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## Policies

# Computing Resources Acceptable Use Policy

<b>Policy number</b>	12-04
<b>Responsible office</b>	Information Technology
<b>Classification</b>	Board of Trustees-delegated Policy
<b>Category</b>	Information Technology and Data Security

### STATEMENT OF POLICY

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This policy sets forth the rules for using computing resources at WMU.

### SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES

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## PURPOSE

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Access to computing resources is a privilege, not a right, and is granted with restrictions and responsibilities for use. This rule sets forth the rules for using computing resources at Western Michigan University.

## SCOPE

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These rules apply to all users of University computing resources and all computing accounts on University computers.

## RULE STATEMENTS

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- Sharing your Bronco NetID, or any other account is prohibited. You are responsible for all activity conducted with your Bronco NetID or any other account. Bronco NetID/account information must not be given to anyone else. Improper safeguarding of your password that results in unauthorized use of your Bronco NetID/account will not be tolerated.
- Use of computing resources must be in accordance with University policies, and codes of conduct. Files controlled by individual users are considered private. The ability to read, alter, or copy a file does not imply permission to do so. The University reserves the right to access and/or remove any files in violation of University policies. The ability to connect to or make use of other systems through the network does not imply the right to do so unless properly authorized by the owners of these systems. To do so without proper authorization will result in disciplinary action.
- People with security access privileges to confidential data and/or data management systems shall not use those privileges for anything other than fulfillment of official duties. Use of those privileges for any other purpose will result in disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination of employment.
- Do not create or participate in electronic chain mail messages or send unsolicited mass mailings to people using the University network or computing systems. Electronic chain mail and mass mailings cause network congestion and waste computing resources. If you receive electronic chain mail at WMU please delete it.

- Email is not confidential and is subject to disclosure in State laws and court procedures. The University reserves the right to access email information if the University suspects or is advised of possible breaches of security, harassment, or other violations of other University policies, rules, regulations, directives, or law. Once a message has been sent, control over it is lost. It may be forwarded to others or displayed on an electronic bulletin board or in a news group without the author's knowledge or consent. Never say anything in email that wouldn't be said publicly.
- All members of Western Michigan University are required to abide by the following principles, which ensure their availability, integrity, and security for all authorized users:
  - Act responsibly and ethically when using Western Michigan University computing resources.
  - Uphold and promote the principles of open expression and academic freedom.
  - Comply with all applicable state law, federal law, and Western Michigan University policies.
  - Do not engage in Prohibited Conduct such as:
    - Unauthorized access to, alteration of, or interference with Western Michigan University's IT systems, networks, or data.
    - Use of Western Michigan University's IT systems to distribute malicious software, including viruses, or to send spam, chain mail, or broadcast messages to large groups without proper authorization.
    - Use of unauthorized wireless devices or other technologies that interfere with Western Michigan University networks or operational capacity.
    - Use of Western Michigan University's IT systems to engage in IT Abuse. IT abuse is defined as any willful or negligent unauthorized activity that compromises the integrity, confidentiality, availability, or operation of Western Michigan University's computing resources. Examples of IT Abuse include, but are not limited to the following:
      1. Use of electronic means to send or post fraudulent, harassing, obscene, indecent, profane, intimidating, or unlawful messages.
      2. Unauthorized use, access, or manipulation of electronic records or systems.

3. Damage, theft, or unauthorized removal of Western Michigan University computing resources, records, or data.
4. Misuse of Western Michigan University's property or resources for non-University related purposes.

- Respect intellectual property rights. Do not access or copy software or data belonging to others without prior written authorization. Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted information, data and/or software is a direct infringement of the federal copyright law. Doing so subjects one to criminal prosecution or civil liability.
- Commercial use prohibited. Computing accounts are provided for non-commercial, academic use only. Accounts found being used for commercial and/or personal gain will be turned off. Electronic advertising using University computing resources is prohibited.
- Do not negatively impact computing resources. Users share many resources including disk space, CPU cycles, printer queues, batch queues, login sessions, dial-up modems, software licenses, etc. Resources also include, but are not limited to, computing facilities, accounts, WMU computing equipment, and network systems and connections. Do not monopolize these resources, especially for non-academic purposes. While computers may be used for email and Internet activities, the machines provided in the computing labs are primarily for academic work. The University reserves the right to limit the use of computing resources.
- Act responsibly and practice due diligence to prevent the spread of computer viruses. Have anti-virus software installed on your computer and keep your Virus Definition File up to date. Perform appropriate security updates for your specific hardware operating system in a timely fashion. The University reserves the right to remove infected or vulnerable computers from the network as well as block malware/spyware infected websites.

## ENFORCEMENT

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- Violations of these rules are subject to the investigative and disciplinary procedures of the University with the Office of Information Technology acting in an advisory role. Complaints against students' abuse are usually forwarded to and handled by the Office of Student Conduct. Complaints against faculty and staff are forwarded to and handled by the supervisors and/or the appropriate vice president and sometimes, in the case of faculty members, to the provost's office.

- In some cases the University must act more immediately to protect its interests and resources, or the rights and safety of others. The vice provost and chief information officer, or a delegate within the Office of Information Technology, has the authority to suspend or limit account privileges and access to resources in those situations. When an account and/or access has been suspended in this way, IT shall notify the appropriate office who will handle the complaint and attempt to notify the account or computer owner. Account suspension, or removal from the network is typically temporary while the complaint is handled through the normal investigative and disciplinary procedures of the University.

## REFERENCE

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In addition to the above rules, all users of computing resources at Western Michigan University are also responsible for adherence to any State or Federal regulations regarding computer use, including, but not limited to the [Telecommunications Act of 1996](#).

## HISTORY

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<b>Effective date of current version</b>	May 20, 2026
<b>Revision history</b>	Monday, February 1, 2010 - 4:56pm Revised. Thursday, January 1, 2015 - 4:57pm Revised.
<b>Proposed date of next review</b>	May 20, 2029

## AUTHORIZATION

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<b>Certified by</b>	Andrew Holmes, Chief Information Officer
<b>At the direction of</b>	Chris Cheatham, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

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