

Georgia Military College Computer Acceptable Use and Ethics Policy

1.0 Overview

This document details the Acceptable Use and Ethics which covers the proper utilization of the computers, networks and related services at Georgia Military College. This policy has been developed to ensure a quality computing environment at GMC that furthers the academic, and service mission of the institution. Providing this environment requires equitable resource distribution, computer and network availability, personal privacy, and data integrity. Achieving this goal requires that everyone in the College community cooperate and adhere to these guidelines. This policy has been developed by members of the Office of Information Technology, in conjunction with the Information Technology Committee and the Executive Vice President. Computers are used to support learning and to enhance instruction. Computer networks allow people to interact with many computers. The Internet allows people to interact with hundreds of thousands of networks. It is a general policy that all computers are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Failure to adhere to the policy and the guidelines below will result in the revocation of the users' access privilege by the network administrator.

2.0 Authorized Users

Individuals who have been granted and hold an active and authorized account on a GMC computer or network and abide by this policy are considered authorized users.

3.0 Authorized Use

Authorized use is predicated on access by an authorized user. Authorized use is that which is consistent with the academic, research, and service goals of this institution and falls within the guidelines of this policy which states that property owned by the institution shall be used only for institutional purposes. Unacceptable uses of the computer include :

1. *Using profanity, obscenity, other language which may be offensive to another user.*
2. *Reporting (forwarding) personal communication without the author's prior consent.*
3. *Coping commercial software in violation of copyright law.*
4. *Using the network for financial gain, for commercial activity or for any illegal activity.*

4.0 Individual Rights

4.1 Privacy

The computing professionals at GMC are committed to preserving the privacy of each authorized user of the computer system and make every effort to ensure that computers and electronic devices are not used to prevent this. However, it is impossible to guarantee such privacy and there are several specific issues that users must be aware of. Electronic mail messages are not secure and, therefore, should not be assumed to be private. Also, despite best efforts to prevent it, a determined person could gain unauthorized access to stored data and thus violate your privacy. Under the Georgia Open Records law it is possible that information which is stored on a computer system, including electronic mail, would be available for inspection by any member of the public. Finally, in the process of performing normal systems/network management and auditing functions, it may be necessary to view user's files or confidential information. However, system network, and application administrators are bound by both professional ethics as well as job requirements to respect the privacy of those involved and not initiate disclosure of information obtained in this manner.

4.2 Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression is a constitutional right afforded to all members of the community and existing Institution policies apply equally to computerized expression, subject to Section 3.0 of this policy. GMC computer and network users should realize that there are services available on the Internet which may be considered offensive to some. With this in mind, users take responsibility for their navigation of the network.

4.3 Safety and Freedom from Harassment

While GMC cannot control Harassment or unsolicited contact on the network, those who believe they have been harassed should follow standard College procedures in reporting such violations.

5.0 Individual Responsibilities

Users of GMC computer equipment are expected to understand this policy and abide by it. This policy is widely distributed and easily accessible, so lack of knowledge of this policy is not an excuse for failure to observe it. Questions regarding this policy can be directed to the Vice President of Information Technology, or the Executive Vice President. Disregard for this policy may result in disciplinary actions as set forth in Section 6.0 of this document.

5.1 Morals and Ethics
Users are expected to respect the right to privacy of other individuals on the network. Do not go browsing around in someone's files even if security permissions permit. This is analogous to condoning someone rifling around on your desk or in your house simply because you forgot to lock your door. It is expected that explicit permission from the owner of the files is obtained before they are accessed. Users are expected to respect the right of freedom of expression of others on the network.

5.2 Expected Behaviors

This section details some guidelines relating to computer based activities. GMC computer users are expected to read sign on messages and system news for specific information such as system changes, policies, and scheduled down time. System and network administrators may find it necessary to contact you regarding policy issues. If repeated attempts to contact a student are unsuccessful, the system or network administrator may be forced to temporarily deactivate the student's account simply to compel the owner to make contact.

5.2.1 User Identification (Userids) and Passwords

It is a violation of policy to use a computer userid (or any computer resource) that is not assigned to you or to share userid passwords with other individuals (including computing personnel). A computer userid is granted to an individual and that individual is responsible for any use of the account. If your userid or password is compromised, you must immediately notify the Office of Information Technology. If you knowingly share your password with someone else and this policy is violated, you will also be subject to the sanctions outlined in Section 6.0. If file sharing with others is necessary, there are methods and techniques to accomplish this without sharing your userid and password. Remember that your password is the first line of defense against unauthorized access to your account. The person in whose name an account is issued is responsible at all times for its proper use.

