

## **Policy: Student Email Policy**

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**Effective:** July 9, 2012

**Policy Statement:** Chattahoochee Technical College provides email services to students in support of education, research, and in communications with the College faculty and staff.

### **Policy Descriptor:**

#### **Guidelines:**

The purpose is to assure that the Chattahoochee Technical College (Chatt Tech) electronic mail user community is aware of the College policies and laws concerning email services and that these services are used in compliance with these policies and laws. This policy has been developed to ensure a quality email service environment at Chatt Tech that furthers the academic distribution of information and service of the institution. Achieving these goals requires that every individual in the Chatt Tech user community cooperate and adhere to these guidelines.

#### **Email Accounts:**

All network and email accounts are the sole property of Chatt Tech and certain restrictions apply to their privacy. There are a number of laws and policies that may require or permit examination of computer related records such as email.

Chatt Tech recognizes the importance of academic freedom, freedom of speech, and privacy of information. Chatt Tech respects the privacy of users and does not routinely inspect or monitor email without the user's permission unless one of the following conditions requires such action as:

- When required by and consistent with law;
- When there is reasonable assumption that a violation of law or College policy has occurred;
- When there are time-critical operational circumstances; or
- In the normal course of system administration by Information Security Administrators.

Since Georgia is an open records state, the law requires that public records be open and available for inspection by any member of the public. These public records include most electronic records of all state agencies. Documents, data, emails, etc. are considered public records regardless of where they reside. Other laws and acts may also require access to these records. Both Georgia law and Chatt Tech policy prohibit, in general, the theft or other abuse of computer systems. Some prohibitions apply to electronic mail services and include, but are not limited to: unauthorized entry, use, transfer, and tampering with the accounts and files of others, interference with the work of others and with other computing facilities. Under certain circumstances the law contains provisions for felony offenses. Users of electronic mail are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these laws and policies.

It is also understood that system administrators must perform routine maintenance on these systems. The nature of this system administration will sometimes require Technology Support Services to work with these files. Each email server also has at least one Postmaster assigned to monitor email that the system cannot deliver due to a variety of factors. The Electronic Communication Act of 1986 provisions this access for

system administrators. Only certain Technology Support Staff are allowed this access and they are required to follow prudent guidelines in dealing with this information. Disclosure of this information should occur only if the material is illegal or in violation of policy. Technology Support Services must notify the Chief Information Officer of any violation, which will in turn be dealt with professionally with senior college administrators. These records can then be monitored without notice to the user with vice presidential or presidential approval. This is conducted, only when there is substantial evidence of an illegal activity or serious policy violation.

### **Legal Risk:**

Since Email is not a totally secure medium, Email should not be used for the transmission of extremely personal and/or confidential educational records, copyright infringement, fraud, slander, libel, harassment and obscenity.

Users have a responsibility to use this resource in an efficient, effective, ethical and lawful manner. Email communications should follow the same standards expected in written business communications and public meetings. Although by its nature email seems to be less formal than other written communication, the same laws apply. Therefore, it is important that users are aware of the legal risks of email. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination/expulsion and/or legal action.

By following the guidelines in this policy, the email user can minimize the legal risks involved in the use of email. If any user disregards the rules set out in this Email Policy, the user will be fully liable.

### **Legal Requirements:**

No user shall give their password for any email system to an unauthorized person, nor shall they obtain any other individual's password by any unauthorized means whatsoever. In addition to the above, no user shall utilize Email for their personal use if it (1) directly or indirectly interferes with the College operation of computing facilities or electronic mail services; (2) burdens the College with noticeable incremental cost, or (3) interferes with the individual's employment or other obligations to the College.

Furthermore, no user shall use the College's Email systems or services for the purpose of transmitting fraudulent, defamatory, harassing, obscene, or threatening messages, or any other communications that are prohibited by law. Use of the college email system for the purposes of sending spam or non-business related bulk mail sent to distribution lists is strictly prohibited whether the distribution list is internal or external. The following rules are required by law and are to be strictly adhered to. It is prohibited to:

- Send or forward emails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks. If you receive an email of this nature, you must promptly notify Campus Security or an Instructor;
- Unlawfully forward confidential information;
- Forward a message without acquiring permission from the sender first;
- Send unsolicited email messages;
- Forge or attempt to forge email messages;
- Disguise or attempt to disguise your identity when sending mail;
- Send email messages using another person's email account;
- Copy a message or attachment belonging to another user without permission of the originator;
- Send an attachment that contains a virus.

**Penalties:**

Violations of these policies incur the same types of disciplinary measures as violations of other Chatt Tech policies or state or federal laws, including criminal prosecution.

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**Approving/Recommending Entity and Approval Date:**

Chatt Tech	Student Affairs	02.28.2012
Leadership Team		N/A
CAM Steering Committee		N/A
Executive Council		07.09.2012
Board of Directors		N/A
College President		N/A
Other		N/A