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Internet: Access, Disclaimers and Other Needful Things  
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Access

Issues:

- should students be permitted access?
- what about persons outside of students, faculty and staff?
  - alumni, especially recent graduates
  - visiting faculty
  - students from other institutions

Situation at the time:

- Students had been permitted access to access and use BITNET services -- university academic administration support,
- Students were familiar with FTP and BBS services, e.g., computer science
- Process: students needed to get faculty sponsorship in order to obtain accounts
- persons other than students, faculty and staff were given access on a case-by-case -- but no written policy
- University internal audit process, i.e., assignment of accounts
- University library had agreements with libraries from other institutions, e.g., DePaul University and Illinois Institute of Technology, to permit their students to use facilities and resources with some limitations

Considerations:

- EDUCOM's statement on rights and responsibilities for citizens in electronic community?
- Should access be treated as a *right* or a *privilege*?
- Should "open access" be the norm?
- Should access be permitted only for specific purposes, e.g., only to do work for a specific course but not for writing resumes?
- Should we expect and permit some personal use, especially on the part of students and faculty?

Sources:

- Contacts with other institutions to find out what is going on there -- will encounter a variety of approaches and philosophies
- Use of the gopher information servers at other institutions
- Electronic discussion groups and anonymous FTP sites.
- Office of general counsel is a good resource on issues of university liabilities

EFF.ORG

Approach:

- University library provided an important basis for the model
- "Open access" is component of access policies but subject to restrictions that may arise due to availability of resources
- Access would be considered a privilege treated in similar fashion as access to library facilities
- Make access open but restrict it as problems with resource allocation arise.
- Primary community is the university community: students, faculty and staff
- Students, faculty and staff can obtain accounts and use computing, networking and information resources and services, if their *primary* use is consistent with university mission in learning and teaching, research, health care and public service.
- Students no longer require faculty sponsorship, except in some extreme cases, e.g., to obtain account on NCSA supercomputing systems at U of Illinois
- Students, faculty and staff have responsibilities regarding acceptable use of these resources -- problems that which may arise would be referred to different codes of behavior, e.g., Code of Student Conduct, Faculty Handbook, and university personnel policies
- Keep in mind limited resources, especially public access labs, i.e., list of priorities <sup>#1 Acad. use</sup>  
<sub>#2 Research</sub>  
<sub>#3 personal use.</sub>
- Educational programs on acceptable use of resources
- Other groups: emeritus faculty, temporary employees (contractors and vendors), alumni, visitors and friends, can be accommodated on a limited basis but not to the detriment of the primary community and in keeping with university contractual arrangements
- Members of these groups would be held accountable to the same standards, e.g., use of computing, networking and information resources, for personal commercial, for-profit enterprises.

Disclaimer

Concerns:

- Material available on the Internet may be inaccurate, inappropriate, offensive or irrelevant to the university mission, or offensive.
- University could be liable for permitting access to such materials.

Situation at the time:

- Access to networking resources is open (except to secured data and programs) to those with authorized accounts
- No attempt at direct censorship.

Considerations:

- Should the University review all materials and then limit access, e.g., not including alt. newsgroups to be accessible?
- Should the University limit access based upon class of account?
- Should the University issue a disclaimer about the nature of the material?

Approach:

- Again, the University Library provides a model.
- - No review or censorship will take place.
- - Those who access and use material from the Internet must take responsibility for how they use that material just as they would using materials in the University Library.
- However, not all materials may be available due to existing resources -- same case with University Library.
- University will issue disclaimer indicating:
  - that there may be material available on Internet which can be accessed through the university network which may be inaccurate, inappropriate to the University mission, or offensive to some,
  - that the University neither holds any responsibility nor endorses for any material found in the Internet, except for any material presented about the University.
- University displays disclaimer when one accesses the University gopher system (gopher.luc.edu)

Other Needful Things

- Use of disclaimer in signature when posting on newsgroups, indicating that material in the posting does not represent the University