

2.23 Technology Resources Acceptable Use

Last Revised: January 2011

Policy Statement: Piedmont Community College's information systems and the data contained therein are owned by the College and provided solely to support the educational mission of Piedmont Community College for authorized users only. Use of these systems is subject to the laws and policies of North Carolina and Piedmont Community College. All access to and use of these systems is subject to monitoring. Unauthorized access of these information systems may subject violators to criminal, civil, and/or administrative action. Access or use of these information systems by any person whether authorized or unauthorized constitutes consent to these terms.

All employees, students, and others in the user community are expected to act responsibly and in conformity with generally accepted rules of network etiquette. All electronic data files stored or transmitted on Piedmont Community College's computer resources may be subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties by an authorized state official. (NCGS.Ch.132)

Unless specifically stated otherwise, the provisions of this policy shall apply to employee and student use of all computing and telecommunicating equipment, servers, networks, systems, and other computing and telecommunicating resources, including Internet, intranet, electronic mail, and on-line services owned, leased, rented, or otherwise provided or controlled by Piedmont Community College.

Individual divisions or departments within the College may adopt additional rules and regulations governing the use of technology resources to meet specific administrative or academic needs. Any adopted additional requirements must be in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and this policy.

The College may provide College employees, students, and other users with access to computer resources when available and desirable in the interest of furthering the educational and valid business-related purposes of the College. College-provided technology resources are to be used only with permission and only during authorized periods.

Waiver of Responsibility

Piedmont Community College makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the computer resources it may provide. The College will not be responsible for any damages suffered, including damages caused by loss of service, interruptions, or any other cause. Use of information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. Piedmont Community College specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained via its Internet service. Piedmont Community College also specifically clarifies that electronic mail/Internet messages authored by employees may not necessarily reflect the views of Piedmont Community College. There should be no expectation of privacy by any user. The College reserves the right to monitor network communications and to report illegal activities to the proper authorities.

Purpose/Definitions:

AUP: Acceptable Use Policy

Data Custodian: The President of the College is the Data Custodian and is appointed by PCC Board of Trustees.

Data Owners: Usually, the applicable Vice Presidents are the Data Owners, appointed by PCC's President.

MIS: Management Information Systems

Technology Resources: As used in this policy, the term "technology resources" shall include all computing and telecommunicating equipment, servers, networks, systems, and other computing and telecommunicating resources, including Internet, intranet, on-line services, electronic mail, and web sites.

Electronic Data Files: As used in this policy, the term "electronic data files" shall include all electronic mail, Internet records, data or other stored information, and removable media on the College's network or hardware.

Employee Acceptable Use: User access to computer resources is provided for the performance of employees' duties in the interest of furthering the educational and valid business-related purposes of the College. Technology resources are not to be considered a substitute for an employee's personal home computer and/or Internet connection.

PCC employees are responsible for the security of any data or other information they have access to in the performance of their duties. Employees are responsible for the security of their login passwords and other access codes, and they will be held accountable for the consequences of intentional or negligent disclosure of this information. Piedmont Community College authorizes confidential passwords and other secure entry identification to protect computer resources. The use of these passwords is restricted to the approved user to whom they are assigned and should not be shared under any circumstances.

Users must report any weaknesses in Piedmont Community College's computer security or any incidents of possible misuse or violation of this agreement by contacting the appropriate Vice President. Attempts to log onto the computing system as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges and other potential discipline. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access.

Employee Unacceptable Use

The following uses are prohibited:

- accessing, producing, posting, sending, or displaying pornographic, obscene, discriminatory, profane, lewd, vulgar, threatening, or sexually suggestive material, language, or images, including images of exposed private body parts;
- uses that violate state or federal laws or College policies;

- uses that may damage the College's computer resources;
- plagiarizing or infringing the copyrights or trademarks of any work, including works found on the Internet;
- use of another's ID or password, except by an authorized person in MIS;
- illegal or unauthorized use of data in folders or work files;
- use of computer systems for personal commercial purposes;
- use that may be disruptive, cause damages, or endanger students or staff; or
- accessing chat-rooms, unless for official College business.

All of the above prohibitions also apply to wireless connectivity with or without knowledge of this form and with or without consent.

Student Acceptable Use: Piedmont Community College recognizes that computer and technology resources, including Internet access and electronic mail, are valuable educational tools and can offer students diverse and unique opportunities to pursue educational goals. Computer and technology resources (under teacher supervision for a class assignment), including Internet access and electronic mail, may be made available to students in College media centers, classrooms, and/or labs and will be provided where available in accordance with this policy.

It is the intent of Piedmont Community College that College-provided Internet access be used only to pursue educational goals and objectives; however, students may find ways to access inappropriate materials. In accordance with federal law, appropriate measures, including Internet filters, will be implemented in an effort to block language and visual depictions that are obscene, offensive, lewd or pornographic, or lacking serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific values.

Students should adhere to the same standard of conduct expected and required in the classroom when using school College-provided computer and technology resources.

Computer and technology resources are the property of the College. Users should not expect that files stored on College servers and workstations will always be private. The College may monitor access to equipment, networking structures and systems, and all data stored or transmitted on College computers in order to ensure the security and performance of its equipment, systems, and networks and to enforce applicable laws and policies.

Student Unacceptable Use

The following uses are prohibited:

- accessing, producing, posting, displaying, or sending offensive messages, music or images, including images of exposed private body parts--offensive material includes obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or sexually suggestive language or images;
- sending false or defamatory information about a person or organization;
- harassing, threatening, insulting or attacking others;
- damaging or changing system settings on computers, software or networks;

- plagiarism and other violations of copyright laws;
- using another student's, instructor's or staff member's ID or password;
- Illegal or unauthorized use of data in folders or work files;
- misusing limited resources, including distributing mass e-mail messages, participating in chain letters, creating and participating in unauthorized newsgroups, storing files on file servers without proper authorization, failing to log out appropriately, and introducing computer viruses;
- using access for personal, commercial, or for-profit purposes;
- reading mail or files without the owner's permission;
- hacking or attempting to gain unauthorized access to the College network for the purpose of stealing and/or corrupting data;
- engaging in, arranging to engage in, or advocating any illegal or violent act, including accessing pornography and hate literature;
- downloading software or files without permission;
- use of a chat room, e-mail, or other electronic communications methods without permission to do so as part of a class activity or assignment;
- disclosing, using, or disseminating personally identifiable information without permission to do so as part of a class activity or assignment; or
- any other use in violation of federal or state law or Board policy.

Approval Authority/Monitoring Authority: Piedmont Community College's Board of Trustees has approval authority for this policy. The Vice President, Administrative Services has monitoring authority for this policy.

Procedure:

Consequences of Violation of Policy

In the event that an employee violates this policy, the following consequences may result:

- revocation or limitation of access privileges;
- disciplinary action;
- personal liability for damage to College technology resources caused by intentional misuse; or
- other sanctions or remedies provided by law.

Disciplinary action for employees may include termination. Disciplinary action for students may include expulsion.

Any of these consequences may be enforced alone or in conjunction with one another by the College against the violator.

Employees who violate this policy will not be defended at the expense of Piedmont Community College, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-43.

Legal Citation: N.C. Gen. Stat. 115C-43

History: Effective October 2001; revised April 2009, January 2011