

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Who can use VU Resources:

- Current Students, Faculty, and staff
- Persons integrally associated with official programs of the University
- Visitors and Guests integrally associated with official University activities
- Emeritus faculty
- Retired staff, as deemed appropriate by the Administration on a case-by-case basis

Requirements for Use of Resources:

- Read and understand the complete Acceptable Use Policy;
- Understand and agree that use of Valparaiso University resources is tantamount to signing the Acceptable Use Agreement Form;
- (Administrative Users) Sign Administrative System Agreement on Privacy and Confidentiality Form;
- Obtain necessary accounts

Valparaiso University computing and information technology resources are to be used appropriately and in a manner consistent with the instructional, research, and administrative objectives of the University.

Acceptable use of resources includes:

- Instruction;
- Independent study;
- Official work of faculty, staff, students, offices, departments, recognized student and campus organizations, and agencies of the University;
- Occasional or incidental noncommercial, personal use by authorized users.

Valparaiso University and the Internet computing resources are shared resources, which need to be used collegially.

Collegial use includes:

- Using common sense;
- Using resources responsibly, for authorized purposes, and in an approved manner;
- Observing standards of decency;
- Respecting the privacy of others;
- Respecting the rights and wishes of others in the use of sounds and visuals in public areas;
- Practicing good stewardship of connect time, information storage space, and other resources and services.

Examples of unacceptable use may include, but are not limited to:

Any use that violates

- Local, state and/or federal laws;
- Copyrights or other intellectual property rights (see Policy 1.5.1.3, which contains a full discussion of copyrights and individual obligations; in brief, if it isn't yours by authorship or by agreement, don't use it or distribute it.);
- License and purchase agreements;
- Acceptable use agreements of any other entity traversed or used through Valparaiso University resources.

Posting, distributing, and/or propagating

- Unsolicited advertising;
- Computer worms or viruses;
- Chain letters;
- Material copyrighted by another;
- Fraudulent or misleading information;
- Libelous, slanderous, threatening, or harassing materials of any description;
- Any materials that demean, defame, or ridicule another person on the basis of gender, race, ethnic background, national origin, religion, or (actual or presumed) sexual orientation;
- Obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, or patently offensive materials;
- Any materials contrary to the mission or values of the University.

Attempting, whether successful or not

- To enter another network node without authorization;
- To enter another's account, files, or file space without authorization;
- To modify any software or information without authorization;
- To conceal or falsify one's identity in any electronic communication or activity;
- To intercept network traffic intended for nodes other than your own;
- To set up, operate, or maintain a server, network analysis tool, or network management tool on the VU network without authorization;
- To use any Internet Protocol (IP) address inside or outside the VU domain(s) without prior approval;
- To damage or destroy any equipment, software, or data.

Any use that

- Is illegal, immoral, unethical, or dishonest in nature;
- Unreasonably denies or could deny access or service to others, including excessive use for recreational games or personal purposes;
- Is for commercial purposes or personal gain;
- Promotes a political position or cause celebre;
- Interferes with the University's activities or the University-related activities of any authorized user;
- Is, or could reasonably be expected to be, damaging to the reputation of the University.

Responsibilities of Users

Account holders are responsible for adhering to the Acceptable Use Policy. Account holders are responsible for anything done with their accounts. Therefore passwords should never be displayed or shared, should be chosen judiciously and changed often. If a user suspects account security has been violated, the password should be changed immediately and IT notified immediately.

Responsibilities of the University

The University, through the Office of Information Technology, is responsible for providing central system and network security and for taking reasonable steps to protect central systems and networks and the information stored thereon from excessive or inappropriate use, damage, or destruction.

Security of Information Storage and Transmission

Valparaiso University assumes users are aware that electronic files and transmissions are not necessarily secure. Users of electronic mail systems should be aware that electronic mail in its present form is generally not secured and is extremely vulnerable to unauthorized access, modification, and forgery.

