A Review of College Policies

Courtney Hagen

W0263284

Introduction to Information Security

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Question 1

The link to the Computer Resources Usage policy is this: <https://www.nscc.ca/services/it/policies/computer_usage_policy.asp>

The actual title of the policy as per the page is “Computer Resources Usage Policy”.

The policy applies to “all faculty, staff, and students of NSCC, as well as visitors and guests of the College who use the college’s computer or network resources no matter where physically located” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.)

NSCC does not guarantee privacy in computer use or email communications.

There is no content in this policy outlining what email is to be used to contact your instructor.

Five examples of illegal use of NSCC computing resources are: emailing another student a threatening email, downloading child pornography, sending pornography to a minor from NSCC’s network, being involved in a pyramid scheme via the network, and present a video with copyright protection without permission from the owner.

Three types of material if downloaded would be considered unacceptable but not necessarily illegal are pornography, pirated software, or a virus.

If an activity is not specifically listed in the policy as being unacceptable but is done intentionally, one can still be held accountable because as per the policy, “this policy is not intended to set forth an exhaustive list relating College computing resources or appropriate and inappropriate use of such resources but rather provide the foundation for responsible computing use.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.) It’s only a problem if malicious behavior is intentional, as the policy acknowledges, “inexperienced users may unintentionally engage in behaviors that violate the principles and/or guidelines of responsible and acceptable use.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.) The policy gives room for intentionality to be assessed by stating “a Human Resources Consultant (for employees) or a representative from Student Services (for students), working with the area manager and IT, will determine the appropriate course of action.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.)

The college does not require specific and conclusive evidence of misuse prior to monitoring individual logins, communications or other activities. As per the policy, “the College may authorize access to monitor the activity and accounts of individual users of College computer resources, including individual login sessions and communications, without notice, when (a) the user has given permission or has voluntarily made them accessible to the public, for example by posting to a publicly-accessible web page or providing publicly-accessible network services; (b) it reasonably appears necessary to do so to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of the College or other computing resources or to protect the college from liability, which includes random audits/monitoring of the system and accounts; (c) there is reasonable cause to believe that the user has violated, or is violating, this policy; (d) an account appears to be engaged in unusual or unusually excessive activity, as indicated by the monitoring of general activity, usage patterns and/or loss of productivity; or (e) it is otherwise required or permitted by law.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.)

Question 2

The link to the email policy is: https://www.nscc.ca/docs/about-nscc/policies-procedures/email-policy.pdf

The actual title of the policy as shown on the policy page is “Email Policy”

If one creates an email using a college email system one's’ personal laptop and store the only copy of that email on their personal laptop, that email is still subject to the FOIPOP act one can be required to produce and disclose that email to third parties. (Electronic Mail (Email) Policy, 2016).

Under the policy, if one uses the college email system to receive or send an email to a third party who is unrelated to the college or college activity are subject to review by the college (Electronic Mail (Email) Policy, 2016).

As per the policy, “the College will never ask for confirmation of a username or password through an email message. Any attempts to gain this information should be identified to IT Services.” (Electronic Mail (Email) Policy, 2016).

Question 3

https://www.nscc.ca/docs/about-nscc/policies-procedures/email-best-practices.pdf Three examples of email best practices recommended by the college are: to be wary of using “reply all”, being mindful of when and what size attachments should be sent, and to fill in the subject line with a clear and concise message. (Email Best Practices, 2015).

Question 4

If you leave a copy of a paper you have written on a table in a common area and another student copies and submits the same work, you are still participating in plagiarism. As per the Academic Integrity policy, “plagiarism can be intentional or occur through carelessness.”, so allowing your work to be copied due to carelessly leaving your work available in a public area can still be considered participating in plagiarism.” (Academic Integrity Policy, 2017).

Question 5

If one makes a defamatory comment on social media about a student, instructor, or college staff member, you are in violation of the student code of conduct. As per the Social Media Policy, “employees and students must not use Social Media to disseminate harassing, abusive, malicious, sexually explicit, threatening, intimidating, illegal information or images or make defamatory comments online.” (Policy - Social Media – Administrative, 2015). This means that students and employees are not to make defamatory comments about anyone, regardless of position, using social media.

Question 6

The Computer Resources Usage Policy has a Scope statement, it is simply labeled as “Application” instead. It states, “this policy, and related policies and procedures, apply to all faculty, staff and students of NSCC, as well as visitors and guests of the College who use the College’s computer or network resources no matter where physically located.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.) As such, this statement clearly highlights the scope of who his policy is intended for, being basically anyone who uses the College’s computers or network resources.

The Computer Resources Usage Policy does not have an exclusive accountability statement, but it does note who is involved for accountability. As per the policy, “a Human Resources Consultant (for employees) or a representative from Student Services (for students), working with the area manager and IT, will determine the appropriate course of action and whether it will include monitoring the activity and accounts of an individual user.” (Computer Resources Usage Policy, n.d.) It states clearly that the Human Resources Consultant is to hold the employees accountable, and the Student Services is to hold students accountable, in collaborating with the area manager and IT department.

It does not appear that the Computer Resources Usage Policy has an exception statement.

References

Academic Integrity Policy. (2017, October 1). Retrieved January 8, 2019, from https://www.nscc.ca/docs/about-nscc/policies-procedures/policy-academicintegrity.pdf

Computer Resources Usage Policy. (n.d.). Retrieved January 8, 2019, from <https://www.nscc.ca/services/it/policies/computer_usage_policy.asp>

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Policy - Social Media - Administrative. (2015, August 20). Retrieved January 8, 2019, from <https://www.nscc.ca/docs/about-nscc/policies-procedures/social-media-policy.pdf>