



South College *Computer* *Code of Ethics* *[Acceptable Use Policy]*

Introduction

Freedom of expression and an open environment to pursue scholarly inquiry and for sharing of information are encouraged, supported, and protected at South College. These values lie at the core of our academic community. Moreover, the College is committed to the fair allocation of its resources and the provision of a learning environment free of needless disruption. To advance these goals, South College has adopted the following policies on computer usage. Most of these policies follow from pre-existing regulations, agreements, and/or Federal, State, and local laws.

Concomitant with free expression are personal obligations of each member of our community to use computing resources responsibly, ethically, and in a manner, which accords both with the law and, the rights of others. The campus depends first upon a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation to create and maintain an open community of responsible users.

Access to South College technology resources **is a privilege, not a right**. This privilege is extended to all users including faculty, staff, and students. Never abuse this privilege or others through the electronic systems. *Computer/Network/Internet and other electronic media abuses not listed under this policy that South College considers inappropriate or that is destructive to the mission of this college shall be considered a violation.*

Overview

This document outlines the acceptable use computers, networks, and related services at South College. This code has been developed to ensure a quality computing environment that furthers the mission of the college, specifically related to enhancing the educational and administrative services of the college. It provides educational information, but its primary purpose is as a regulatory policy. Additional information for employees is found at section 6.19 of the *Employee Handbook*.

The Policy for Responsible Computing and Use of College Resources regulates the use of the College's computing resources at South College. Computing resources include all college owned, licensed, or managed hardware and software, and use of the South College network via a physical or wireless connection, regardless of the ownership of the computer or device connected to the network. All network users must comply with local, state, and federal laws relating to copyright, security, and electronic media.

Network users at South College have access to several accounts which includes the following:

- Academic Computing
- Administrative Computing
- SC Wireless Network
- Computers located in College offices
- College servers

- These resources are available to currently enrolled students for the completion of their coursework and to employees of the College. SC network accounts are created for students when they start their education at South College. They are available for use throughout the student's entire college career at South College.
- Downloading and sharing copyrighted material (mp3, video files, etc.) without permission is a federal offense.
- Downloading or sharing copyrighted materials may result in the loss of network access privileges.

NOTE: South College does not provide technical support for personally owned computers.

A. Use of Computing Labs

- Users are expected to obey Copyright and Intellectual Property rules.
- These areas are intended to be a work place and the following rules are designed to safeguard the equipment and environment:
 - Food, drinks, and candy are not permitted in the labs.
 - Only current SC students and employees are permitted network access in these areas.
 - Students are permitted to logon to only one lab PCs at a time.
 - The computing lab computers are for completing school work. Gaming is prohibited.
 - Illegally copying software is prohibited and violators may be prosecuted.
 - Users should use a removable storage device, e.g., USB flash drive, or CD-RW, to save their work. Any work saved on the hard drive will be deleted periodically.
 - Users are expected to clean up their workstations upon leaving, i.e., dispose of trash, pick up printed documents and push in chairs.
 - Any logged on/locked computer, located in a lab left unattended for more than fifteen minutes will be rebooted.
 - South College is not responsible for any offensive or inappropriate material that is found on the Internet. The use of the Internet for non-class assignments is permitted provided a workstation is not needed by a student with a class assignment.

B. Use of South College E-mail Account

South College has setup an e-mail account for every student enrolled, and faculty/staff member employed at South College. The South College e-mail account serves as the official means of sending information between students and faculty/staff. These messages are sent to the South College e-mail address only.

- Students and employees are responsible for maintaining their official South College e-mail address and are expected to check it on a frequent and consistent basis.
- Students and employees have the responsibility to recognize that certain communication may be time-critical.

