Information Classification
Objectives

• Why information classification is important.
• How information is classified.
• How classified information should be handled generally.
Background

• Information is an asset.
• Information has value that needs protection.
• Some information has legal protection requirements.
• Loss or inappropriate disclosure has consequences.
Classification System

Rules for information handling

• Sharing the information
• Transmitting the information
• Storing the information
• ...
Classification System

Multiple requirements:

• Not all information requires the same protection.
• Protection requirements may change over time.
• Scheme needs to be simple.
Classification System

Three basic categories:

1. Confidential information
2. Internal-use information
3. Public information
Three Category Scheme

Confidential Information

Disclosure could...

- Violate privacy of individuals
- Violate regulations or statutes
- Jeopardize financial state of Rensselaer
- Injure reputation
- Reduce competitive advantage
Three Category Scheme

**Internal-use Information**

Information intended for use by Rensselaer employees when conducting Rensselaer activities.
Three Category Scheme

Public Information

Information made available for public distribution through authorized Rensselaer channels
Distribution by Category

Confidential – Internal-use – Public

10% – 80% – 10%
Control Statements

- Three categories cannot cover every situation.
- Control statements provide additional clarification or restriction on handling.

“To be opened by addressee only”
“Public after mm/dd/yy”
Exercise

Social security numbers
Student grades
Parking lot assignment
Employee home address
Email password
Cabinet member’s salary

Course catalog
Cabinet member’s salary after it’s published in the Times Union
Office phone number
Course syllabus
Birthdays
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For Confidential Information…

Need to know
Training and/or agreement in place
Protected storage
Appropriate labeling
Protected transmission
Need to know
Protected storage
Labeling if needed
For Public Information…

Authorized channels
Record retention/disposal
No other restrictions
Discussion Example #1

A work/study student needs help completing the paperwork for employment.

- Can you help the student?
- How can the paperwork be forwarded?
- Do you retain a copy “just in case”?
Faculty member is traveling, but needs to submit final grades for a course.

- Can the grades be faxed?
- Can the grades be emailed?
Email

Secure transport?

Secure storage?
Campus Email Systems

Exchange

- Microsoft Outlook
- exchange.rpi.edu
- Groupware integration
- Security features
- Used by administration staff

IMAP

- Thunderbird, MacMail
- webmail.rpi.edu
- Basic email functions
- Legacy application
- Used by faculty and academic staff
On-campus Email Security

Server-to-recipient:
• Exchange & IMAP encrypted.

Sender-to-server:
• Exchange clients traffic is encrypted.
• IMAP client traffic could be encrypted.
On-campus Email Security

Server-to-recipient:
- Exchange & IMAP encrypted.

Sender-to-server:
- Exchange clients traffic is encrypted.
- IMAP client traffic is encrypted (as of January 2014)
Email Discussion

Ok to send…?

- Employee transaction forms?
- Grades?
- Social security numbers?
- Credit card numbers?
Facsimilie

What about faxing, then?
Discussion