

Miami University

Skype Usage

IT Policy | IT Standard | **IT Guideline** | IT Procedure | IT Informative
Issued by: IT Services

Note: This guideline is effective as of May 11, 2009. It is pending approval from the IT Policy committee, which meets next in Fall 2009.

SCOPE:

This guideline covers all usage of the Skype program on the Miami network.

RATIONALE:

Skype allows for free Internet calls to other Skype users, which facilitates new avenues of teaching and research. However, Skype can create a significant amount of network traffic if it is allowed to use its supernode functionality, which can lead to significantly degraded service for other users.

When a Skype instance is operating as a supernode, the benefits for the Skype user fail to outweigh the costs imposed on the rest of the users who will suffer decreased network reliability and performance.

IT GUIDELINE:

A. Skype Supernodes

When Skype switches into supernode mode, it uses a significantly larger amount of network bandwidth than when it is operating outside of supernode mode.

B. Responsible Use of Computing at Miami University

MUPIM covers the responsible use of computing at Miami University in section 16.6.A. Specifically, users must “[r]espect the finite capacity of those resources and limit use so as not to consume an unreasonable amount of those resources or to interfere unreasonably with the activity of others.” Additionally, enforcement includes allowing IT Services administrators to “disallow network connections by certain computers (even departmental and personal ones)”.

C. Use of Skype at Miami University

Skype may be used on the Miami University network.

If a Skype instance switches to supernode mode and is negatively impacting the ability of other users to access the network, the computer running the offending Skype program may be prevented from accessing the network. This may occur with no advance notice to the Skype user. This will result in an interruption of the Skype call.

There are technical measures which can be taken to decrease or prevent the likelihood of a Skype instance switching to supernode mode. Contact your Technical Service Representative (TSR) or Campus Partnership Representative for additional information.

D. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this standard require approval from the Vice President for Information Technology before they are implemented.

E. Review

This standard will be reviewed by the Security Working Group on an annual basis.

APPROVAL(S) AND DATE(S):

Reviewed by: Information Security Officer, May 4, 2009

Final Approval by: IT Policy committee

Final Approval on: Not yet approved – in effect pending presentation before the IT Policy committee in Fall 2009

Version number: 1.0

REVISION HISTORY & REFERENCES:

- A. Revision History
May 4, 2009 – Initial Version