Users of the World Wide Web should be aware that information sent or received via the Internet is not necessarily secure. It is possible for software on a World Wide Web site to explore and retrieve information from the user's computer without the user being aware of the invasion.

Anyone who "downloads" software, certain applications, or certain file types (such as Microsoft Word documents) should be aware of the possibility that such material could incorporate viruses, worms, or other destructive materials.

Confidentiality of Accounts and Communication

Valparaiso University provides computers, networks, network connections, and other telecommunication services to support the work of teaching and learning, conducting research, completing University tasks, and conducting the affairs of the University. The University reserves the right to access, review, and monitor electronic communications, computer files, and computer usage in any case where there is cause to believe these resources are being used for activity that is illegal or in violation of the Valparaiso University Honor Code ("Honor Code") or the Valparaiso University Appropriate Use Guidelines ("Appropriate Use Guidelines"). The University specifically disclaims responsibility for the content of any individual's communications and files that are not manifestly related to University business. In the normal course of managing computer and network resources, an IT staff member may incidentally become aware of content of certain communications or files, or of certain usage patterns. In the event an IT staff member becomes aware of any information that suggests activity that is illegal or in violation of the Honor Code or the Appropriate Use Guidelines that staff member is honor bound to report it to proper authority. University employees must understand that University computing and communication accounts (including, but not necessarily limited to

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file spaces, e-mail accounts, and voice mail accounts) are presumed to be used for University business. In situations where an employee leaves the employ of the university, that employee's accounts and any information remaining therein shall be considered the property of the University as of the departure date of that employee. In addition, in circumstances where university business requires immediate access to information known to exist in an employee's account, and that employee is not available, access to the employee's accounts may be granted for the sole purpose of gaining access to the needed information.

Jurisdiction

Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy may be of many different characters, and the procedures to be followed may be governed by different University policies, depending on the nature of the offense and the status of the offender. In cases where the violation is primarily a violation of other University policies as set forth in official University documents including, but not limited to, the Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, the Salaried Staff Handbook, the Hourly Staff Handbook, or the Honor Code (University Violation), the procedures and sanctions set forth in those documents shall apply. In cases where the violation is primarily a civil violation of federal, state, or local laws or regulations, the matter should be referred to the appropriate University official -- Dean of Students, Provost, Copyright Officer, etc. -- (whether or not the violator is a member of the Valparaiso University community), and the normal policies and procedures of the office having jurisdiction should be followed. In cases where the violation is primarily a criminal violation of federal, state, or local laws or regulations (Criminal Violation), the matter should be referred to the Valparaiso University Police Department (whether or not the violator is a member of the Valparaiso University community), and the normal policies and procedures of VUPD should be followed.

In cases where the violation is a simple violation of the Acceptable Use Policy, with no other ramifications (Simple Violation), the matter should be referred to IT.

Procedures

Violations will be referred to the appropriate jurisdiction, following the procedures set forth in Policy 1.5.1.7 In addition, as soon as IT becomes aware of a violation of this policy, the IT staff will take appropriate measures to halt the violation, secure the network and resources, and comply with applicable laws and regulations pending resolution of the matter. These measures may include halting a program running on central systems; disconnecting remote systems from the network; removing offending material from VU systems or rendering it inaccessible; disabling user accounts; or any other measures necessary to accomplish cessation of the violation, preservation of the integrity of University resources, and compliance with legal and regulatory mandates.

Sanctions

In addition to sanctions, disciplinary action, or legal action that may be imposed by the authority having jurisdiction over the violator, violations of Appropriate Use Guidelines may lead to suspension or loss of computing privileges.

Disclaimer

Services available through the Valparaiso University campus network include access to a large number of conferences, lists, bulletin boards, and Internet information sources. The University takes no responsibility for the truth, accuracy, or nature of the content found within those information sources which are not affiliated with, endorsed by, edited by, or reviewed by Valparaiso University.

Office of Information Technology

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