

HUNTER - L *Guidelines and Protocols*

For Submission to Hunter College Senate – May 1, 2013

Hunter-L was founded as a forum for communications of presumed general interest to significant segments of Hunter College – faculty, students, and staff – without regard to their status. To serve this end, guidelines were adopted for Hunter-L in June, 2003 by the FDA Executive Committee and Senate Administrative Committee—the entities responsible for the maintenance of Hunter-L—to guide its proper use and specify what constitutes its abuse. In the wake of ten years of experience operating under the previous guidelines, the leaders of the FDA and Senate have instituted a committee to update and clarify the charter for Hunter-L. By signing on to Hunter-L, users agree to abide by the following guidelines and protocols.

The following signifies the results of the committee’s work. They are designed to preserve Hunter-L as a resource for robust intra-college communication.

A. General Principles

1. While Hunter-L is not a deliberative body, *Robert’s Rules of Order* (Section 43) provides instructive criteria for the proper use of Hunter-L. To paraphrase: When engaging in debate or posting a critical message, post-ers should speak directly to an issue, policy, or measure relevant to the Hunter community or higher education more generally. In order to protect and promote spirited and informative debate among members of the college, one should not arraign the motives of others, criticize persons, or malign individuals. These prohibited behaviors unduly constrain the use of Hunter-L, often generating hostility and discouraging individuals from participating.

2. **Affirmatively**, Hunter-L encourages posting of matters of potential relevance to the Hunter community, broadly conceived. **Negatively**, the guidelines for Hunter-L condemn posting of matters of private concern to departments of the college; forbid direct endorsements of, or solicitations for, private groups and public groups not affiliated with the college, and prohibit personal attacks.

B. SPECIFICS

1. The guidelines are limited, so as to nourish a broad-based conception and use of Hunter-L as an important dimension of Hunter’s public realm. We desire self-regulation and the demonstration of mutual respect on Hunter-L, as they are necessary to promote free, lively participation on, and usage of, Hunter-L. Fictional illustrations of an acceptable, robust post and prohibited post are listed below.

a. ACCEPTABLE

“The proposal to remove heat from the West building during February in order to balance the college budget is outrageous. Beyond its harm to the health of members of the college, it threatens the quality of education we can comfortably conduct. This is just another example of a policy of false savings, in which public higher education is made to suffer while corporations use their profits to fund lobbyists and seal bargains that secretively drain our common wealth.”

b. UNACCEPTABLE

“Jane Doe’s idiotic proposal to issue summons to persons who do not immediately move to the right on escalators so as to allow those of us on the fast track to fulfill our ambitions threatens the reputation of Hunter as a college on the move. To be sure, it’s not surprising, given her disagreeable nature as evidenced in departmental meetings, but it just shows why one should avoid her classes.”

Note: Attachments or direct links to material that primarily elaborates such unacceptable messages are also prohibited in posts on Hunter-L.

III. COMPLIANCE

As noted above, Hunter administration, faculty and staff who sign on to Hunter-L accept these guidelines when they do so. In that sense, the listserv is a self-monitoring operation. However, reality and practicality suggest that at times there may be disagreement over interpretation of the guidelines or alleged violations. Since Hunter-L is maintained under the auspices of the FDA and the Senate, those bodies have the responsibility to protect the integrity of the listserv and its members, and the FDA president and Senate chair, in order to do so, are to initiate action or respond to complaints about non-compliance, in the following manner:

For a case where they jointly* find a party to have violated the guidelines for Hunter-L, they may take any of the following actions, in series or individually, orally and/or accompanied by a written justification, in communication with the alleged offender:

- a.** Private clarification of the guideline/s violated to the post-er and warning that determination of another violation may result in **(b)**; notification to Hunter-L that a violation has occurred and reiteration on Hunter-L of pertinent guideline/s.
- b.** Temporary suspension from Hunter-L (up to one year, after which a decision about reinstatement would be made jointly by the FDA and Senate chairs);

* For any case in which the FDA President and Senate Chair *disagree*, the matter should be referred to a vote by an equal number of members from the Senate Administrative Committee and the FDA Executive Committee.