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# SOUTHEASTERN

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L O U I S I A N A U N I V E R S I T Y

## **Use of Telephones and Fax Machines**

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Southeastern provides telephones in all major offices for business calls. The telephone is an important link between the University and the public we serve, and is a vital part of our business operation. Because of the large volume of business transacted by telephone, employees should keep the lines open by making personal calls as brief as possible. Personal calls should be made during breaks, and incoming personal calls should be limited to important and/or emergency situations.

Business long distance telephone calls should be made using the LINC system by dialing 9 then the area code, the 7-digit number, and then the employee's personal access code obtained from Telephone Services. No long distance personal calls are to be charged to the University. Employees will need to charge personal long distance calls to a credit card, call collect, or use a cellular phone. Your supervisor can give you more detailed instructions for using the telephone.

### **TELEPHONE PROTOCOL**

Telephone calls often create the first or only impression of Southeastern to the caller, and handling calls appropriately is important to the overall public relations efforts of the University. Therefore, it is important that all telephone calls be answered in as courteous, helpful, and dignified manner as possible. If for some reason no one is available in the office to take calls, the telephone forwarding system should be used. No office phones should be unattended.

Persons answering the phones should have access to campus telephone numbers, either through a printed list or online. All student workers and graduate assistants answering the phone should be familiar with the names of the administrative officers of the University.

Any person responsible for answering calls should be trained to transfer calls. When a caller is being transferred to another office, the person initiating the transfer should stay on the line until the called office answers and the initiator explains the nature of the call being transferred, then connects the original caller. This will help to assure the caller's requests are handled appropriately. If the called office is not the appropriate place to transfer the call, stay on the line with the caller and determine what further steps may need to be taken.

When taking messages, call message reports should include the name (correctly spelled) and calling number, as well as the time and date the message was taken. Personal details (illness, on leave, attending a conference out of state, etc) need not be given to casual callers.

University staff and faculty who supervise student workers and graduate assistants should take steps to ensure that students are answering the phone correctly. Suggested guidelines for answering the telephone include:

**Basic Phrase for Answering Calls:**

“Office of ----- . [your name, your title, *for example, Jane Doe, student worker*]. May I help you?”

**Requested Person is Not Available:**

“I’m sorry, but [Dr./Mr./Ms.] ----- is not available right now. May I take a message for him/her, or is there any way I may be of service?”

“[Dr./Mr./Ms.] ----- is away from the office now, but I expect him/her to be available [this morning/this afternoon/ about (specific time)/later today/tomorrow]. May I ask him/her to return your call?”

“[Dr./Mr./Ms.] ----- will not be here this week. May I refer your call to [Dr./Mr./Ms.] -----, the [title], who may be able to help you?”

“[Dr./Mr./Ms.] -----is [attending a meeting/conducting a class]. May I take your name and number and have him/her return your call? [or] May I be of assistance?”

For more information and training materials on telephone etiquette, contact the Training and Development Manager in the Human Resources Office.

## **FAX MACHINES**

Southeastern provides fax machines in all major offices to expedite business transactions and communications. Fax machines are for University-related business use only. Employees and students should not use University fax machines to send or receive documents for personal use, or to make personal long distance calls.