

BOSSIER PARISH COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMPUTER SERVICES TECHNOLOGY POLICY

With the rapid expansion of technology in the 21st century new concerns emerge. Because e-mail is the fastest way to communicate, problems arise regarding the receiving, and sending of un-solicited and un-wanted material. Receiving and opening e-mail from an unknown source can possibly shut down our systems. Distributing and receiving chain letters and jokes within our system can waste valuable time and resources; therefore, I would like to review our e-mail and technology policy with you.

To make sure that every B.P.C.C. employee is familiar with the Technology Policy, we ask you to read the policy, sign the attached form, and return your signed form to Human Resources.

NOTE The last page of this policy must be signed, dated, and returned to Human Resources Department.

As employees of Bossier Parish Community College, we take pride in our work and in our school. Each time you click the send button, a representation of you and our school has been created. Please understand that once you send an e-mail it not only has the capability of being seen by the person you are sending it to, but also has the possibility of being seen by millions of people and virtually never going away.

The following are some important rules to remember:

- a.) Sending harassing or discriminatory e-mail is strictly prohibited. Familiarize yourself with the school's harassment and disciplinary policies they also apply to e-mail and the Internet.
- b.) E-mail and Internet use should be limited to school-related functions. You are subject to disciplinary action for sending or accessing questionable material and wasting time.
- c.) Humor is subjective. What's funny to you may be insulting and offensive to others. Once a risqué' joke is sent, there's no getting it back. When telling a joke face-to-face, at least you can monitor reactions and stop yourself if necessary.
- d.) The computers and printers we use to perform our job duties are the property of Bossier Parish Community College. Therefore, you should have no expectations of privacy regarding the e-mails you send or receive.
- e.) E-mail can be a wellspring of evidence. Even deleted messages can be retrieved. And you don't know to whom your messages will ultimately be forwarded, where your messages will be saved, or who will make hard copies all with your name and the name of our school attached.
- f.) Don't open any attachments sent to you via e-mail from an unknown source. Immediately send it to your recycle bin and then empty your recycle bin.
- g.) Report any instances of electronic harassment/discrimination to your supervisor, operations manager, or Human Resource Manager. Complaints will be investigated immediately.
- h.) Never install software sent to you via the e-mail system or the Internet unless approved by our Systems Manager.
- i.) Should approved software need maintenance or repairs, it will be relayed to you by our Systems Manager. Never install repair software sent to you from an unknown source. If you receive any, contact our Systems Manager before opening any attachments.
- j.) Today's viruses are becoming more and more complex, using an e-mail address book to propagate itself throughout the system. Use your better judgment. If the message is not work-related or does not have anything to do with your job function, then remove the message without opening, the attachment.

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No software should be added to your school P.C. unless installed by our Computer Service Dept. Most, if not all, software suppliers require license agreements. With a network as large as ours, if any P.C.s have unlicensed software, it could cause us legal problems or fines.

NETWORK CAPACITY AND POLICY ISSUES ARISING FROM THE USE OF PEER-TO-PEER FILE SHARING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Introduction

Recently, there has been significant media coverage and controversy surrounding the use of Napster, KaZaA, and other peer-to-peer file sharing programs and services available on the Internet. These programs are designed to let people easily exchange music, movies, videos, and other files over the Internet. In the final analysis, programs and services like KaZaA, Napster, Gnutella, iMesh, CuteMX, Scour Exchange, and FreeNetfile are not as harmless as they might seem. This advisory points out the serious legal implications of violating copyright laws by sharing certain materials via these programs, and also focuses on the negative impact that these file sharing programs can have on network capacity. Additional security risks are also described.

It is tempting to conclude that the issues raised primarily involve our students. However, a number of our staff and faculty may be using the new file sharing technologies to explore what is available on the constantly developing Internet. So all members within the College community need to be aware of these issues.

