1.0 PURPOSE

This Policy provides general guidance and specific recommendations for the use of "CougarNet", Columbus State University’s Information Portal. CougarNet is a
gateway that facilitates easy access to a variety of web-based content originating from sources throughout Columbus State University. CougarNet generates dynamic web pages, rich with content in a format customized to address a specific end user’s need(s). This content is supplemented with web-based collaborative tools and messaging options. It is designed to serve a diverse user population. CougarNet services are highly valued and sensitive Institute resources. This Policy establishes an acceptable usage framework that enables the highest quality information sharing possible for the benefit of all authorized Portal users. CougarNet is specifically intended for use by the Columbus State University Community to facilitate quick and easy access to pertinent information.

An example of CougarNet usage could be a student using the portal to locate course information, access campus e-mail, check various calendars, and access student records.

**2.0 SCOPE**

This Policy applies to all authorized CougarNet usage from any location at all times. This is an Institute-wide policy and does not supersede other policies that pertain to the use or actions that may occur while using CougarNet. This Policy is meant to complement related policies and further apply sound principles already approved for the acceptable use of Institute computing resources.

**3.0 POLICY**

Policy is categorized for each service provided and accessed through BuzzPort. For specific policy, refer to the detailed section for that category. Since BuzzPort is an official Institute resource, all authorized users must abide by applicable Institute policies and guidelines. At a minimum, these include the following:

Failure to comply with approved Institute-wide and departmental policies can result in the loss of CougarNet access, computing privileges, and enforcement of appropriate CSU disciplinary procedures as well as applicable criminal and civil penalties.

**3.1 Portal Administration**

BuzzPort is a strategic Columbus State University resource that is not “owned” by any single department. Executive leadership has implemented a model for sustainable program administration.
The Vice President of Academic Affairs provides executive sponsorship. This individual approves all major Portal initiatives requiring the commitment of Institute resources. The positions has officially created the following groups:

The Director of University Information and Technology Services provides leadership and oversite of the entire program.

An Administrative Technologies and Utilities Committee made up of representatives from each College and Department guides the Portal Support Team in implementation and on-going development efforts. They also identify, prioritize and prototype new functionality.

The Portal Support Team implements, supports, and nurtures the Portal initiative. Long-term, the Team is led by the Portal Administrator who is responsible for on-going operation of the program. It includes the necessary functional, technical, and project support expertise to accomplish agreed upon objectives.

CougarNet is a conduit to facilitate easy access to a variety of information technology resources. CougarNet accounts are created automatically for users in the Columbus State University Community. Accounts are created and administered by the University Information and Technology Services (UITS) Department. Users are automatically added to the system by processes designed, implemented, and maintained by the Portal Support Team.

The Portal Administrator is responsible for defining the structure and characteristics of access groups with appropriate guidance from the Administrative Technologies and Utilities Committee and Portal Support Team. The Portal Administrator will fully document the access groups’ structure and assure knowledge transfer and sustainability of this process.

3.2 Portal Access

3.2.1 OBTAINING ACCESS AND CHANGES IN USER ROLES

Members of the Columbus State University Community will be able to access CougarNet using their CougarNet Account Information. While using CougarNet, users will exercise privileges assigned to their user role(s). It is not acceptable for any individual to circumvent or attempt to obtain access to services or information not appropriate to one’s authorized role.

Default user roles (access groups) will be automatically assigned to active students, faculty and staff. Creation and assignment of roles other than the defaults will be granted based upon approved need. Role definitions will only be defined and assigned by the Portal Support Team after verification of appropriate need and approval by the Portal Administrator.

Users requiring more than the default type of access should submit requests through eQuest. All CougarNet help requests are forwarded directly to the Portal Support Team.
Since CougarNet is an information gateway providing easy access to many other systems, some non-CougarNet systems may require their own unique user authorization and authentication protocols, usually in the form of a specific user id and password. Usage and access policies for these systems along with their support services exist outside the supported CougarNet environment. Details on the policies, procedures, and support structures of these systems are beyond the scope of this Policy.

