

POLICY

Ocean County College will provide or contract for the communications services and technological equipment necessary to gain access to information resources which promote its mission and goals and to provide an atmosphere which encourages the free expression of ideas. Access to communication resources is a privilege to which all members of the college community whose work requires it are entitled. Certain responsibilities accompany that privilege and understanding them is important for all communication technology users.

The College expects that all members of the academic community will respect the rights of others and comply with all the laws that pertain to communication and communication technology. Information technology provides a means of communication, both public and private. Users and system administrators will respect the privacy of person-to-person communication in all forms, including voice (telephone), text (regular mail, electronic mail and file transfer), and image (graphics and television).

The College vests the responsibility for ensuring the integrity and performance of its various communication systems with various administrators. While respecting the rights of all users, when the use of a communication system unnecessarily impedes the communication activities of others, system administrators are authorized to take those actions necessary to maintain the system and are fully accountable for their actions.

Communication systems and information technology may be used for purposes related to academic studies, the discharge of professional responsibilities by employees, official business with the college, and other college-sanctioned activities. Improper use of communication systems and information technology includes, but is not limited to the following:

- deliberate harassment of other users;
- intentional destruction of or damage to equipment, software, or data belonging to OCC or other users;
- unauthorized copying of copyrighted material;
- intentional disruption of communication systems;
- sending forged email or chain letters that may interfere with system efficiency;
- violation of system securities;
- violation of computer software license agreements;
- unauthorized use of computer accounts or access codes;
- academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating); or
- use of a communication system for private business purposes.

College users can facilitate computing in a shared resource environment through:

- regular deletion of unneeded files from accounts on central or networked computers;
- refraining from overuse of connect time, information storage space, printing facilities, or processing capacity;
- refraining from overuse of interactive network facilities.

Violation of the statements described above will be dealt with in accordance with normal disciplinary procedures of the college. Illegal acts involving College communication resources may also be subject to prosecution by state and federal authorities. The College reserves the right to extend, limit, restrict, or deny privileges and access to its communication systems based on institutional priorities and financial considerations, as well as, when presented with evidence of a violation of this and other College policies, or state and federal laws.

Adopted: December 8, 1997

PROCEDURE

1. Supervisors are responsible for instructing or providing college-supported training opportunities for employees on the proper use of the communication services and equipment used by Ocean County College for both internal and external professional communications. Communications equipment and services include, but are not limited to, U.S. mail, college mail, electronic mail, Internet connections, courier services, facsimiles, telephone systems, computer networks, on-line services, computer files, video equipment and tapes, tape recorders and recordings, pagers, cellular phones, and bulletin boards.
2. Most communication services and equipment have toll charges or other usage-related expenses. Employees should be aware of these charges and should consider cost and efficiency needs when choosing the proper vehicle for each professional communication.
3. Employees should not use college communication services and equipment for personal purposes except in emergencies or when extenuating circumstances warrant it. When personal use is unavoidable, employees must properly log any user charges and reimburse the college for them. However, whenever possible, personal communications that incur user charges should be placed on a collect basis or charged directly to the employee's personal credit card or account.
4. College communications equipment may not be removed from the premises without written authorization from the employee's supervisor.
5. Employees should exercise care so that no personal correspondence appears to be an official communication of the college. Employees may not use college stationery or postage for personal letters.