This crime alert is to inform you about a telephone scam directed at several members of our university community.

Several students have received phone calls from persons impersonating state police officers, FBI agents or other law enforcement officials. These callers advise the victims they owe money to the government, the IRS, Carnegie Mellon or other entities. They instruct the victims to buy money orders, gift cards or other forms of payment to settle these “debts.” The victims are then instructed how to make a payment to settle these fictitious debts.

In some cases, the callers threaten the victims with arrest.

Often the phone number that appears on the victim’s phone looks like the actual phone number for the law enforcement agency falsely represented. The suspects are able to deceive the victim by making the phone number appear to be legitimate.

The IRS handles all financial matters through the U.S. mail on official letterhead. Law enforcement agencies, such as the FBI, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and Pennsylvania State Police do not handle financial matters by telephone.

These scams are occurring nationwide, many are directed at universities and in many cases the calls originate outside the United States. We were advised today of impending charges against a group outside of the U.S. for targeting elderly persons in similar fashion.

We urge anyone that is targeted in this manner to contact University Police immediately at 412-268-2323.

**General Prevention and Safety Tips:**

- Never provide personal information to strangers.
- Don’t discuss financial matters or conduct financial transactions over the phone with unfamiliar parties.
- Hang up if you receive any suspicious phone calls.
- Don’t accept calls from unknown phone numbers.

Chief T. A. Ogden Jr.
Carnegie Mellon University Police