



**Responsible University Officer**  
VP for Information Technology

**Responsible Office**  
Information Technology Services

## Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources

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### Purpose and Background

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Messiah College provides a wide variety of computing and networking resources (collectively “Information Technology resources” or “IT resources”) in order to assist students and employees in the completion of their academic pursuits and job duties, support the college's daily operations and long term goals, and further the educational purposes of the college.

The purpose of this document is to promote the meaningful, efficient, ethical, lawful, and productive use of IT resources. Use of IT resources is subject to the terms of this policy and other policies of the college, as well as to all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

**THE COLLEGE ACKNOWLEDGES EMPLOYEES’ RIGHTS TO NLRA SECTION 7 ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS ACTIVITIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND/OR MUTUAL AID. THEREFORE, NOTHING IN THIS POLICY IS MEANT TO DISCOURAGE EMPLOYEES’ ABILITY TO EXERCISE RIGHTS UNDER THE NLRA.**

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### Definitions

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#### **Information Technology (IT) Resources**

Facilities, technologies, and information resources used for College information processing, transfer, storage, and communications. Included in this definition are computer labs, classroom technologies, software systems, computing and electronic communications devices and services, e-mail, networks, telephones (including cellular), voice mail, fax transmissions, video, and multimedia. This definition also includes services that are College owned, leased, operated or provided by the College; services that are connected to College resources, such as cloud and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS); or any other connected/hosted service provided now or in the future. This definition is not all inclusive but rather reflects examples of equipment, supplies and services.

#### **User**

Individuals or entities permitted to make use of College information technology resources, including students, staff, faculty, alumni, guests, sponsored affiliates, and other individuals who have an association with the College.

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## Policy Statement

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All use of IT resources must be consistent with the values and spirit of the Messiah College Statements of Faith, Community Covenant, Codes of Conduct, Foundational Values, and Educational Objectives. Use of IT resources is considered a privilege, not a right, and the college reserves the right to limit, or restrict privileges and access to it. The college also reserves the right to remove or limit access to information created, stored, transmitted, uploaded, downloaded, or acquired on any college IT resource.

The specific usage guidelines that follow are not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to establish and clarify the intent of this policy. Situations not enumerated here will inevitably arise, and they should be interpreted according to the spirit of this policy.

### A. Appropriate Use

General requirements for acceptable use of the College's IT resources are based on the following principles:

1. Each user is expected to use IT resources consistent with the educational mission and ethical and moral standards of Messiah College;
2. Each user is expected to be authorized to use IT resources and to protect user identification, passwords, information and systems from unauthorized use;
3. Each user is expected to comply with licensing agreements and copyright law related to software and other digital material;
4. Each user is expected to adhere to all other applicable College policies
5. Each user is expected to use IT resources in a manner that complies with all applicable State and Federal laws and regulations.

### B. Incidental Personal Use

1. **College Employees:** The College provides IT resources and services to employees of the College for business use. Employee personal use that is not part of legitimate college business is permitted when it is not excessive, does not interfere with normal business activities, and when it otherwise complies with this policy.
2. **College Students:** Student personal use must adhere to the provisions of this policy and to the Messiah College Student Handbook, and Code of Conduct.

### C. Prohibited Use

Users are prohibited from using college owned IT resources for the following reasons. Additional limits may be imposed by a supervisor or other appropriate office. Users may not:

1. Infringe on another individual's right to privacy or otherwise adversely affect members of the user community. Specific examples include avoiding the production or propagation of material that is abusive, profane, or sexually, racially or religiously offensive; or material that may injure or harass someone else, or lead to civil or criminal liability as determined by a court of law.
2. Infringe on copyright, including illegal copying or file sharing of video, audio, software or data (See *D. Illegal Copying of Software and Other Copyrighted Materials*).
3. Violate college policies or local, state, or federal statutes.

4. Provide false or misleading information to obtain a college computing account, or hiding or disguising one's identity to avoid responsibility for behavior in the use of information technologies.
5. Use another user's account without authorization.
6. Attempt to gain or gaining unauthorized access to college information technology resources, or to the resources of another.
7. Perform any act(s) that impede the normal operation of or interfere with the proper functioning of college information technology resources.
8. Interfere with the security mechanisms or integrity of the college's information technology resources.
9. Use IT resources excessively in a manner that overburdens the resources to the exclusion of other users.
10. Use IT resources for personal profit, commercial reasons, non-college fundraising, political campaigns or any illegal purpose. The prohibition against using college information technology resources for personal profit does not apply to:
  - i. Scholarly activities, including the writing of textbooks or preparation of other teaching material by faculty members.
  - ii. Other activities that relate to the faculty member's professional development.
  - iii. Other activities as approved by the college President.
11. Make unauthorized solicitations on behalf of individuals, groups, or organizations.
12. Intentionally or knowingly install, execute, or provide to another, a program or file, on any of the college's information technology resources that could result in the damage to any file, system, or network. This includes, but is not limited to computer viruses, Trojan horses, worms, spyware or other malicious program(s) or file(s).

#### **D. Illegal Copying of Software and Other Copyrighted Materials**

Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. See the Intellectual Property Policy in the [Human Resources Manual](#) for more details. This principle applies to works of authors, artists, and publishers in all media including text, music, images, software and other domains. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgement and the right to determine the form, manner, and terms of publication and distribution of one's work. Because electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical. Copyright infringement and unauthorized access to digital materials may be grounds for legal action. Use of illegally copied software or other materials is contrary to the spirit of stated behavioral expectations, undermines Messiah College's ability to negotiate favorable software agreements, and may result in legal action against the user as well as the college. Messiah College prohibits the illegal use of copyrighted materials. Under the terms of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), the college is committed to respond to lawful requests for information. Messiah College will not protect or defend a user against criminal investigations or lawsuits resulting from intentional copyright infringement.

#### **E. Expectation of Privacy**

Although Messiah College seeks to create, maintain, and protect the privacy of electronic information on its IT resources, use of the college's technology is not personally private. Users should have no expectation of personal privacy in connection with the use of such technology. The normal operation and maintenance of the college's IT resources require the back up and caching of data and communications, the logging of activity, the monitoring of general usage patterns, and other such activities. The College in its sole



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discretion, reserves and may exercise the right to monitor, access, retrieve, and delete any of this information at any time and without notice to or the consent of users.

In practice, Messiah College does not routinely or capriciously monitor the use of college technology, or the content of communications or transmissions using IT resources. The college does, however, specifically reserve the right, with or without notice, to intercept, access, monitor, inspect, copy, store, use, or disclose the contents of communications or transmissions employing IT resources. While the previous actions could occur at any time, they usually occur when the College reasonably believes these actions are appropriate in order to protect its interests. Such situations could include when a violation of applicable college policies or codes, contractual obligations, or state or federal law is suspected, or when the safety or integrity of the institution is at stake.

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### **Audience**

This policy applies to all users of Messiah College IT resources, whether initiated from a computer and/or network device located on or off campus, and regardless of the ownership of the device connected to the network.

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### **Compliance**

Users of the IT resources must abide by this policy. Alleged violations of this policy will be referred to the appropriate administrative offices and/or law enforcement agency.

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### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Vice President of Information Technology (VP of IT) is responsible to carry out this policy, and to make referrals to appropriate administrative offices when necessary. Any exception to this policy must be approved by the VP of IT.

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### **Related Policies and Links**

- [Student Handbook](#)
- [Human Resources Manual](#)
- [Community Covenant](#)
- [Codes of Conduct](#)
- [Copyright Infringement Policy](#)

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### **Document History**

- Effective Date: 26 APR 2016
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