

Code of Ethics for Information Technology at Colby College

Information technology facilities (computer hardware, software, networks, data and other information, etc.) are made available at Colby as shared resources intended to support and facilitate the teaching, research, and administrative functions of the College. Students, faculty, staff, and authorized guests are encouraged to use these resources to their maximum benefit in these functions. Experimentation, exploration, and learning are promoted within common sense and legal constraints.

Network and system administrators are expected to treat the contents of electronic files and network communications as private and confidential. Any inspection of electronic files, and any action based upon such inspection, will be governed by all applicable U.S. and Maine laws and by College policies.

The same standards and principles of intellectual and academic freedom, as well as rights to privacy, developed for college libraries are applied to electronic material.

The same standards of intellectual and academic freedom developed for faculty and student publication in traditional media apply to publication in electronic media. Examples of these electronic materials and publishing media include, but are not limited to, electronic mail, mailing lists (Listserv), Usenet News, and World Wide Web pages.

Usefulness of the facilities depends upon the integrity of its users. These facilities may not be used in any manner prohibited by law or disallowed by licenses, contracts, or College regulations. Individuals are accountable for their own actions and all activity involving the accounts for which they have responsibility. College policies and state and federal law make certain kinds of activities involving information technology either abuse, civil offenses, or criminal offenses. Students, faculty, and staff should be aware that criminal prosecution may occur if the law is violated. Examples of misuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use of information technology resources without permission;
- Informing anyone of the password to your personal, non-transferable account [Never tell anyone your password! If you do so, you are in violation of this code. If someone else uses your account, they are in violation of this code. If access by another person to files protected by your account password is needed, consult with the ITS staff for approaches that do not compromise password security.];
- Access and attempts to access files, disks, or network communications other than one's own without appropriate permission;
- Interference with any information technology system or another's use of any system, including consuming gratuitously large amounts of resources (storage space, processor time, network capacity, etc.) or by deliberately causing the failure of a system resource (overwhelming mail, deliberately crashing a computer system, corrupting a disk drive on a shared computer, etc.);
- Use of any College resource as a staging ground to crack (hack, break into) any other system without permission;
- Sending threatening messages or other material intended to harass;
- Theft, including the illegal duplication of copyrighted material, or the propagation, use, or possession of illegally copied software or data;
- Damaging files, networks, software, or equipment;
- Misrepresenting one's identity (forgery), plagiarism, and violations of copyright, patent, or trade secret laws;
- Deliberate creation, distribution, or use of any software (viruses, worms, letter bombs, etc.) designed to maliciously destroy data and/or disrupt services.

Colby prohibits the use of its facilities for the purpose of private financial gain not relevant to the mission of the College. Examples of such use include making commercial contracts and providing services for pay, such as the preparation of papers or income tax forms. Any service provided over any part of Colby's network that involves private financial gain may be prohibited. In instances where some private financial gain other than compensation by Colby is expected, permission must be granted in advance by the College.

Violations of this Code of Ethics for Information Technology at Colby College are handled through standard disciplinary processes as outlined in the Student Handbook and applicable faculty and staff handbooks. Information Technology Services (ITS) may take immediate action to protect information

security, system integrity, and operational continuity, pending disciplinary decisions and review of ITS' actions by the appropriate disciplinary authority.

This Code of Ethics also applies to Colby's off-campus programs but participants should be aware that different laws and contractual requirements, as well as special policies, may be in force at those locations.

Accounts are available to the spouses, partners, and minor children of employees, primarily to avoid their needing to use an employee's account. Each account has the same unrestricted, unfiltered access to Internet resources that student and faculty accounts have. Accounts established for minor children are the responsibility of the employee and it is expected that the employee will monitor use of the account. Consequently, the employee and/or spouse/partner may choose to maintain control of the password. This is an approved exception to the prohibition on anyone but the account holder knowing the password.

Students, faculty, and staff, as constituents of the academic community, should be free, individually and collectively, to express their views on this code of ethics. The campus Information Technology Committee should review at least annually this code, soliciting all views, and recommending changes as necessary.

Approved by the Information Technology Committee on May 16, 2006