- 1. Users must not give a password to another user.*
- 2. Users should change passwords frequently.*
- 3. Users should choose a password that cannot be easily guessed by others.*
- 4. Users should use a combination of letter and numbers in their password.*

5.2.2 Unauthorized Access

You must not attempt to guess or break another user's password. Attempts to gain access to GMC computers and networks to which you are not authorized is prohibited. You may not use GMC facilities to login or attempt to login to computers external to GMC to which you are not authorized. If you suspect that your account has been compromised, you should contact the Office of Information Technology.

5.2.3 Providing Services

Users are not permitted to provide network or computer-based services using GMC computers or networks without prior permission from the Office of Information Technology. Examples of such services include, but are not limited to, file transfer protocol (FTP) and WEB servers.

5.2.4 Internet Access

Because access to the Internet provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents of users, if the user is under 18 years old) must understand that Georgia Military College does not control the content of the information available on these other systems. Some of the information available is controversial and, sometimes, offensive. Georgia Military College does not condone the use of other materials. School employees, students and parents of students must be aware that access to the Internet will be withdrawn from users who do not respect the rights of others or do not follow the rules and regulations established by Georgia Military College.

5.2.5 Unauthorized Monitoring

Users are not permitted to use computers and networks to monitor electronic transmissions.

5.2.6 Disruption of Operations

Deliberate attempts to disrupt the operation or degrade the performance of computers or networks are prohibited.

5.2.7 Circumvention of Policies

Do not circumvent or attempt to circumvent any policies or procedures that have been established to ensure equitable resource distribution in our shared computing environment. For example, you must not deliberately circumvent the modem inactivity timer.

5.2.8 Game Playing

The policy regarding game playing on GMC computers and networks is established by the department responsible for the user in question. However, no department should permit game playing to interfere with normal College business.

5.2.9 Use of Copyright or Licensed Materials

There shall be no copying or installation of software on GMC computers if such copying or installation would violate any copyright or licensing agreement. You may be asked to show a valid license agreement to ensure the legal use of software on GMC computers. Contact the Office of Information Technology if you have any questions regarding licensing issues.

6.0 Sanctions

Violators of this policy may be subject to one or more of the following sanctions which can be imposed by the Office of Information Technology upon consultation with the violators' supervisor or teacher.

1. *admonition*
2. *temporary or permanent suspension of computer privileges*
3. *temporary or permanent suspension of lab privileges*

Additional sanctions, such as suspension and employee action, may also apply as outlined in the SOP. Legal action can also be taken as per Section 6.1. Appeals to these sanctions are explained in Section 6.2.

6.1 Legal Restraints

Users of GMC computing facilities are expected to abide by State and Federal laws that apply to the usage of computers. These laws exist to "establish certain acts involving computer fraud or abuse as crimes punishable by defined fines or imprisonment or both". As an example, the Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act was enacted in 1991 to "provide for criminal liability and definition of penalties for the crimes of computer theft, computer trespass, computer invasion of privacy, computer forgery, and computer password disclosure". The penalties range from fines up to \$50,000 and imprisonment up to 15 years. The full text of this act and others are available via GMC gopher and World Wide Web.

6.2 Appeals

Appeals to sanction should be handled through the existing College grievance and appeals for both employees and students.

Computer Acceptable Use & Ethics Policy Waiver

From the GMC Computer Acceptable Use and Ethics Policy the following rules and regulations apply:

It is a privilege to receive a computer account.

The account receives free Internet access.

A RESPONSIBLE computer user may keep an account as long as the user is an employee or student at Georgia Military College.

Responsible users may:

Use network software to complete class assignments.

Use the Internet to research assigned classroom projects.

Use the Internet to send electronic mail (e-mail) to other users.

Use the Internet to access other computer systems.

Responsible users:

May NOT use the Internet for any illegal purpose.

May NOT use impolite or abusive language.

May NOT violate the rules of common sense and etiquette.

May NOT change any computer files that do not belong to the user.

May not send or get copyright material without permission.

May NOT create malicious or destructive programs.

Users must not give their password to anyone.

Users are responsible for backing up their own user areas

The use of cell phones and pagers is NOT allowed in classrooms or labs at Georgia Military College.

I have read the GMC Computer Use and Ethics Policy and I agree to abide by the rules and regulations. If I do not follow the rules, I understand that my network account will be taken away.

Print name _____

Phone Number _____ **Campus** _____

Signature and Date _____ \ \ _____

All students under age 18 need parents signature.

I have read the Computer Acceptable Use and ethics policy for Georgia Military College. I understand that the Internet is a worldwide group of hundreds of thousands of computer networks. I know that Georgia Military College does not control the content of these Internet networks. When using the Internet, I realize that students may read material that is controversial or offensive. I give my permission to issue a computer account allowing Internet access to my child. I understand that my child may keep this account as long as the procedures described in the Georgia Military College Acceptable Use Policy are followed.

_____\ \ _____
Parent Signature / Date