Here's what we know about these programs:

Negative Effects on Network Performance

Peer-to-peer file sharing applications and services such as KaZaA, Napster, Gnutella, iMesh, CuteMX, Scour Exchange, and FreeNet can generate so much network traffic that they adversely affect network performance for users who share the same local network. Use of these applications is perceived as being most widespread among students, but many members of the College community who use the Bossier Parish Community network to get to the Internet also download these programs. And some are using their desktop computers in the computing centers, labs, and College offices to download such programs. All persons who are authorized to access and use College computing, networking, telephony and information resources are required to use these resources in a manner that advance the education and public service missions of the College. Any access and use of these resources and services that interfere with these goals are not permitted. Computer Services is continuously monitoring the network traffic situation as it relates to the use of these file-sharing applications. Users on the College network whose usage hinders network performance and interferes with others trying to use the network for College work will be contacted. Action to maintain network integrity and performance will be taken where necessary. This is not only a matter of network etiquette. Interfering with the ability of others to use network services violates Bossier Parish Community College policy and may be grounds for suspension of access to College computing and networking resources and can result in other appropriate sanctions.

File Sharing Applications and Copyright Issues

Providing or obtaining copyrighted material, e.g., music, movies, videos, text, and etc., without permission from the rightful owner violates the United States Copyright Act and several College policies. While it is true that a number of artists have allowed their creative works to be freely copied, those artists remain very much the exception. It is best for you to assume that all works are copyright-protected except those that explicitly state otherwise. As an individual, you should also be aware that you face liability for damages of up to \$30,000 per infringement under the U.S. Copyright Act.

Additionally, students, faculty and staff who may be in violation of copyright law place not only themselves at risk; they may be incurring liability for Bossier Parish Community College as an institution, e.g., using the College network resources to obtain the material and/or to store the material on College servers. If an artist, author, publisher, or law enforcement agency notifies the College that you are violating copyright laws, then the relevant offices within the College will investigate the complaint. If appropriate, action will be taken against you in accordance with College policy. In some cases, violations of College policy could result in suspending your network access privileges and/or criminal prosecution under state and federal statutes.

Computers Acting as Servers

Peer-to-peer file sharing applications typically allow you to set up your computer so that other people can access files you choose to make available to them. While this might seem like a nice service to offer, there are some serious drawbacks. Having your computer act as a server can burden the College networks if your server is popular and does excessive, high-volume transfers of files. For example, MP3 files are usually very large files, between 2 and 10 MB in size. Some applications let you choose NOT to be a server, but others, such as Gnutella, don't. If you simply install the software and don't take the time to read any documentation, you may not even realize your computer is a server. Make sure you understand what the software does. Note: machines acting as servers for materials which infringe copyright can and will have their network connections turned off in response to complaints. Another serious problem with setting up your computer as a server is that you could be opening a **security hole for hackers**, allowing them access to your entire computer. Peer-to-peer file sharing applications differ in how much security they provide. Be cautious. If you have installed a peer-to-peer file sharing application on your computer that connects to the College network and you have considered the issues presented in this advisory and now would like to remove the application, you can usually achieve this in a Microsoft Windows environment by clicking on START, SETTINGS, CONTROL PANEL and then select ADD/REMOVE PROGRAMS. If you still need assistance to remove the application, you can contact Computer Services.

Finally, we all like to personalize our computers by installing screen savers. Screen savers are considered software items and should not be added to your P.C. Screen savers can also slow our systems down or cause damage. Only approved screensavers, which are the one's pre-installed by windows on your P.C. are allowed, and should not be customized to show unprofessional material. All other screensavers are in violation of school policy and should be immediately removed from your P.C. Any unapproved screen savers will be removed by our systems manager or upper level management when found.

The Bossier Parish Community College computer system and its network are a big investment for our school, as it is for other schools with which we communicate. We rely on our system to do the basic functions we previously performed manually. **Our Technology Policy is in place to prevent downtime, increase system response time, and comply with software manufacturer's agreements. Your full cooperation is expected.**

Bill Martin
Chief Information Officer

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By signing this explanation of Bossier Parish Community College's Technology Policy, I am acknowledging that I understand its content and agree to abide by the policy.

Name: (Please Print): _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____