Any changes in a user’s status at Columbus State University may impact that user’s CougarNet Account. These changes will automatically be reflected in the user’s CougarNet account. These changes can include account creation, deactivation, deletion, and default role assignments.

A user can have multiple roles. For example, a user could be a faculty member, and a student as well as a staff member. This would mean that the user account is affiliated with three roles. Users must submit a change request through eQuest when the need arises for a role change. Such requests will be routed to the Portal Support Team for action. Examples of situations requiring a change in access privileges include:

- A user leaves one department and is hired by another.
- A user has been a student and is hired as a staff/faculty member at Columbus State University.
- A user is no longer a staff/faculty member but remains a Columbus State University student.

3.2.2 Termination of BuzzPort Access

Access to CougarNet will be denied to a student that is not enrolled in courses for the present semester. Faculty and staff that are no longer employed by Columbus State University will have their account removed after the termination date. Students that have applied to Columbus State University will have accounts until the second week of the semester for which they are applying. If student is not accepted or not enrolled in courses their account will be removed from CougarNet. Students that have taken courses and not attended Columbus State University for a semester will have accounts regenerated upon enrollment into courses.

3.3 Targeted Communications

The targeted announcement functionality of the CougarNet portal should be used for legitimate educational, research and administrative efforts consistent with the University’s mission and goals. Targeted announcements should be intended for an audience within the campus community and be of a nature that the event is not recursive, i.e. events that occur more than once with a different venue should be considered for a channel in the portal not an announcement. Minutes of meetings and other informational descriptions should not be a part of the announcement, but should be a link to a document containing that information.

Types of Announcements
There are many types of targeted announcements that may be sent through CougarNet and they may be sent as an announcement as well as an email. These include a targeted audience of:

- Exclusively faculty, staff or students
- The entire campus community
- A group of faculty, staff or students identified by a unique characteristic

**Announcement Creation**

The announcements for the entire campus, faculty or staff will be controlled by the Public Relations Office. The requests for this type of announcement should be submitted to this office through an email and contain the targeted group, the message, the requestor, the mode (announcement and/or email), and the expiration date of the announcement. The Director of Public Relations or their designee will review the request and determine if it satisfies the objectives and mission of the university. If the announcement does not meet the criteria, it will be returned to the requestor with an explanation of the denial. If the announcement does meet the criteria, it will be posted within 24 hours to the CougarNet targeted announcements within the “Campus Announcements” or the “Personal Announcements” area dependent on the targeted audience.

The announcements for students will be controlled by the Student Affairs Office. The requests for this type of announcement should be submitted to this office through an email and contain the targeted group, the message, the requestor, the mode (announcement and/or email), and the expiration date of the announcement. The authorized person in the Student Affairs Office or their designee will review the request and determine if it satisfies the objectives and mission of the university. If the announcement does not meet the criteria, it will be returned to the requestor with an explanation of the denial. If the announcement does meet the criteria, it will be posted within 24 hours to the CougarNet targeted announcements within the “Personal Announcements” area only.

Announcements that are being sent to a certain population selected from Banner will be controlled by the Technology/Communication Department within Enrollment Services. Examples of this type of announcements are all student who are need to take the Regents’ exam, Nursing students with a Columbus State University GPA of 3.00 or higher, and Computer Science students who have completed a certain course with a “C” or better. The requests for this type of announcement should be submitted to this office through an email and contain the requirements for the population, the message, the requestor, the mode (announcement and/or email), and the expiration date of the announcement. The authorized person in the Director, Technology/Communication Department of Enrollment Services or their designee will review the request and determine if it satisfies the objectives and mission of the university. If the announcement does meet the criteria, it will be returned to the requestor with an explanation of the denial. If the announcement does meet the criteria, it will be posted within 24 hours to the CougarNet targeted announcements within the “Personal Announcements” area.
### 3.4 Calendaring

CougarNet provides web-based **calendaring** for all CougarNet users. Course calendars for faculty and students are automatically generated based upon data from the Banner Student Information System. CougarNet will be the official Calendaring system for Columbus State University and will be the only Calendering system supported by the Information Technology Department.

