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College Policies

Massachusetts College of Art Electronic Mail, Internet and Telecommunications/Voice Mail Policy

Introduction

General Principles:

The ethical principles that apply to everyday academic community life also apply to the use of information and computing resources. Every member of the Massachusetts College of Art community has basic rights and responsibilities. It is unethical for anyone to violate these rights or ignore these responsibilities. Anyone who uses Massachusetts College of Art's computer systems and networks is responsible for meeting the standards outlined in this policy.

The privilege of access to computer systems and networks owned or operated by Massachusetts College of Art imposes certain responsibilities and obligations and is granted subject to the College's policies, and local, state, and federal laws. Appropriate use always is ethical, reflects academic honesty, and shows restraint in the consumption of shared resources. It demonstrates respect for intellectual property, ownership of data, system security mechanisms, and individuals' rights to freedom from intimidation, harassment, and unwarranted annoyance. Appropriate use of Massachusetts College of Art's electronic mail, internet, and telecommunications/voice mail systems includes instruction, independent study, authorized research, independent research, communication, and official work of the offices, units, recognized student and campus organizations, and agencies of the College.

Respect for intellectual labor and creativity is vital to academic discourse and enterprise. This principle applies to works of all authors and publishers in all media. It encompasses respect for the right to acknowledgment and the right to determine the form, manner, and terms of publication and distribution.

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, unauthorized access, and trade secret and copyright violations, may be grounds for sanctions against members of the academic community. This policy should be taken in the broadest possible sense and applies to Massachusetts College of Art internet, email, telecommunications voice mail usage even in situations where it would not apply to the computer(s) in use (for example, student-owned computers attached to the campus network).

Philosophy:

Reasonable Use. Limited resources and a large use community dictate the need for all users to consider the right of others to work effectively. Any behavior by a user that significantly impacts the working environment of others, either directly or indirectly, is considered unreasonable.

Academic Integrity. As an educational institution, we must maintain the integrity of activities relating to education. Electronic Mail, Internet, and Telecommunications/Voice Mail violations of such integrity will warrant the same severity, as would any other violation.

Policy

Electronic mail, Internet access, Telecommunications/Voice mail and other electronic media, and equipment are business tools that are provided by Massachusetts College of Art to employees and students to facilitate timely and efficient conduct of business. To help ensure that these tools are used appropriately, Massachusetts College of Art has developed the following acceptable use policy. This policy addresses access, use, and disclosure of electronic mail, Internet messages, telecommunications/voice mail and material created, sent, or received by Massachusetts College of Art employees and students using the College's systems. Massachusetts College of Art intends to honor the policies set forth below, but reserves the right to change them as may be required under the circumstances. The "Committee on Workplace Privacy and Electronic Information" makes changes to this policy through recommendations to the President of the College. The Committee meets several times a year, or as needed, to discuss the policy and, if necessary, to update, change, or modify the policy.

1. **Purpose.** Massachusetts College of Art maintains electronic mail, Internet, and telecommunications/voice mail systems. These systems are provided by the College to assist in the conduct of business within the College. Massachusetts College of Art supports computing, networking, telecommunications, and

information resources for the students, faculty, and staff of Massachusetts College of Art. Computer and telecommunication facilities and services are offered in support of teaching, learning, research and public service. Access to the telecommunication, computer, and network systems owned and operated by Massachusetts College of Art imposes certain responsibilities upon users, in accordance with existing Massachusetts College of Art policies and local, state, and federal law. Users accept the responsibility for utilizing services in ways that are ethical, that demonstrate academic integrity, and respect for others who share these resources. This policy is established in an effort to help users understand what is expected of them. It sets guidelines regarding the issues of privacy and respect for property, ownership of data, system security, and misuse of the system.

2. **Relation to Other Policies.** This policy is intended to be consistent with other Massachusetts College of Art policies, including, but not limited to, the College's sexual harassment and equal opportunity policies and the students' code of conduct. Employees and students are to use Massachusetts College of Art's electronic mail, Internet systems, and telecommunications/voice mail systems in a manner that is consistent with these other policies.
3. **Acceptable Use.** The use of the electronic mail, Internet systems, and telecommunications/voice mail systems is reserved solely for the conduct of business at the College.
4. **Company Property.** The electronic mail, Internet systems, telecommunications/voice mail systems and hardware are College property. Additionally, all messages and attachments composed, sent or received on the electronic mail, Internet systems, and/or telecommunications/voice mail are and remain the property of Massachusetts College of Art. They are not the private property of any employee or student, and employees and students should not consider any e-mail, Internet messages, telecommunications/voice mail messages or material private or their personal possessions.*
5. **Pass Codes.** Employees and students must not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication, other than where authorized. All pass codes are the property of Massachusetts College of Art.
6. **Non-Removal.** Employees and students may not remove from the premises any hardware licensed to/owned by the College, software licensed to/owned by the College, or telecommunications devices licensed to/owned by the College without prior management approval. Employees and students, may not remove from the premises any files or data licensed to/owned by the College without prior management authorization. The language of this paragraph is not intended to prohibit employees from taking work home with them which requires the use of files, software, hardware, or data which is owned by or licensed to the College for the purpose of off-campus use. The language of this paragraph is not intended to prohibit students from taking school work home with them which requires the use of files, software, hardware, or data which is owned by or licensed to the College for the purpose of off-campus use.
7. **Downloading.** In downloading documents from the Internet, Massachusetts College of Art requires that such documents must be job or curriculum related and constitutes a reasonable use of Massachusetts College of Art's resources. Please refer to the MassArt's [Electronic File Sharing Policy](#) for more details.
8. **No Sexually Explicit, Offensive, or Inappropriate Web Sites. Offensive or Harassing Use Prohibited.** Massachusetts College of Art's Internet systems and telecommunications/voice mail systems must not be used to visit sexually explicit or otherwise offensive or inappropriate web sites, or inappropriate telecommunications sites or to send, display, download, communicate or print offensive material, pornographic or sexually explicit pictures or any other inappropriate materials. If an individual believes access to such sites is necessary for academic research, or is otherwise necessary to further the College's interest, the individual must first receive written approval by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs.

