

**What are the Social Implications of the Acceptable Use Policy?**

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**CYSE 425W: Cyber Strategy and Policy**

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**November 24th, 2024**

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is a standard for measuring a person's permissions as well as allowances within the confines of an organization or companies' guidelines. However, even though Acceptable Use Policies are used for authority means, its development in today's society also allows it to be a huge factor in social dynamics and social queues. The creation of AUP's influenced the cultural as well as subcultural norms of today's society and its law and regulations.

The development of Acceptable Use Policies came from the ongoing improvements in technology and how these challenges go hand in hand with the technology itself. Media outlets became the prime method of misuse and modification of information, communication, and education between multiple facets of our society. The distinct lack of guidelines aided in the unfaltering wave of problems like cyberbullying, online hate and discrimination, and fraud. In the case of things like school organizations implementing AUP's to combat unethical online behavior and inappropriate use of school resources, the development of AUP's served as a deterrent for these issues within the confines of the school environment (The National Business Officers Association, 2017). In the case of a business or company, understanding and ensuring that employees are productive as well as attempting to mitigate the risks involved with liability issues are factors that an AUP might consider. Social awareness is a huge element when compared with the multi-dimensional details of an AUP, and it is important to balance the societal expectation and norms with the physical more tangible factors involved with the guidelines themselves of the AUP (Reilly, 1998). Individuals' rights have to be combined with strict but reasonable regulations.

AUP's establish boundaries for the digital space by preemptively controlling the behavior of individuals through regulation. The social consequences of implementing AUP's can range

depending on how restrictive or free the regulations are (The National Business Officers Association, 2017). A main social consequence that can be involved with the development of AUP's is the factor of cause and effect. When an individual acts a certain way online, an AUP makes them accountable for their actions, creating a sense of ethical responsibility and respectfulness. However, there have been cases in which an AUP can be too restrictive and bias towards certain types of individuals and events, resulting in free speech being a prime issue of today's society. Due to how strenuous AUP's can be (especially in larger organizations where they are constantly changing day by day) a simple mishap can result in huge punishments that are circumstantial yet important for the individual themselves (Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology, 2024). Another consequence comes from the lack of information and education in some area of our society, which can result in a misconception of an AUP's information, which can lead to unintentional rule breaking.

Cultural influences play a huge role in how AUP's regulate our society. Through a more shared approach, focus on empowerment and betterment of society through the use of AUP's take prioritization over feelings about why the regulation are strict. Discouragement of inappropriate behaviors in the digital and physical space, as well as freedoms being a key focus towards improvement of our society can be taught and implemented through the use of Acceptable Use Policies (Reilly, 1998). Individuals being respected and heard from by the organizations that enforce the AUP's as well as conflict resolution for more varied occurrences are key principles in creating a welcoming and friendly culture for individuals. Regarding subcultural influences, online communities tend to use AUP's as a way to connect online members together through fair and unbiased means.

## References

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