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REG - 70.00.4 Responsible Use Regulation

Authority: Chancellor

Responsible Office: Information Technology Services

Contact: Information Technology Services, 919-530-7423

History: Effective Date: February 15, 2006; Reformatted/Updated: March 9, 2016; Revised: March 21, 2017, October 03, 2024; BOT Approval March 20, 2025

Related Links:

- NCCU REG 80.06.7 Faculty and Non-Faculty EHRA Employees Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Regulation (https://www.nccu.edu/policies/retrieve/132)
- NCCU POL 01.04.1 Political Activities Policy (https://www.nccu.edu/policies/retrieve/2)
- NC Statewide Information Security Manual (https://it.nc.gov/documents/statewide-policies/statewide-information-security-manual/open)
- NCGS Section 14-196.3 (Cyberstalking) (http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/BySection/Chapter_14/GS_14-196.3.html)
- NCCU REG 70.00.5 Electronic Mail (E-Mail) Regulation (https://www.nccu.edu/policies/retrieve/117)

1. Purpose

Responsible use of University computing and electronic communication resources demonstrates respect for unobstructed access, intellectual property rights, truth in communication, ownership of data, system security and integrity, and individuals' rights. Responsible use includes, but is not limited to, respecting the rights of other users, sustaining the integrity of systems and related physical resources, and complying with all relevant policies, laws, regulations, and contractual obligations.

2. Regulation

2.1 The computing and electronic communication resources that North Carolina Central University provides for faculty, staff, and students are essential to conducting the University's primary missions of teaching,

research, and public service. Protecting and preserving University computing and electronic communication resources is a cooperative effort that requires each member of the University community to act responsibly and guard against abuses.

2.2 The University's computing and electronic communication resources include its servers, networking facilities, e-mail system, personal computers, software, video distribution system, telephone system, and state-owned cell phones. This regulation applies to all users of North Carolina Central University computing and electronic communication resources, including faculty, staff, students, former students, guests, individuals not otherwise affiliated with the University, and external organizations and individuals accessing external network services, such as the Internet, through University facilities.

3. Scope

3.1 The University provides authorization to use University computing resources with the creation of a user ID and password. Students, faculty, and staff obtain a user ID upon enrollment or employment at the University. The user ID provides access to basic computing services such as the use of email, access to office automation software, the Internet, and access to systems and information. Departments or units provide access to additional resources as needed or appropriate.

3.1.1 ITS will provide periodic training regarding the appropriate use of University computing resources to users of NCCU's computing and electronic communication resources.

3.1.2 ITS will periodically update its computing and electronic communication resources offerings to the campus to address the dynamic technology environment and landscape.

3.2 Use of University computing and electronic communication resources is conditioned upon the obligation of each user to adhere to the following standards of responsible use:

4. Guidelines

Individuals who use the University's computing and electronic communication resources agree to:

4.1 Observe all federal and state laws, as well as policies of North Carolina Central University and the University of North Carolina Board of Governors in the use of University computing and electronic communication resources. The University may take any immediate steps necessary to deal with alleged violations of law or policy, including removing illegal material from the University server or other University computing or electronic communication resources.

4.2 Respect the privacy and personal rights of others by ensuring that use of University computing and electronic communication resources does not constitute an invasion of privacy, harassment, defamation, threats, intimidation, or discrimination based on race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion, or sexual orientation.

4.3 Respect and preserve the performance, integrity, and security of University computing and electronic communication resources. Ensure that use of those resources does not circumvent system security and does not achieve or aid others in achieving unauthorized access. The University may take any immediate steps necessary to deal with threats to performance or degradation of its computing and electronic communication resources.

4.4   Protect the purpose of University computing and electronic communication resources to carry out the University's primary missions by ensuring that use does not result in improper commercial gain for the University, or personal commercial gain or private profit, except as allowed under University research and intellectual property policies, "External Professional Activities of Faculty and Other Professional Staff Exempt from the State Personnel Act"; and corresponding policies and rules applicable to employees covered by the State Personnel Act.

4.5 Respect the intellectual property rights of others by ensuring that use of University computing and electronic communication resources does not violate any copyright or trademark laws, or University licensing agreements (including licensed software).

5. Appropriate Uses

Examples of computer and network uses that are appropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

5.1 Use of computers in student labs for class assignments.

5.2 Instructor preparation.

5.3 Thesis and dissertation research support.

5.4 Publishable research.

5.5 Personal computing to improve computing literacy, or to learn new computer hardware and software.

5.6 Use of public computers for review of available individual or campus information.

5.7 Use of computers provided by the university to faculty and staff in support of their work;

5.8 Approved use of the university's information and administrative systems; and use of Internet resources to promote collegial interaction and research.