The electronic mail, Internet systems, and telecommunications/voice mail systems are not to be used to create or communicate any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those which are considered offensive are messages, materials, or communications which contain sexual implications, racial or ethnic slurs, or other comments that offensively address someone's age, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ancestry, or disability. In addition, these systems must not be

used to

communicate other improper messages, for example, messages or material that is defamatory, derogatory, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate. The electronic mail, Internet systems, and telecommunications/voice mail systems must not be used to commit any crime, including but not limited to, sending obscene e-mails over the Internet with the intent to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass another person.

9. **Solicitation Prohibited.** The electronic mail, Internet systems, and telecommunications/voice mail systems may not be used to solicit or proselytize for outside or personal commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other solicitations that are not job or curriculum related.
10. **Chain Letters and Repeated Messages.** Employees and students must not send or forward "chain letter" e-mails. Employees and students are prohibited from sending anonymous or repeated messages via the e-mail, Internet, or telecommunications/voice mail systems designed to annoy, abuse, or torment. Employees and students are prohibited from making any communication which adversely impacts the communications of the College by over-loading the network or knowingly acting in a manner that will disrupt normal operations of computers, telecommunications/voice mail, or the network systems.
11. **Viruses.** Employees and students may not use Massachusetts College of Art's e-mail or Internet systems to develop or send any virus, worm, Trojan horse, or otherwise destructive program. Employees should not open e-mails or attachments unless they are confident of the identity of the sender.
12. **Copyrighted Material and Trade Secrets.** The electronic mail and Internet systems must not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials without prior management authorization. The College expressly incorporates into this policy the "[Fair Use Guidelines for Educational Multimedia](#)" resulting from the NASAD 1997 Annual Meeting. See the [Electronic File Sharing Policy](#) page for more info.
13. **College's Right to Monitor.** Massachusetts College of Art acknowledges that privacy is an important value for educational institutions. Creative, innovative, and risky thought as well as scholarship and educational accomplishment all depend on interacting in a communication context in which individuals feel free to express and transmit their opinions and ideas. Thus, Massachusetts College of Art extends to its students, faculty, and staff a reasonable expectation of privacy in the communication that they conduct via Massachusetts College of Art's internet, email, telecommunications/voice mail systems and networks. However, everyone should recognize that privacy cannot be guaranteed, even when it is intended, and should, therefore, exercise reasonable caution in electronic communication.

Although the privacy of electronic mail, files, and data is protected in normal circumstances, when, upon the judgment of the appropriate authorities, there is reason to believe the law or College policies have been violated, Massachusetts College of Art may access or disclose the electronic files, mail, voice mail, and/or electronic discussions stored or transmitted by a student, staff member, or faculty member of the College. In these cases, an individual with appropriate administrative responsibility will make the determination. For example, for students, it will be determined by the Dean of Students' office or that office's designee; for staff, by the relevant Vice-President or designee; for the faculty, by the Vice President of Academic Affairs or designee; and, in cases that may be in violation of the College's Affirmative Action policy, the Director of Civil Rights Compliance and Diversity or designee. Authorized representatives of the College will monitor the use of its systems in its sole discretion, at any time, with or without notice to any employee or student and may bypass, delete, change and/or modify any pass code. Such monitoring is capable of tracking and recording e-mail messages and telecommunications/voice mail messages sent and received as well as Internet web sites visited by employees.

Administrative Computing of Massachusetts College of Art may routinely monitor communications technology and log usage data, such as network session connection times and end-points, CPU and disk utilization for each user, security audit trails, network loading, etc. Administrative Computing may review this data for evidence of violation of law or policy, and other purposes.

14. **Consent.** An employee's or student's use of Massachusetts

College of Art's e-mail system and/or Internet systems and/or telecommunications/voice mail systems constitutes his/her agreement to comply with the College's Electronic Mail, Internet, and Telecommunications/Voice Mail Policy as well as his/her consent to the College's recording and monitoring of the employee's use of the e-mail, Internet, and telecommunications/voice mail systems.

