

EDU users,

Many of you are likely aware that the university has a new policy which greatly restricts the allowed uses of Social Security Numbers (SSNs). The policy statement can be found on the web at <http://www.unl.edu/is/ssn.shtml>. The Center for Science, Mathematics, & Computer Education and Information Services are working together to ensure that all EDU usage on campus is consistent with this policy.

For many years SSNs were used as student ID numbers at UNL. When students created a new account in EDU, they were asked to enter their student ID number. Thus, many older EDU class gradebooks contain SSNs in violation of the new university policy. Although it is a required field in the registration process, the student ID number does not play a substantial role in EDU. It is occasionally useful in large classes when two students have identical or very similar names.

Our compliance plan has the following components:

- The ID number field in the student registration process will be programmed so that it will only accept 8 digits – thus it will be impossible to enter a 9 digit SSN. A comment will be added stating that usage of SSNs is in violation of university policy and encouraging students to use the 8 digit ID number on their Ncard. This will be done immediately.
- Over fall break (October 16-17), Information Services will run a script that will delete any student ID numbers in EDU that have 9 characters or more. All other information will remain unchanged including student name and logins. This script should have no effect on classes created recently as most students do use their 8-digit ID numbers. We are waiting until fall break to accommodate instructors doing educational research on archival EDU gradebooks who use the student ID field to identify particular students. All such instructors who wish to take responsibility for their own compliance with UNL SSN policy and offload their old grade data from EDU, can download the data in Excel (or other) format from the EDU Gradebook before fall break.

Please contact me if you have any questions related to these procedures.

Sincerely,

Kevin Lee  
For the EDU Advisory Board