6. Violations

Violations of responsible use of University computing and electronic communication resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

6.1 Use of another user's User ID.

6.2 Accessing or transmitting information that belongs to another user or for which no authorization has been granted.

6.3 Any attempt to make unauthorized changes to information stored on the University's computer systems.

6.4 Unauthorized copying of information stored on the University's computer systems.

6.5 The tapping of phone or network lines in violation of any federal or state law.

6.6 If any action that jeopardizes the availability or integrity of any University computing, communication, or information resources.

6.7 Use of IT resources that interferes with the work of students, faculty, or staff or the normal operation of the University computing systems.

6.8 Any attempt to bypass the University IT security systems.

6.9 Copying or distributing without authorization software licensed to North Carolina Central University.

6.10 Violation of federal, state, or local laws, including copyright infringement or invasion of privacy; Use of University- owned IT resources for commercial purposes; and/or

6.11 Use of electronic mail messages, social media accounts or Web pages that constitute invasion of privacy, harassment, defamation, threats, intimidation, or discrimination based on race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion, or sexual orientation.

6.12 Unacceptable use of email and personal use of NCCU email.

6.12.1 NCCU users shall exercise due care when addressing email correspondence to ensure that the correspondence is addressed correctly and that the intended recipient is authorized to view content within emails or documents. Examples of email content that constitute unacceptable use include the following:

6.12.2 Private or personal for-profit activities. This includes personal use of email for marketing or business transactions, advertising of products or services or any other activity intended to foster personal gain.

6.12.3 Unauthorized not-for-profit business activities.

6.12.4 Seeking/exchanging information, software, etc., that is not related to one's job duties and responsibilities.

6.12.5 Unauthorized distribution of confidential data and information including the unauthorized use of email auto-forwarding.

6.12.6 Use for, or in support of, unlawful/prohibited activities as defined by federal, State, and local laws or regulations.

6.12.7 Matters concerning political activities as prohibited by State law and University policy.

6.13 The viewing of pornography (as it is defined in G.S. § 143-805) on a device owned, leased, maintained, or otherwise controlled by NCCU or the viewing of pornography on a network supported by NCCU.

7. Rule Enforcement

7.1 The University may take such action as may be necessary for its discretion to address any use violation(s) under this regulation, including termination of a user's account. In addition, North Carolina Central University reserves the right to limit or restrict the use of its computing and electronic communication resources when there is evidence of a violation of applicable University policies, contractual agreements, or state or federal laws.

7.1.1 The University reserves the right to place restrictions on the use of its electronic resources in response to complaints that present evidence of violations of University policies, rules, regulations, or codes, or local, state, or federal laws and regulations. Actions that violate these policies can result in immediate disabling, suspension, and/or revocation of the account owner's privileges pending review for further action. Such unauthorized or illegitimate use of electronic resources including computer accounts, resources or facilities may constitute misconduct and accordingly violators are subject to appropriate disciplinary, criminal, and/or legal action by the University and/or the State. If evidence is established, the University authorities responsible for overseeing these policies and codes will be consulted on the appropriateness of specific actions.

7.1.2   Individuals who have concerns about the conduct of a member of the University community or the propriety of a given situation or activity should notify their department chair, dean, director, or an administrator in their supervisory chain at a level sufficient to allow objectivity in evaluating the subject of concern. If action is deemed warranted by this official, the matter shall be referred to the appropriate vice chancellor or senior officer. Prior to acting, the vice chancellor or senior officer responsible for the situation or activity at issue shall consult with the Chief Information Officer for ITS, who shall, as appropriate, consult with the Office of Legal Affairs. The responsible official shall then respond to University community members who express concerns about such activities or incidents, and shall inform the chancellor regarding their response.

7.1.3   When concern about a given situation or activity involves an imminent threat to individuals, systems, or facilities, users should immediately communicate the concern directly to the Office of the Information Technology Services/CIO and to University Police.

7.2   Failure to use North Carolina Central University computing and electronic communication resources responsibly in accordance with the standards set forth in this regulation threatens the atmosphere for the sharing of information, the free exchange of ideas, and the secure environment for creating and maintaining information. Any member of the University community who violates this regulation may be subject to disciplinary action under appropriate University disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination of employment.

7.2.1   First Offense – Call and warning letter from ITS to offending user and immediate supervisor.

7.2.2   Second Offense – Warning Letter from ITS to offending user and immediate supervisor stating that a third offense will result in disconnection of service/loss of network privileges.

7.2.3   Third Offense

7.2.3.1 Censure letter to the offending user, immediate supervisor, division chief, and Human Resources.

7.2.3.2 Disconnection of service/loss of NCCU user network privileges for a reasonable period to allow ITS to correct the violation of the regulation.

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