This Policy pertains only to calendaring within the CougarNet environment and will be subject to an Institute-wide calendaring policy if and when adopted.

CougarNet provides a framework to host College or Department calendars. These calendars will be created and maintained by each College or Department.

Users will not be able to access calendars if CougarNet is unavailable.

Individual users are responsible for their own calendar data, syncing, and backing up as they deem appropriate. To have the syncing software installed on a workstation submit a eQuest.

#### 3.4.1 Group Calendar

A group calendar is automatically created for every group that exists under the group index on CougarNet. Any user who has joined, and is an active member of a group, can view that group’s calendar contents.

Users will not be able to access these calendars if CougarNet is unavailable.

Individual users are responsible for their own calendar data, syncing, and backing up as they deem appropriate.

The calendar name for any group will automatically reflect the group name.

#### 3.4.2 Personal Calendar
Personal calendars are available to all CougarNet users. Users of personal calendaring should be aware of the following conditions:

Users will not be able to access personal calendars if CougarNet is unavailable.

Individual users are responsible for their own calendar data, syncing, and backing up as they deem appropriate.

Each CougarNet account will have a personal calendar identified by the user’s name. It is strongly suggested that all personal calendars created by users begin with the same name that is used to identify the user. For example, if George Burdell’s personal calendar is named “George P Burdell”, any additional calendars created by George should include this user name. George could create a calendar called “George P Burdell Study Schedule”. This will facilitate identification under the calendar look-up screen on the Portal and minimize confusion with non-personal CougarNet calendars.

Any personal calendar names deemed inappropriate by the Portal Support Team, Administrative Technologies and Utilities Committee, or Sponsors are subject to immediate removal.

3.4.3 Course Calendar

Each course will have a course calendar automatically generated from data available in Banner and named after the term and course field in Banner. Only the instructor(s) of record or designee will be able to modify a course calendar.

Users will not be able to access these calendars if BuzzPort is unavailable.

WebCT/Vista course calendars must be maintained separately from BuzzPort calendars.

3.5 Group Management

Group portals are a dynamic component of the CougarNet framework. Each group can have its own guest homepage, member homepage, e-mail list, calendar, message board, chat room, access links, posted articles, and photographs. Groups can be either public or restricted. Groups are available under a variety of categories listed in the groups index.

3.4.3 Request for Group Creation

(Talk to Student Life)

Requests for group creation must be submitted under the appropriate group category utilizing the request mechanism available in CougarNet. Requests will be evaluated based upon appropriateness for the group category. For example, someone authorized by the Dean of Students will review and approve all requests for student groups. For administrative, academic, and other group categories, an appropriate representative at the local unit level will review and approve group requests. A
group request is submitted through the “create group” option which presents a tabular form to submit the following information:

- **Group name** – names must adhere to published naming conventions
- **Short description** that will appear next to the name on lists
- **Long description** detailing the proposed group's purpose and mission
- **Type of Group** – with a choice to be either a public or restricted group.

A restricted group requires a user to submit a request through the portal and obtain approval from the group leader in order to join the group.

- **Acknowledgement of Leadership** – the requestor will become the Group Leader and must acknowledge awareness and acceptance of leadership responsibility in the request by clicking a check box.
- **Through check boxes, the requestor must indicate which group tools will be activated for the group and which group features can be delegated.**

Requests for group portal creation may not be approved for the following reasons:

- The request includes inaccurate or incomplete information
- The group name does not adhere to published naming conventions
- The group leader is not willing to accept the responsibilities of this role
- The requestor is attempting to circumvent Institute policy
- A group portal already exists that meets the intended purpose
- The purpose is deemed to be inappropriate for the group category