



## Lancaster Theological Seminary Electronic Communications Policy

Lancaster Theological Seminary is committed to providing an environment that encourages the use of computers and electronic communications as essential tools to support the instructional, research, administrative, and other work or mission related activities of the Seminary.

In utilizing the Seminary's computers and electronic communications systems, such as electronic mail and access to the Internet, it is important for all users to be aware of the Seminary's policy regarding responsible use. It is the responsibility of each user to ensure that this technology is used for proper and lawful purposes and in a manner that is responsible and does not compromise the confidentiality of sensitive information, the security of the Seminary's systems, or the reputation, policies or mission of the Seminary.

### **Computer Systems in General**

**Systems Security:** Computer resources are property of the Seminary and are to be protected from unauthorized access, use, modification, destruction, or disclosure. An active terminal should not be left unattended for any extended period of time, such as, for example, overnight or while the user is otherwise away from the office for several hours. Individual passwords for computers are confidential and may not be shared or posted. If someone else learns a user's password, the password should be changed immediately. Each user is responsible for activity performed using the user's password with such user's knowledge and consent. No user should attempt to obtain access to another user's documents without prior authorization.

**No Privacy:** Users do not have an expectation of privacy or a personal privacy right in any matter created, received, sent, or stored on a Seminary computer, whether or not the matter is designated as private or confidential. The Seminary reserves the right to access all files or data contained on any Seminary computer, including but not limited to e-mail messages, personal file directories and Internet usage and material at any time and without prior notice. For example, the Seminary may access any and all computer systems for the purpose of assuring compliance with statutory requirements and internal policies, supporting the performance of internal investigations, and assisting with the maintenance and management of the Seminary's information systems. Computer files may also be subject to search under Court order.

**Software License Restrictions and Copyright Laws:** Most proprietary software licenses have legal restrictions prohibiting unauthorized use and copying. It is the responsibility of each user to ensure compliance with all copyright and other laws and license restrictions before downloading or receiving software from any source. In addition, software may not be downloaded or received on a Seminary computer, including software available on the Internet, unless it is approved in advance by Computer Services. Only personnel authorized by Computer Services may load software onto any Seminary computer, connect any hardware or other equipment to any Seminary computer, or move or change any Seminary computer equipment.

In addition, information posted, viewed or downloaded from the Internet may be protected by copyright, trademark, piracy or other laws. Reproduction of protected information is permitted only if such reproduction is (1) a fair use or (2) based on express permission given by the copyright owner or authorized agent that is on file with Computer Services at the Seminary or (3) in compliance with use or permission guidelines posted by the owner or authorized agent of the information. It is each user's responsibility to comply with applicable copyright and other legal restrictions and posted use or permission guidelines.

**Virus Protection:** All files originating from a source outside of the Seminary, including files obtained over the Internet must be checked for possible computer viruses before being downloaded onto a Seminary computer. The virus-checking software on each Seminary computer will ordinarily perform this check automatically. All users should contact Computer Services before downloading a file that may pose a particular risk for any reason. All users must follow any other policies or notices with respect to viruses or other security measures that the Seminary may adopt or post from time to time.

**Compliance Required:** All users must comply with the Seminary's Electronic Communications Policy. Violation of the policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the Seminary.

**Responsible Use of E-Mail:** E-mail should be used for work-related [Seminary-related] purposes. The principal purpose of electronic mail (e-mail) is to facilitate instructional, research, administrative, and other work or mission related communications by and among Seminary employees and students. While the Seminary permits reasonable personal use of e-mail (subject to the "No Privacy" policy noted above), such use must not interfere with an employee's work responsibilities or disrupt the work of other users. Users should not use e-mail to widely broadcast "chain letters", "bulk" e-mail (or "spam"), or other non-work related messages. E-mail should not be used for personal monetary gain, outside commercial purposes, or for any political purpose, unless approved by the Seminary.

**E-mail correspondence is the property of the Seminary:** All e-mail correspondence is the property of the Seminary, whether or not related to personal or confidential matters. The Seminary reserves the right to monitor its e-mail system, including a user's mailbox, at its discretion in the ordinary course of business. The existence of passwords and "message delete" functions do not restrict or eliminate the Seminary's ability or right to access electronic communications. Please note that in certain situations, the Seminary may be compelled to access and disclose messages that were sent over its e-mail system.

**Standards of confidentiality and security must be observed:** E-mail, which contains confidential information, must be treated as confidential. Users may not share e-mail passwords, provide e-mail access to an unauthorized person, or access another user's e-mail without authorization.

