

## **POLICY STATEMENT C: Aurora University Computer Use Policy**

Computers are an essential tool in higher education for instruction, research, and public service. Aurora University is committed to providing a wide range of high-quality computing services to students, faculty, and staff and to support the mission of the University. The following policies have been established to ensure the security and integrity of the University's computing resources and the fair and equitable access to those resources by all the members of the University community. These policies apply to all University computing systems (desktop, laboratory, and network), all hardware, software, data, and telecommunications devices associated with these systems, and all use of the campus network from personal devices. Failure to abide by these policies may result in the loss of computing privileges, assessment of damage costs, and possible disciplinary action.

Authorized Use: Access to Aurora University computing resources is available to faculty, staff, and all currently enrolled full-time and part-time students. Access may also be extended to others in support of Aurora University's educational and community service activities. All computer accounts for staff leaving the University and students who do not register for the current semester will be removed within 30 days. Accounts that have not been accessed for 120 calendar days will be deemed inactive and removed from the system.

Distribution of Resources: The utility of the University's computing services depends on the balanced distribution of limited resources. All users are expected to assist in the conservation of these resources and to avoid excessive system usage, connect time, and storage. Specifically prohibited is the use of the network for recreational activities that place heavy load on scarce resources, the creation or distribution of mass mailings or exceptionally large e-mail messages, and other types of use that would cause congestion of the network or otherwise interfere with the work of others.

Disruptive Activities: Any deliberate attempt to tamper with, disrupt, delay, or endanger the regular operation of the University's computing resources is prohibited. Attempted access of Aurora University's servers using unauthorized methods, the creation or propagation of computer worms or viruses, or the distribution of electronic mail or software intended to replicate or do damage to another user's account or to the University's hardware, software or data is considered vandalism and will be treated as such.

Commercial Activity: The use of the University's computing resources for personal business or commercial use, such as the posting of commercial web pages and the distribution of unsolicited advertising, is prohibited.

Property Rights: All computer programs and files, unless they have been explicitly placed in the public domain by their owners, are private property and may not be copied or distributed without authorization. The users of Aurora University computer resources are subject to applicable laws governing intellectual property and should be aware that the copying, distribution, or use of protected material without proper permission or license is prohibited.

Privacy: Rights to privacy on the part of members of the Aurora University community extend into the computing environment. Prohibited activities include the following: accessing or attempting to access another user's computer account or files without specific authorization; the deliberate,

unauthorized attempt, through misrepresentation or any other mechanism, to access University computers, computer facilities, networks, systems, programs, or data; and the use of University computer resources to gain access to restricted databases. Electronic mail poses unique challenges to the right of privacy; although all users have the right to expect that their electronic mail messages will not be viewed by others, for a variety of reasons this is difficult to ensure, and users are urged to post e-mail messages with the understanding that occasionally their messages may reach readers other than the intended recipients. Users should also be aware that authorized computer administrators may on rare occasions need to access users' accounts for purposes of system maintenance and resource management.

The use of a device is prohibited unless otherwise designated for use by the University.

Harassment and Fraudulent Behavior: The sending of harassing messages or files to or about another person, interfering with the legitimate work of another user, the transmission and display of abusive or obscene messages, and the sending of messages under an assumed name or modified address or with the intent to obscure the origin of the message is a violation of this policy and such activity may also be subject to applicable state and federal laws.

Freedom of Expression: The free exchange of ideas is central to the educational process. The Aurora University computer use policy supports this principle, with the exception of uses that violate the law, endanger computer resources, violate University policies, or are otherwise determined by University authorities to be inappropriate, unethical, or inconsistent with the educational goals of the University.