Auburn University at Montgomery
Policies and Procedures

Title: User Password Policy

Responsible Office: Information Technology Services

I.   PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures governing User Passwords, including password structure and requirements for periodic password change.

II.   POLICY

User passwords provide access to many university resources, which may contain confidential information. It is important that users choose passwords that are difficult to guess, and not something easily associated with the individual.

AUM requires all user passwords to contain a minimum of 8 alphanumeric characters, including:
- A combination of upper and lower case letters
- At least one number
- No common words or phrases
- No variant of the user name

User passwords must be kept confidential and may not be shared with others. Revealing a password exposes the authorized user to the responsibility for actions that another party takes with the disclosed password.

Passwords must not be written down and stored in an area where unauthorized individuals may view or access them.

AUM user passwords will expire and must be changed after 180 days. Passwords may not be repeated. Users should refrain from keeping the same password with a slight variation (for example, changing one letter or number within a previous password to create a new password).

If a password is shared, or there is concern that a user's account has been compromised, the user should contact AUM ITS immediately, in order to have his or her password reset.

III.   EFFECTIVE DATE

July 2010

REVISED DATE

June 14, 2010

IV.   APPLICABILITY

All AUM employees

V.   RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief Information Officer implements and administers this policy.

VI.   DEFINITIONS

VII.   PROCEDURES

Users should apply the following techniques in choosing passwords that are difficult for unauthorized parties to guess such as:
- String several words together (the resulting passwords are also known as "pass-phrases").
- Shift a word up, down, left, or right one row on the keyboard.
- Bump characters in a word a certain number of letters up or down the alphabet.
- Transform a regular word according to a specific method, such as making every other letter a number reflecting its position in the word.
- Combine punctuation or numbers with a regular word.
- Create acronyms from words in a song, a poem, or another known sequence of words.
- Deliberately misspell a word (but not a common misspelling).

VIII.   EXCLUSIONS

IX.   INTERPRETATION

The CIO will interpret policies as needed.

APPROVAL TO PROCEED: _____ DATE:_____