**Offensive, demeaning, harassing, defamatory or disruptive e-mail are prohibited:** E-mail should conform to the same standards of propriety and respect as any other verbal or written communication at the Seminary. Offensive, demeaning, harassing, defamatory or disruptive messages are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, messages that are inconsistent with the Seminary's Faculty, Staff and Student Handbook guidelines and "[Anti-]Harassment Policy". Users who become aware of or receive prohibited e-mail should notify Computer Services. Inappropriate use of e-mail may be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination of employment or dismissal from the Seminary.

**Users are responsible for eliminating inappropriate e-mail sent into the Seminary from an outside source:** All e-mail sent or received on a Seminary computer is subject to the same standards of propriety and respect. This includes e-mail sent to the Seminary over the Internet from a source outside of the Seminary. When receiving e-mail from outside sources, users have the responsibility of immediately deleting all e-mail that falls below the Seminary's standards as articulated above, including all pornographic, obscene, and sexually explicit communications. The prohibited e-mail should be deleted before the content of the e-mail is viewed, if possible. Users also have the responsibility of ensuring that others do not see the prohibited e-mail.

**Responsible Use of the Internet:** The Internet is for work-related [and educational research] purposes. The Seminary's connection to the Internet is principally for instructional, research, administrative, and other work or mission-related purposes. Any unauthorized use of the Internet is prohibited. Unauthorized uses include, but are not limited to, posting, viewing, downloading, or otherwise transmitting or receiving offensive, defamatory, pornographic or sexually explicit material; engaging in computer "hacking" or other related activities; or attempting to disable or compromise the security of information on any computer. While the Seminary permits reasonable use of its Internet connection for personal reasons (subject to the "No Privacy" policy noted above), such use should not interfere with an employee's work responsibilities,

diminish an employee's work efforts, or disrupt the work of other users. For this reason, use of the Internet for personal reasons during an employee's work hours is generally inappropriate.

Participation in work-related Internet discussion groups is permitted with certain restrictions. Users may participate in work or mission-related Internet discussion groups using the Seminary's computers and electronic communications systems, but only to the extent that such participation (1) does not reflect adversely on the Seminary, (2) is consistent with all the Seminary's standards and policies, including those regarding confidential information and public statements, and (3) does not express any position that is, or may be interpreted as, inconsistent with any position taken by the Seminary or that purports to be, or may be interpreted to be the official position of the Seminary. Users who participate in work-related Internet discussion groups are responsible for ensuring that all information provided by them is accurate and that any personal opinions expressed are clearly identified as "personal" and not the opinion of the Seminary. Defamatory statements or personal attacks are strictly prohibited. Any other posting using the Seminary's name or otherwise identifying the Seminary must be approved in advance by the Vice President of Academic Affairs & Dean, the Dean of Students, the Vice President for Business and Finance, or the President.

Work-related Internet subscriptions are allowed. A subscription through a Seminary computer or electronic communications system to an Internet mailing list is permitted only if the subscription is (1) work or mission-related or (2) does not generate numerous messages.

Take precautions when providing or receiving information over the Internet. A user should never provide confidential, proprietary or restricted information about the Seminary over the Internet without the Seminary's prior written consent. This includes but is not limited to information about employees, students, organizational structure, strategic plans, and financial data. Because it is possible for users to hide their true identity on the Internet, contacts made over the Internet should not be trusted with any Seminary information, whether confidential or not, unless a due diligence process has first been performed.

Information obtained from the Internet is not subject to quality controls and should be verified by an independent source before being relied upon. Not all sources on the Internet provide information that is accurate, complete, current or even legal. The Seminary neither monitors nor controls information accessible through the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content or use.

Users may not establish external network connections. Only authorized personnel may establish Internet or other external network connections. Because other connections may cause unauthorized access to the Seminary's systems and information, they are strictly prohibited. Prohibited connections include but are not limited to the establishment of hosts with public modem dial-ins, World Wide Web home pages and File Transfer Protocol (FTP). The Seminary reserves the right to monitor Internet usage at its discretion.

### **USE OF LTS EQUIPMENT**

The equipment used in accomplishing your work [or for instructional purposes] is expensive and may be difficult to replace. Exercise care when using tools and equipment and follow all operating instructions, maintenance requirements and safety guidelines. Damage or deterioration of equipment shall be reported immediately to your supervisor and the Business Office.

You are responsible for all property, materials or equipment issued to you or in your control during your employment with [or education at] LTS. Should you leave LTS for any reason, you are required to return such property, material or equipment to your supervisor before your last day of work.