

To: All Faculty
From: ITS Customer Support Center (consult@usc.edu)
Subject: Email Safety

Information Technology Services (ITS) would like all USC account holders to beware of illegitimate, or phishing, email messages with variations of the Subject line Re-Activate Your Account. In the past year, this type of email has become increasingly common at colleges and universities across the country.

These phishing schemes are attempts to steal your personal information through legitimate-looking email. The messages urge recipients to reply by email and include their password and other personal information.

Protect Your Password

Neither USC nor ITS will ever request that you submit personal information, including any passwords, over email. Treat any email that requests your password or other personal information as a phishing attempt; do not reply to such messages.

You can learn more about how to identify a phishing email by visiting the page below.

<http://www.usc.edu/its/security/phishing.html>

Also be aware of clicking links in email messages, since they may contain hidden code redirecting you to a malicious website. If you are unsure whether a link is legitimate or not, type the address in your web browser.

Update Your Software

Make sure that you are using the most recent version of your web browser and email program and that you have installed all available updates. Browsers such as Internet Explorer version 7 and Firefox 2.0 contain security settings that can warn you if the website you are visiting is a suspected forgery. If you are not sure whether your browser is set to identify forged websites, call the ITS Customer Support Center at 213-740-5555.

ITS provides USC students, faculty, and staff with free antivirus and firewall software for home and office use on the ITS software download page at the address below. (You will need a valid USC login in order to access the page.)

<https://software.usc.edu>

Additional Steps:

If you have responded to a phishing scheme by submitting information about your USC password, you should immediately go to <https://www.usc.edu/its/password> to change your USC password. If you are unable to change your USC password, contact the ITS Customer Support Center at 213-740-5555 as soon as possible.

To report spam or phishing attempts, see the page below.

<http://www.usc.edu/its/brightmail/spam.html>