need to know.

UMS does not monitor, and has no control over, information accessible through the Internet. The University disclaims any warranty for any information found on the Internet as to its accuracy, authority, timeliness, usefulness, or fitness for a particular purpose. Likewise, the University disclaims any control over, or knowledge about, changes in content to the sources for which it has established links, or for the content of sources accessed through secondary links.

The Internet contains much information that is personally, academically, professionally, and culturally enriching. It also provides material that may be factually incorrect, offensive, disturbing to some individuals, and/or illegal. Moreover, the Internet may not be an adequate substitute for many other kinds of information resources which may be limited by copyright or other restrictions to local use.

While the University is committed to serving the general public to the greatest extent possible, it reserves the right to give priority in service to the UMS community (students, faculty, and staff), especially in the case of a high level of demand for limited equipment and materials. This may include limiting the amount of time users may have to use certain information resources and supporting equipment. Moreover, access to some information resources must be limited based on licensing or other contractual agreements with vendors.

Individual Campuses or units may enact additional Acceptable Use Standards that include this Policy at a minimum

The Campus Information Technology Director will notify the University of Maine System Information Security Office of any significant violation of acceptable use including any violation that may have implications beyond a single campus or may involve loss of private, financial, or medical information.