- Inappropriate language should not be used in e-mail messages.
- E-mail is sent to the entire student population must be authorized first.
- Sending junk e-mail, chain letters, unsolicited or offensive e-mail is not permitted and will not be tolerated.
- Users are responsible for maintaining their mailbox size. Empty deleted items folder, delete old and junk e-mail messages. File attachments increase the mailbox size; therefore, students and employees are advised to save them to a removable storage device and delete the e-mail message.
- Users must be sensitive to the special need for software and services available in only one location, and cede place to those whose work requires these special items.
- Users must refrain from any action that interferes with the supervisory or accounting functions of the systems or that is likely to have such effect. The loading of non-college Internet software such as America On-line or CompuServe is strictly prohibited.

C. Use of the College's Network

Services provided by the College in connecting to the Internet are for educational purposes and not for communicating with family and friends. The College does not provide this service for other personal or commercial use.

All activities of College network accounts are governed by having the logon password, so it is important that usernames and/or passwords are not given to anyone (including family members). It is important that all network users protect username and password information as they would their social security number. Do not place them in an easily accessible place.

- The student/employee will be held accountable for any abuse of computing resources under the use of his/her account (username).
- Do not log into South College's network using anyone else's username and password.
- Do not log into South College's network and then allow someone else to use your account.
- Appropriate language should be used in all computing activities, i.e. e-mail messages, discussion areas, etc.
- Server processes, including chat rooms, shall not to be installed or run from the user's directory, lab computers, or on personal computers connecting to the College network.

Users should be aware that the computer systems are the property of the College and e-mail messages, Internet usage, and other computer files are subject to review at the discretion of the College without notice. In the case of harassment complaints, illegal violations, or a system problem—hardware, software, or attacks by hackers—the IT Tech staff are authorized to look at and remove any information or files necessary to investigate complaints or solve the systems' problems to protect the systems and the information they contain. In this situation, the staff is obligated to treat any information they might see that turns out to be unrelated to the problem as strictly confidential. In addition, e-mail messages are subject to subpoena or otherwise discoverable in litigation.

Users must follow local, state, and federal laws and regulations pertaining to computing activities. In cases involving fraud, forgery, extortion, copyright violations, intimidation, humiliation, etc., violators may be legally prosecuted and may be subject to immediate loss of all computing privileges at South College. Users are responsible for reporting any activities which they believe to be in violation of these policies. To

report such incidents, contact the Office of Information Technology.

D. Use of the Internet

South College places the highest priority on quality instruction. In many instances technology can enhance and strengthen this process. Instructors and students are encouraged to make full use of all available computing resources in the classroom, library, and during scheduled lab times, keeping in mind that others share in these resources.

Administrative use of computing resources enhances the college's ability to provide timely and accurate services to students, graduates, and outside agencies associated with the college. The college places emphasis on the utilization of the administrative system to its fullest capacity. This emphasis includes extensive training provided to users and a full-time System Administrator to provide necessary assistance.

The Internet is an open forum for many subjects, opinions, and ideas, both appropriate and inappropriate to the educational values and/or goals of South College. Therefore, it is up to the users of the Internet to be responsible, selective, and wise when dealing with people, topics, opinions, and/or ideas found on the Internet that do not serve the educational purposes of this College. Offensive materials on the Internet, including but not limited to adult sites and pornography, are not to be accessed through the College's network using the lab or any personal computer located at the College or connected to the College network. Anyone accessing these pages may be asked to discontinue doing so, may be asked to leave, and may be subject to disciplinary actions.

E. Use of the College's Wireless Network

- The wireless network is provided for currently enrolled students and employees.
- The use of bridges, hubs, routers, switches or other network equipment which could interfere with the College's wireless network is not permitted on campus.
- Users are not permitted to share their wireless connection to another device which access has not been requested.
- Users are required to follow the guidelines on the usage of the College's network and the Internet when using the SC wireless network.
- Misuse of the SC wireless network or not following the approved policies may result in losing complete access to the SC network.
- All network users are responsible for the integrity of their own individual computers. It is each person's responsibility to make certain that his or her computer is secured against viruses, worms, hacker attacks, and other intrusions. Further, they are responsible for all uses of their computer and will held accountable for network traffic originating from their computer or traced back to their computer's IP address. Students can obtain a copy of the free version of AVG Anti-Virus Free Edition web link on the South College Web Site: <http://www.southcollegetn.edu/resources/student-resources/resources/student-computer-resources.html>.

