

Informatics Services Use Policy

1. Purpose

The Computer Center of METU provides various informatics services (forums, electronic lists etc.) for METU users (academic/administrative staff and students) as well as for users from outside METU so as to facilitate their *interactive* exchange of information, enhance mutual communication, and offer discussion platforms. Furthermore other informatics services (web pages, phone book etc.) where the above mentioned users can access information *without any direct interaction* are also supplied by the Center. For the efficient and secure use of these services, which have been devised to serve many users, there are some rules and regulations to be followed. This policy document has been scripted to assert these rules and to guide the user in making use of the services provided.

2. Scope

This policy document enfolds all the informatics services provided by the METU Computer Center Informatics Group.

3. Policy

3.1. Interactive Informatics Services

The interactive informatics services provided in METU covers all the services that provide a virtual medium where users, in general, can get together and share information, can organize discussion groups and, depending on the technical infrastructure of the service, can contribute in different means. This contribution may be in the form of sending e-mails to electronic mailing lists or sending messages to related forum platforms.

The interactive informatics services include *groups* related with various topics. For instance groups are labeled "list" for the electronic list services, whereas they are labeled "forum" for the forum services. Only academic or administrative staff is authorized to make a new interactive informatics services group request. For groups to be started for student units, similarly, it must be the academic advisor of the student unit to place a new group request.

The participation status of users to these services can be classified in, basically, two types. A user can either be the "administrator" or the "user" of any of these groups. The rules pertaining the administrator and the users can be listed as follows:

3.1.1. Group administrators

- Becoming the "administrator" of a group depends on the will of the member users and would be defined while forming a new group. Those users who wish to be the group administrator inform the CC during the new group formation application and if found appropriate will be the designated group administrator. It is necessary to be an academic or administrative staff to become a group administrator. The only exception being, in the case of student groups where a student may only become the group administrator with the consent of the academic advisor.
- The CC must be notified in case of a need to change the group administrator due to any reason.
- By no means can the start of a group application be made on an interactive service, with purpose of getting commercial gain.
- Group specific rules and sanctions are determined by the group administrator. These rules in no way can be in conflict with the METU Information Technology Resources Usage Policy. It is the administrator's responsibility to ensure users to comply with the group specific rules.
- For groups where membership is a must, becoming a member is at the user's discretion. No one, whether a METU user or not, may not be affiliated at any one of these groups without his/her consent and will. No one can be forced to join any of these groups or can be posted non solicited e-mail or messages containing advertisements.

3.1.2. Users

- Those users who wish to make use of groups established on the interactive informative services are expected to abide by not only the METU Information Technology Resources Usage Policy but also by the rules and sanctions imposed by this policy document.
- In addition users should comply with generally unwritten rules and should pay attention to the basics mentioned below:
 - No information outside the scope of the group should be sent.
 - It should be kept in mind that the group is a multi-user one and should be regarded as a public platform.
 - Messages which may possibly be considered a violation of personal rights ought not be sent. If there is doubt about a message and that it may be misinterpreted as such, it should not be sent by no means.
 - Users must not send messages that are not of themselves or not all of the written information is written by them. Especially, received forwarded messages should not be directed to groups.
 - Messages that promote another site, person, corporate etc or their advertisements ought not be sent.
 - Messages related to technical trouble shooting inquiries or trials should not be sent to groups.
 - For groups that require membership, incase a membership is needed to be dissolved, the request must not be sent to the group.

For most of the groups the procedure has been automated and the necessary steps to start or delete a membership are processed via an interface. The users who are not aware of the interface or who do not know what to do, should get in touch with the group administrator instead of sending a message to the group.

3.2. Non-interactive Informatics Services

Non-interactive informatics services are those where the users are not interactive mutual participants and whose basic purpose is to supply information only. METU web pages and web announcement systems are just two examples of these services. The users of these services do make use of them by either as an "information provider" or as an "information recipient".

3.2.1. Information Providing Users

Since the basic purpose of non-interactive informatics services is to provide information, it becomes necessary for some sources (information providing users) to supply the information. The information is not only supplied by the METU CC (as in the case of METU and CC web pages) but also by other users (as in the case of academic departments which design their web pages by using their web accounts, or units which announce their messages in the Announcements System, and even users who update their personal information in the Phone Book System).

3.2.2. Recipient Users

The users who see, read, or make use of the supplied information are placed within the "information recipient" users group of non-interactive informatics services. Since there are no restrictions on almost all of these services, any user, in or out of campus, with an internet connection can access these services on condition of abiding by the regulations. For those services which are restricted, if the users are authorized within the boundaries of the restrictions, they can access the information presented on those services.

Whether "the supplier of information" or "the recipient of information" all users of a group have to comply with the rules stated below:

- Any information (software or data) attained via non-interactive informatics services may not be used in a manner to breach copyright laws.
- No act can be performed to damage or jeopardize the security of the information supplied.
 - All information that is not directly accessible on METU servers or by any link are declared to be "confidential". Access to such information is violation of the secrecy principle.

- Any "voluntary" or "involuntary" attempt to change or try to change any data or software itself, supplied on METU servers, or their function is violation of the integrity principle of METU.
- Occupying the resources of the servers, on which METU services are provided, more than reserved for one user or any such trial is infringement of the attainability principle of METU.

4. Implementation

Users with the intention of making use of METU Computer Center Informatics Services are responsible of abiding by the regulations depicted by METU Informatics Services Provision Policy Document. Users who have been detected to breach the policy may be faced with the sanctions proclaimed with the METU Information Technology Resources Usage Policy.

METU Computer Center reserves the right to make the necessary amendments on the Informatics Services Provision Policy Document without prior notification of the users. The users are liable to follow up the information given with this document and be informed of probable changes made.