Policy for Acceptable Use of Technology Resources

Introduction

Wallace State Community College provides high-speed access to the Internet, e-mail, and network services through a Switched Ethernet Network interconnected by a fiber optic backbone. The network is provided for use by WSCC students, faculty, and staff and is to be used for education, academic inquiry, and public service only.

The college's network/Internet provides students with a quality learning environment by promoting a flexible delivery method of instruction, innovative technology, and state-of-the-art concepts in instruction. It also contributes to a growth-oriented learning environment for employees by promoting faculty and staff professional development opportunities. Through efficient management of the college's network/Internet resources and facilities, WSCC serves as a learning partner for its community and regional stakeholders. In addition, the college's technology infrastructure and resources support the college's administrative and operational processes, thereby strengthening its outreach, programs, and services.

Statement of Policy

1. Ethical and Responsible Use of the Network/Internet
   a. All users must be accountable for using these resources in an effective, ethical, and lawful manner. At any time and without prior notice, Wallace State Community College reserves the right to examine e-mail, personal file directories, or any other information stored on WSCC computers or equipment. This action will only be allowed with the express approval of the college president or presidential designee, and/or at the request of authorized law enforcement personnel.
   b. The appropriate system administrator monitors access to the Internet.
   c. Use of the Internet through college resources constitutes acceptance of such monitoring.
   d. This policy should be read and interpreted in conjunction with all other WSCC policies, including, but not limited to, policies prohibiting harassment, discrimination, offensive conduct, or inappropriate behavior.
   e. Users are prohibited from accessing the Internet for any unethical or immoral purpose, including any activity associated with pornography, obscenity, violence, gambling, racism, harassment, personal gain, or any illegal activity.
   f. Users are discouraged from using profanity or vulgarity when posting electronic mail via the Internet or posting to public forums (i.e., news groups). Any electronic mail sent through posting to public news groups must fall within these ethical standards.
   g. All users must abide by all federal and state laws with regard to information sent through the Internet. Unauthorized release or disclosure of information through the Internet or through any other means is strictly prohibited. Proprietary or confidential information pertaining to the college shall not be transmitted over the Internet.
   h. All users are prohibited from using Internet access through Wallace State's systems for any political or personal profit-making activities.
   i. Any recorded material must be reviewed by users for completeness and appropriateness. Users are responsible for any content they post. In particular, Tegrity (Wallace State's preferred presentation capture service for instructional purposes) recordings should be reviewed to ensure they do not contain any extraneous recorded content before, during, or with the main content recording.
   j. Any and all material in violation of this policy shall not be forwarded to any individual or entity inside or outside Wallace State's network. This restriction includes, but is not limited to, e-mails that are forwarded to other individuals.

k. Users are forbidden from engaging in any activity which is in violation of the Code of Alabama (1975) §§ 36-25-1 through 36-25-30, as amended (the "State Ethics Law"), or which, in the opinion of the WSCC administration, may be contrary to such law.

2. Accounts
    a. The appropriate system administrator must approve all accounts and issue passwords allowing access to the college network/Internet resources. The user must be authenticated through a Wallace State Community College-assigned network user name and password.
    b. The user name and password, including those used to access e-mail or an instructional platform such as Canvas, are the responsibility of the individual to whom they are assigned. Any individual other than the person to whom they are assigned shall not use the user name and password or any other assigned authorization. Violations of this policy or any other policy through the unauthorized use of the user name and password subjects the individual to whom the user name and password are assigned to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
    c. Users should not leave a computer logged on when vacating a workstation. The user is responsible for his or her account and any content left on the computer. Leaving an unattended logged-on computer puts the user and the institution at risk.
    d. In the event Wallace State Community College no longer employs an individual, it is the responsibility of Human Resources to notify the appropriate system administrator to close the former employee's account.
    e. Proper identification must be used in any electronic correspondence, and valid, traceable identification provided if required by applications or servers within the Wallace State computing facilities.

3. Software
    a. To prevent computer viruses from being transmitted through the system, no unauthorized downloading or installation of any software is permitted. Software downloads and installation shall be done only after approval and/or assistance from the appropriate system administrator.
    b.   Streaming media and music and video downloads are prohibited unless authorized by the appropriate system administrator.
    c. Point to point (P2P) file sharing is prohibited unless authorized by the appropriate system administrator.

4. Copyright Issues
    a. All college network/Internet users must adhere to the copyright laws regarding software, data, and authored files. Users may not transmit copyrighted materials belonging to entities other than this college. Users should exercise caution when downloading material from an Internet source as such action may constitute violation of copyright laws.
    b. It is permitted for Web pages to be printed and material downloaded from the Internet for informational purposes as long as the purpose for such copying falls into the category of "fair use." "Fair use" is defined as the doctrine that copyright material may be quoted verbatim, provided that attribution is clearly given and that the material quoted is reasonably brief in extent.
    c. The college is not responsible for copyright infringement by a user. Such responsibility shall lie solely with the user.
    d. Users guilty of deliberate copyright infringement shall be subject to disciplinary action, including possible suspension, expulsion, or termination.

5. Personally Owned Computer Hardware/Software
    a. Personally owned software cannot be loaded onto a college-owned computer unless it is directly related to the job position and is approved by the appropriate system administrator. If any approved personally-owned computer software is loaded onto a college-owned computer, the license and documents must remain with the college computer on campus in the event of an audit.
    b. Computer hard drives may not be installed or removed without the express written consent of authorized personnel.