15. **Confidentiality/Privacy.** The confidentiality of any message or materials should not be assumed. Even when a message or material has been erased, it may still be possible to retrieve and read or hear that message or material. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality. Messages read in HTML may identify the reader to the sender. Notwithstanding Massachusetts College of Art's right to retrieve and read/listen to any electronic mail, Internet messages, telecommunications/voice mail messages or material, such messages or material should be treated as confidential by other employees and students and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees and students are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of material on the systems. Without prior management authorization, employees and students are not permitted to retrieve or read e-mail messages that are not sent to them. The contents of electronic mail, Internet messages or materials, or telecommunications/voice mail messages may, however, be disclosed to others within the College, with prior management authorization.
16. **Confidentiality and Encryption.** Confidential or privileged information should not be sent over the Internet, unless with appropriate warnings, safeguards, or encryption.
17. **Disciplinary Action.** In keeping with its long tradition of academic freedom, Massachusetts College of Art supports free inquiry and expression by the users of its internet, email, and telecommunications/voice mail systems and networks. Massachusetts College of Art, however, reserves the right to take action against or deny access to its facilities to those whose use is not in agreement with the purpose of the College or infringes on the rights of others.

In accordance with College procedures, Massachusetts College of Art may impose sanctions on anyone who is found to have violated the policies of the College regarding internet, email, computer and/or telecommunications/voice mail network or systems usage. A violation of the policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the loss of computer, internet, email, and/or telecommunications/voice mail network or systems access privileges and/or discipline ranging from counseling up to discharge from employment or expulsion from the College, and/or legal action. Some violations may constitute criminal offenses and may be subject to local, state, and/or federal prosecution.

In addition, Massachusetts College of Art reserves the right to terminate any computer network connection without notice should it be determined that network traffic generated from the connection inhibits or interferes with the use of the network by others.

18. **Password Accountability.** Employee and student passwords are confidential and employees and students are accountable for all usage under the password of Massachusetts College of Art computer and telecommunication/voice mail systems. No one shall give any password for any College computer, telecommunications/voice mail system, or network facility to any unauthorized person, nor obtain any other person's password by any unauthorized means whatsoever. In general, passwords should never be shared with anyone else. Anyone who knows your password can use your account. If he/she does anything that affects the system, it will be traced back to your userid. If your userid or your computer account or telecommunications/voice mail account is used in an inappropriate manner, you may be held responsible. All employees and students are prohibited from running programs that attempt to identify passwords or codes.
19. **Other Countries' Laws.** Employees and students with Internet access must take particular care to comply with and understand the copyright, trademark, libel, slander, and public speech control laws of those countries in which this College maintains an academic/business presence.
20. **Representation of the College.** Employees and students should make clear when they are or are not representing the College in their e-mail, Internet, or telecommunications/voice mail communications.

21. **Internet Site/Identification Originator.** Employees and students should be aware that Internet sites accessed from Massachusetts College of Art's computer network may identify Massachusetts College of Art as the originator of each visit. If employees or students participate in "chat sessions" or post messages on the Internet, they may be regarded as representing Massachusetts College of Art. Thus, all communications must be professional, appropriate to Massachusetts College of Art, and not adversely reflect on its reputation.
22. **Public Records.** As a State College (public entity), information accessed and/or distributed over the e-mail, Internet or the telecommunications/voice mail systems may be considered a public record pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws c.66.
23. **Collective Bargaining Agreements.** Where Collective Bargaining Agreements are in effect and come into conflict with this Policy, the Collective Bargaining Agreements shall govern.
24. **Contact Person.** If you are not sure whether an activity you are planning would affect service, you may contact Administrative Computing at (617) 879-7870. Employees who need help understanding this policy or who discover a violation of this policy should notify either the Director of Human Resources (Erin McNeil at 617-879-7907) or the Director of Administrative Computing (Felipe Lopez at 617-879-7878).

Disclaimer. All parties placing materials on the College's e-mail, Internet, website, or any other College network represent and warrant that the submission, installation, copying, distribution, and use of such materials in connection with the College's systems will not violate any other party's proprietary rights. The user understands and agrees that Massachusetts College of Art is not responsible for any errors created in or damage to materials as a result of the installation or maintenance on the College's Network servers, or their use by anyone accessing Massachusetts College of Art servers. All use of the e-mail, Internet, and telecommunications systems must be in accordance with existing Massachusetts College of Art regulations for computer and telecommunications/voice mail use. Official Massachusetts College of Art computer network pages may contain links to other pages not sanctioned by the College.

Massachusetts College of Art intends to honor the policies set forth above, but reserves the right to change them as may be required under the circumstances. The "Committee on Workplace Privacy and Electronic Information" makes changes to this policy through recommendations to the President of the College. The Committee meets several times a year, or as needed, to discuss the policy and, if necessary, to update, change, or modify the policy.

* This policy is not meant to determine ownership of academic research and work product displayed and/or stored on Massachusetts College of Art systems.

** Parts of this Policy incorporate some of the substance and language of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's Policy on Electronic Citizenship approved April 13, 1998 and last modified on October 18, 1999.

Date: August 2004

