

POLICY ON RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTER AND COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

The computer network and other forms of communication equipment and the content thereof are the property of Ferrum College. The use of Ferrum College **computers**, its **computer network**, and **other forms of communication equipment**, is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action by College officials and/or the cancellation of those privileges. Other forms of communication equipment include, but are not limited to, e-mail, telephones, facsimile machines, copiers, iPads, and smart phones.

Ferrum College provides access to its computers, computer network, and other forms of communication equipment for students, faculty, and staff. All persons who access any of the above mentioned equipment shall thereby agree to this policy. All users are expected to use the equipment appropriately, honestly, and constructively. The following policy is meant to support and protect college students and personnel in the use of this valuable educational resource.

The following actions constitute irresponsible and unacceptable use of Ferrum College computers and communication equipment as defined above:

- Sending or receiving copyrighted materials, including peer to peer file sharing, without permission *
- Using impolite, abusive, or otherwise objectionable language in public messages
- Placing unlawful information on College computers
- Using College communication equipment in ways that violate local, state, federal, or international laws or statutes
- Excessive use of College communication equipment for non-school or non-work related activities
- Using College communication equipment to access gambling websites
- Using College communication equipment in ways that violate standards of accrediting and sanctioning bodies, e.g., SACS or NCAA
- Sending messages that are likely to result in the loss of the recipient's work or system
- E-mailing chain letters or pyramid schemes, and any other type of use that would cause congestion on College computers or otherwise interfere with the work of others
- Using College communication equipment for commercial purposes
- Excessive use of College communication equipment for personal use
- Changing any computer file that does not belong to the user
- Giving one's password to others or allowing someone else to use one's password
- Using another's password without proper authorization
- Using College communication equipment to send, retrieve, or copy pornographic material, inappropriate texts, or graphic files
- Circumventing security measures on College or remote computers or networks
- Attempting to gain access to another's resources, programs, or data without proper authorization
- Vandalizing, which is any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another computer user
- Falsifying one's identity to others while on College computers or other communication equipment
- Using computer programs to decode passwords or access control information
- Attempting to circumvent or subvert any system of security measures
- Engaging in any activity that might be harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, or damaging files
- Using e-mail, the telephone, fax machine or messaging services to harass, intimidate, or threaten another person
- Wasting communication equipment resources

The preceding items should not be considered comprehensive. Other inappropriate actions not listed may also be considered irresponsible and unacceptable use of College computers, its network, and other communication equipment. The College reserves the right to monitor without notice usage of communication equipment, including, but not limited to, the content of e-mail and Internet usage. Violations may also be subject to local, state, federal, and international laws and statutes.

* For further information regarding copyright policy see <http://ferrum.libguides.com/copyright>. Also please be aware that anyone found to have violated the copyright law may be liable for statutory damages up to \$30,000 for each infringement and, if the copyright owner proves willful infringement, the amount may be increased up to \$150,000 for each infringement. The penalty for movie infringement can be up to \$250,000 for each movie. A person violating copyright laws may also be liable for attorney's fees incurred by the owner of the copyright during legal proceedings.