6. Privacy of Information
    a. Information passing through or stored on any Wallace State Community College electronic network or communication or computer system may be seen by others for a variety of reasons. Routine administration, management, or audit functions may require information stored or transmitted via Wallace State Community College computers and networks to be intercepted. Electronic transactions may be subject to inspection by Wallace State Community College without notice. All users should fully understand that no guarantee can be made that information communicated over Wallace State Community College electronic systems or stored on Wallace State Community College systems will remain private.

b. Users should respect the privacy of others, including, but not limited to, abstaining from unauthorized access to e-mail, files, data, and transmissions.
c. All users should be aware of and comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as its restrictions on the use and dissemination of personal and academic information.
7. Computer Crimes
a. The Alabama Computer Crime Act, codified at Code of Alabama (1975) §§ 3A-8-100 through 13A-8-103, makes it a crime for a person to damage, or without authorization to modify computer equipment, computer networks, and computer programs and supplies or without authorization to access, examine, or use computer data and programs, and provides for punishment up to a Class B Felony. Federal law also makes it a crime to access computers or computer networks devoted in part to Federal purposes without proper authorization. Any violation of such State or Federal laws respecting computers shall also constitute a violation of the WSCC Policy for Acceptable Use of Technology Resources. Furthermore, this policy prohibits various actions (described below) which may or may not constitute a crime.

Conditions of Use of the Internet and E-mail

1. As a condition of access to the network/Internet resources, employees are required to sign the "Policy on Acceptable Use of Technology Resources" acknowledgement form. Students are also required to sign this form as they enter computer labs on campus. Online students view digital copies of the form in the "Getting Started" area within online courses (such as through the Canvas platform) and must acknowledge understanding of this policy by completing a quiz to open the remainder of their online course content.
2. Users under the age of 18 must have a minor consent form (Appendix B of Acceptable Use Policy) signed by their parent or legal guardian to be eligible to use the college's network/Internet resources. Access to or proper use of the Internet by a minor is solely the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.
3. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including discharge in accordance with guidelines provided by the Alabama Community College System (SBE Policy 619.01).
4. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action as stated in the Student Handbook section of college catalog.
5. Community members utilizing open campus computers, such as those in the library, must agree to the institutional "Policy on Acceptable Use of Technology Resources" and are subject to being banned from using the college's equipment and Internet access if found in violation of its terms.

Unacceptable Use

The following activities are prohibited on all WSCC technology resources. The activities listed are for reference and are not intended to be all-inclusive.

1. Altering system software or hardware configurations without authorization of the WSCC Technology Department.
2. Accessing, via the internet or any other means of broadcasting, pornographic, obscene, or violent images or content or any other material in violation of local, state, and federal statutes. Use of resources for gambling, racism, harassment or political campaigning is also prohibited.
3. Using technology resources for illegal activities.
4. Accessing or attempting to access another user's files, e-mail or other resources without his or her permission except as otherwise provided herein.
5. Allowing unauthorized persons to utilize an authorized user's account, user name, or password.
6. Using technology resources for commercial or profit-making purposes without written authorization from WSCC.
7. Installing, copying, distributing or using software that has not been authorized by the WSCC Campus Technology Department.
8. Originating or proliferating electronic mail, broadcasts, or other messages that may be deemed as obscene, abusive, racist, or harassing.
9. Creating and/or distribution of viruses or other destructive programs.
10. Unauthorized release or disclosure of any confidential college, personnel, or student information.
11. Using any computer technology in a manner that violates patent protection or license agreements.

12. Engaging in any activity that violates copyright laws. Such activity may include utilizing WSCC technology to copy and/or distribute copyrighted materials without authorization.
13. Using WSCC computer technology to support or oppose any candidate or candidates for public office or for any other political purposes. (Use of state property for political purposes constitutes a violation of Alabama law).

Disciplinary Action

Unacceptable use is prohibited, and is grounds for loss of computing privileges, as well as discipline or legal sanctions under federal, state, and local laws. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion from the college. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including discharge in accordance with System Policy.

Social Media

Wallace State Community College recognizes the value of social media in communicating and engaging with students. The college's social media sites promote college programs, services and activities and generally further the college's mission. Students are encouraged to contribute constructively through posting on college-sponsored social media sites.

Specifically:

1. Wallace State maintains official pages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn, among others. These pages have the purpose of developing a Wallace State virtual community, supporting recruiting and retention, and fostering interactivity with the college.
2. College-sponsored social media accounts are monitored by the WSCC Marketing Department. Questions and comments are welcome; however, inappropriate or uncivil posts will be removed.
3. Public expression of opinion by students shall be in accordance with the terms and conditions specified in the WSCC Student Code of Conduct.
4. Public expression in conflict with the college's Non-Discrimination Policy may contribute to a hostile educational environment and is thus prohibited.
5. Disclosure of proprietary or confidential information is prohibited.
6. WSCC may remove any posts that do not directly support its mission, programs, or services. Posts by third parties that appear to be advertisements for other companies or organizations may also be removed.
7. If an area or student group wishes to have an item placed on a college site, send the request to the Director of Marketing.

If an area or student group wishes to create its own social media site:

1. Obtain permission from a supervisor.
2. Obtain permission from the Director of Marketing in advance of the site creation. Included in the request should be the name of social media site(s) the area wishes to use, target audience, and purpose of the social media site.
3. Neither students nor employees may use a personal account (I.e., Hotmail, Gmail, etc.) to create Wallace State sites. In some cases, a generic Wallace State e-mail account (I.e., maneissue@wallacestate.edu) may be needed to create the social media site.
4. The college requires administrative rights to any social media site that is sanctioned or sponsored by WSCC.