

Instant Messaging Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to express Regent University's policy regarding the use of Instant Messaging as a means of communication between two users (faculty/staff/student/agent). In addition, this policy aims to inform the user about the use and misuse of this communication medium.

Privacy Notice:

As Instant Messaging communications are inherently insecure (not protected by encrypted communications), any student, faculty, staff, or other agent (contractors, temporary employees, etc.) utilizing Instant Messaging technology must exercise caution with regard to conversation content. Further, Instant Messaging Clients do not provide sufficient authentication of the parties involved in the conversation. Subsequently, users are not assured that they are communicating with who they think they are (a user may not be who they are claiming to be). For these and other reasons, users of the University's computer system assets, including, but not limited to Instant Messaging Clients, maintain no personal privacy rights with respect to content created, stored, received or sent from the University's information systems (as defined in the *Acceptable Use Policy, General Provisions, Item 1*). In accordance with the Regent University Acceptable Use Policy, Regent University, or its delegates, reserves the right to intercept, monitor, or record all information stored on its information systems and inspect activity to diagnose problems or identify security threats and/or violations.

Proper Use:

Students, faculty, staff, and all agents of the university (contractors, temporary employees, etc.) are permitted to use Instant Messaging Clients, including, but not limited to Yahoo! Messenger, AOL Instant Messenger, MSN Messenger, and Google Talk, in order to facilitate communications between two or more parties.

Misuse:

Students, faculty, and staff are not permitted at any time, to carry out communications via Instant Messaging Client that involve any of the following.

- Communications consisting of HIPAA or FERPA protected information
- Communications consisting of personal private information
- Communications consisting of Regent University non-public or confidential information
- Communications which may constitute intimidating, hostile or offensive material on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, religion, national origin or disability
- Communications in support of partisan political purposes including, but not limited to statements, opinions, or solicitations
- Communications supporting any business function that is not directly in support of Regent University business functions and procedures
- Communications utilized in such a manner as to qualify as 'excessive personal use' and that interfere with the normal employment responsibilities of a faculty, staff, graduate assistant, or other employed agent of the university (contractor, temporary employee, etc.)

Policy Violations:

Abuse of Instant Messaging communications, through misuse as defined above, or use in violation of law or other university policies, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or enrollment. All persons to whom these guidelines are applicable, as stated above, are responsible for adhering to these rules. All supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring that these guidelines are adhered to within their respective areas of responsibility. Any user may report university policy or law violations to their immediate supervisor, representative faculty or school personnel, or directly to the Information Technology Department Help Desk at 757-352-4076 or infosec@regent.edu.