Student E-Mail Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide the following information:

1. Inform students about the applicability of law and University policy concerning electronic mail;
2. Provide guidelines for student use of electronic mail at Hodges University;
3. Give specific examples of prohibited activities involving electronic mail; and
4. Inform students about specific issues of privacy, authenticity and risk related to e-mail.

Hodges University provides electronic mail services to students and alumni.

Hodges University encourages the use of e-mail in support of instruction, research and public service. Students are urged to make extensive use of e-mail to communicate with their instructors, support staff and fellow students. Students are expected to use e-mail services responsibly, i.e. to comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws, and with other University policies. Hodges University reserves the right to remove any accounts inactive for a year or more. Removal of accounts for students who have a “withdrawn” or “cancelled on enrollment” status is up to the discretion of Hodges University and will be handled on a case by case basis.

Access to network/communications resources owned or operated by Hodges University imposes certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to these University policies and local, state and federal laws. Appropriate use should always be legal, ethical, reflect academic honesty, reflect University standards and show restraint in the consumption of shared resources. It should demonstrate respect for intellectual property; ownership of data; system security mechanisms and individual rights to privacy and freedom from intimidation, harassment and unwarranted annoyance. Appropriate use of network/communications resources includes instruction, independent study; authorized research; independent research- communications; and official work of the offices, units, recognized student and campus organizations and agencies of the University.

Because electronic information is volatile and easily reproduced, respect for the work and personal expression of others is especially critical in computer environments. Violations of authorial integrity, including plagiarism, invasion of privacy, unauthorized access, and trade secret and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community.

If there is reason to believe that a student’s e-mail account is being used in a violation of law or University policy, or if an account is used in a way that threatens to disrupt service to other users, the Department of Information Technology may restrict, suspend or disable that account’s access to e-mail services, until the Department of Information Technology is assured that the illegal or disruptive use of the account will cease.

Specific Prohibitions

It is not possible to provide a comprehensive list of all possible violations. However, the following list of activities is specifically prohibited:

- Use of e-mail to threaten or harass individuals on or off campus. Offensive messages (i.e. messages with sexual, discriminatory, racial or derogatory connotations) are prohibited and will be considered harassment. Harassment in any form is prohibited.

- Use of a false e-mail addresses (i.e. mail "spoofing"). Deliberately sending mail with a misleading or false e-mail address is prohibited. Forgery, or attempted forgery, of the “From:" line in an e-mail message is prohibited. Masking the identity of an account and/or electronic address is prohibited.

- Any attempt to disrupt another person’s ability to use his/her computer account. Examples include sending excessive or repetitious e-mail, and attempts to contact another user via e-mail,
telephone or in person, after being told that such contact is not desired. Violation of such a request will be considered harassment and is prohibited.

- The sending of excessively large quantities of e-mail. An excessively large quantity of mail may be defined as a small message sent to a very large number of users, a very large message sent to several users, or anywhere in between.

- Sending unsolicited commercial or bulk e-mail, including advertisements, is prohibited. Examples include sending mass mailings to advertise a product or service. Note that this prohibition extends to “spamming”, i.e. sending solicitations to many users, newsgroups or others without express consent on the receiver’s behalf.

- The sending of any material that contains viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time bombs, cancel bots or any other harmful or deleterious programs.

- The initiating or forwarding of “chain letters”. A chain letter is an e-mail message whose primary purpose is to propagate itself indefinitely. Chain letters waste network resources, slowing mail delivery and other network services. Note also that chain letters are “illegal if they request money or other items of value and promise a substantial return to participants” (U.S. Postal Inspection Service).

- Violation of privacy. Monitoring or attempting to monitor other people’s communications without their permission or knowledge. Users should not view, read, listen to, copy, change, execute or delete another user’s information without that user’s or the owner’s permission.

- Attempts to gain unauthorized access to the service, other accounts, computer systems or networks connected to the service, through password mining or any other means. Security measures are in place to protect the privacy of Hodges University users. Any attempt to bypass these security measures, or to secure a higher level of access or privilege without appropriate authorization, is prohibited.

- Use of User ID for commercial purposes. Users may not sell access to their User ID or perform work for profit in a manner not authorized by Hodges University.

- Hodges University student e-mail cannot be used to upload/download copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information or similar materials without the appropriate prior authorization.

**User Privacy and Risk**

UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO ACCESS AND EXAMINE THE FILES AND/OR ACTUAL NETWORK ACTIVITY OF ANY COMPUTER USER TO INVESTIGATE VIOLATIONS OR SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS OF SECURITY AND/OR POLICIES, NETWORK INTERACTIONS WHICH MAY BE CONTRIBUTING TO POOR COMPUTER PERFORMANCE, OR COMPUTER MALFUNCTIONS. FOR THIS REASON, USERS MUST REGARD THEMSELVES AS HAVING NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY WITH REGARD TO THEIR FILES, DATA OR COMMUNICATIONS.

There is no guarantee that e-mail is authentic, it is therefore prudent to be skeptical of the “From:” addresses that appear in messages. Mail between campuses or from off-campus sites can be very easily “spoofed”, i.e. the message is sent in such a way that it appears to be from a different sender than it truly is. Anyone who has doubts about the identity of the sender of any message should communicate with the purported sender by some other means to confirm the content of the message. Hodges University assumes no responsibility for lost or delayed mail.

Hodges provides mobile email access for its students as a convenience. The University is not responsible for disclosure of information through use of mobile email. Please exercise appropriate caution in protecting your academic and personal information when accessing Hodges email using a mobile device.