Users should be aware that connecting to the SC wireless network gives the College the right to investigate cases of harassment complaints, illegal violations, copyright infringement, or network problems in which the IT Tech staff may need to review e-mail messages, Internet usage, and other computer files on any computer which has been configured for use on the South College wireless network.

F. Copyright Compliance

The Copyright Compliance Policy, as stated in the *South College Catalog*, states the following:

- “No member of the South College community shall share files with peers without authorization, and/or illegally download and/or distribute copyrighted materials using the institution’s technology systems without authorization. Under certain circumstances, applicable laws allow the use of copyrighted materials, such as for the purpose of private study, scholarship, teaching, or research, without permission. However, there is no blanket exception from liability for students or faculty/staff of educational institution. If reproduction of copyrighted material is used for purposes in excess of what constitutes “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. Infringement of another’s individual copyright is a violation of federal law (U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17, U.S. Code) and may include fines and other penalties. Most text, music, movies, television shows, software, games and images found on the Internet are protected by federal copyright law. The owner of the copyright in these works has a right to control their distribution, modification, reproduction, public display, and public performance. Therefore, it is generally illegal to use file sharing networks to download and share copyrighted works without the copyright owner’s permission unless “fair use” or another exception under copyright law applies. If a violation of this policy is observed or reported, South College will respond by investigating pursuant to procedures outlined in the *Student Handbook* or *Employee Handbook*, whichever is appropriate. During such an investigation is complete, if the user is determined to have violated this policy, appropriate discipline and/or corrective action will be taken. Users may be held responsible for and liability damages or expenses resulting from misuse of South College computing resources.” (pg. 35).

The *Employee Handbook* also states that employees are prohibited from copying or distributing copyrighted materials (Section 6.19).

G. Prohibited Activities

- A student/employee shall not damage, destroy, misuse, or otherwise endanger the College’s computing and information resources. This section is intended to aid in interpreting the policies stated above and should not be interpreted as complete. Examples of conduct in violation of the approved policies are:
- Using software or material known to have been obtained in violation of the Copyright Law or a valid license provision.
- Copying and providing to others any copyrighted material or licensed program contents, unless allowed under the fair-use doctrine or explicitly permitted by the copyright owner.
- Disrupting, hindering, or damaging the service, use, or ability of others to access or use any College computer, facility, equipment, software, network, other resource, including e-mail.
- Accessing resources on the College’s network using a different username and password other than the one assigned.
- Providing any person with access to the assigned account, or in any way allowing others access to a machine/network under one's account.
- Creating, modifying, reading or copying files (including e-mail) in any areas to which the user has not been granted access.
- Disguising one's identity in any way, including the sending of fraudulent e-mail messages, removal of data from system files, and the masking of process names.

- Sending harassing or abusive messages via any digital means.
- Using College facilities to gain unauthorized access to computer systems on or off-campus.
- Use of campus computer facilities for commercial purposes.
- Attempting to interfere with the normal operation of computing systems in any way, or attempting to circumvent the restrictions associated with such facilities.
- Using any College computer, facility, equipment, software, network, or other resource, including e-mail, to commit or attempt to commit acts prohibited under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

H. Social Networking Sites

- Running personal Web Pages, Blogs, or other Social Networks that support commercial activities or running server systems under the CCSNH registered domain name SOUTHCOLLEGETN.EDU or variation thereof, without authorization.
- The use of the South College name, seals, images and text are the property of South College and shall not be used without the written permission.
- Faculty, staff, and students using social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Virtual Worlds, Chat Rooms, etc., should do so with consideration and care. Posting of defamatory comments about faculty members, staff, or students of South College as a whole on social networking sites will be considered a violation of the Code.
- The taking of unauthorized photographs of faculty members, staff, or students is not allowed.
- Posting information that is of a negative nature of South College or anyone associated with the College on the Web is a violation of the Code.

I. Online Course Participation

All students participating in a distance learning course must agree to abide by the following code of conduct:

- Only students who are officially enrolled in the course are allowed participate in the course.
- All work completed in the course must be your own work (except for assignments that explicitly permit collaboration).
- Respect must be shown at all times to others. Harassment, insults (either direct or indirect), bickering, personal attacks, denigration, and flaming will not be tolerated.
- Do not post profane, abusive, offensive, sexist, racist, or impolite/strong language and/or materials.
- Do not make solutions to homework, quizzes or exams available to anyone else. This includes both solutions written by the student, as well as any official solutions provided by the faculty member.
- Do not engage in any activities that will dishonestly improve your results or dishonestly improve/hurt the results of others.

J. Computer Settings

South College computers are set up uniformly for a reason. When instructing students on computer concepts, uniformity of screen colors, icon locations, toolbars, printer settings, etc. promotes the learning of new concepts. When computers are different, students must search for the information being referred to, causing confusion and additional unnecessary time. In certain classes, students may be asked to change several of these settings in order to learn about them; however the computer should always be restored to its original settings prior to logging off.

K. Disciplinary Actions

South College's computing resources must not be used in a manner that violates any local, state, or federal laws. There are currently many laws that govern certain aspects of computer use. Supervisors and System Administrators may be bound to report any violations of such laws if they do occur, and the college may be required to cooperate in certain investigations related to criminal or civil violations.

If a violation of this code is observed or reported, South College will respond by investigating pursuant to procedures outlined in the *Student Handbook* or *Employee Handbook*, whichever is appropriate. During such an investigation, the user's privileges may or may not be suspended. Once the investigation is complete, if the user is determined to have violated this code, appropriate discipline and/or corrective action will be taken. Users may be held responsible for any liability damages or expenses resulting from misuse of South College computing resources.

For student alleged violations, the Dean of Student Services may convene a preliminary conference with the appropriate Dean/Department Chair or Administrator, and the student involved to consider the complaint. The conference members may take any of the following actions:

1. Determine that no action is warranted;
2. Render an administrative reprimand which may be recorded on the student's permanent record;
3. Confer disciplinary probation which may be recorded on the student's permanent record;
4. Implement other actions or penalties deemed appropriate by the Dean of Student Services and the Dean/Department Chairperson/Administrator or
5. Dismiss the student from the college.

The student will be informed in writing by email of the decision within three working days of the conference.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision made by the conference members, he/she may petition the decision by requesting a hearing before the College Academic and Conduct Appeals Committee. The request must be made in writing to the Dean of Student Services within three working days of the notice and must include the student's reasons for the petition including mitigating circumstances as well as the student's contact information including email address. If no request is made, the decision is final. If a request is made for a hearing, the Dean of Student Services will provide the student with the information that will be necessary for the student to submit an official appeal to the Chair of the Academic and Conduct Appeals Committee. Once the appeal letter is received, the student will be notified by email and certified mail (if possible) about the nature of the charges, the time and date of the hearing, and the right to present applicable evidence on his/her behalf.

After a careful and thorough hearing a final determination, by majority vote of Committee members, will recommend one of the following actions:

1. removal of the charges against the student;
2. administrative reprimand;
3. disciplinary probation, which may or may not be recorded on the student's permanent record;
4. disciplinary suspension for a specified period of time;
5. dismissal from the College; or
6. other action the committee deems appropriate.

The Committee's decision will be sent by certified mail and/or email to the student within ten working days of the hearing.

The student may submit a written appeal of the Committee's decision to the President of South College, which must be received within five working days after notification. After consideration of the committee report and the student's appeal, the President shall, within ten working days after receipt of the appeal, make a determination. The decision of the President is final at the institutional level.

L. Changes to This Policy

The Office of Information Technology may change or amend this policy from time to time. When changes are made, they will be announced. As with all matters of law and ethics, ignorance of the rules does not excuse violations.

"If there be any intangible possession that distinguishes an institution of higher learning, it is the tradition of freedom united with responsibility - freedom to do what one chooses, responsibility for what it is that one chooses to do."

Carl Becker - American Historian