Policy Concept Form

All policy proposals including new policy concepts, recommendations to revise, or requests to repeal must be submitted via this form to the University Secretary. The Secretary will forward completed concept forms to the President's Policy Advisory Council for consideration pursuant to I.03.01 Policy on University Policies. When submitting a policy concept form, please keep the following university definition of "policy" in mind:

A University Policy ("Policy") is a policy that (1) has broad application or impact throughout the University community, (2) must be implemented to ensure compliance with state or federal law, (3) is necessary to enhance the University's mission, to ensure institutional consistency and operational efficiency, or to mitigate institutional risks; or (4) is otherwise designated by the Board or the President as a University Policy subject to the Policy- Making Process authorized in section 4. A policy establishes rights, requirements or responsibilities. Excluded from this definition are things such as, but not limited to, implementation guides, operating guidelines, internal procedures, and similar management controls and tools.

Name:	Angela Wilhelms (submitted on behalf of Kyle Henley, VP Univ. Communications)
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University Affiliation:	University Secretary

Policy Subject Matter (please included existing policy number(s) if available)

Edits and merges two UO policies: 01.00.11 (Email Use for Official University Communication) and 01.00.15 (Guidelines for Official Mass Email).

Statement of Need and Desired Result (please describe what we accomplish with the proposed action)

These policies were very much related so merging them into one policy makes sense to improve user-friendliness. The base of this red-line version is Policy 01.00.11. Most edits either update outdated language (i.e., no longer correlates with technical practices) or simply make the document easier to read and consistent with standard writing styles. The new section three in this red-line version is the "merging" of Policy 01.00.15. Language has been updated in that section from the original policy as well so those interested should cross-reference. (Policy 01.00.15 would be deleted.) Most notably on 01.00.05 is the deletion of specific guidelines and procedures, which are less suited for a policy statement and more appropriately maintained by the communications office.

Affected Policy Stakeholders (please list all known impacted stakeholders and the nature of those impacts)

None. Edits to this document do not change the operative nature of the policy. Guidelines in the current 01.00.05 policy would be edited in consultation with those groups. Feedback has been solicited from them already. The VP for Communications and the CIO have approved the concept, and communications directors (or designees) from HR, IS, Enrollment Management/Registrar, Student Life, Academic Affairs, Emergency Management, and Risk Services have all reviewed the proposal.

Proposed Action (i.e., new, revision, repeal)

Revision (01.00.11); Repeal (01.00.05).

Reason for Policy

The university must be able to communicate quickly and efficiently with employees and enrolled students in order to conduct official university business. E-mail is an available and appropriate medium for such communication. E-mail is also an efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable way to communicate with large groups of people. However, non-strategic use of mass e-mail can reduce employee productivity and hinder the university's ability to deliver critical messages. Recognizing these expectations and concerns, this policy establishes e-mail as an official form of university Communications and establishes the requirements for use of mass e-mail.

Entities Affected by this Policy

Anyone with or with access to a university email account.

Web Site Address for this Policy

To be updated if approved.

Responsible Office

For questions about this policy, please contact University Communications at 541-346-3134 or uonews@uoregon.edu.

Enactment & Revision History

02/08/2010 Policy number revised from 1.000 to 01.00.11

08/09/2005 Issued by: Vice President for Administration

Policy

Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the University of Oregon (University or UO) may send official University communications to employees and students by e-mail to an account ~~assigned~~ provisioned by the University with the full expectation that such e-mails will be read by the recipient in a timely fashion.

   I.   **Assignment of E-mail Accounts**

~~Beginning Fall Term 2005,~~ All UO students and employees are provisioned ~~will be assigned~~ an account in the uoregon.edu domain, ~~(if they do not already have one). The account will be~~ which is designated as their "UO e-mail account." The UO e-mail ~~account is generated by the Computing Center and~~ may not be changed absent University approval. ~~There will no longer be any preferred accounts.~~ University communications that are sent by e-mail will be sent to ~~the~~ UO e-mail accounts.

II.   Responsibilities

Employees and students are expected to review messages received through their UO e-mail account on a frequent and consistent basis. Individuals must ensure that there is sufficient space in their accounts to allow for e-mail to be delivered. Communications may be time-critical. Individuals should use UO e-mail accounts for all University-related e-mail communications.

III.   Use of Mass E-Mail

University mass e-mail is an e-mail message sent to any large campus audience (e.g. all students, all undergraduate students, all faculty, all staff, etc.). All mass e-mails shall follow the UO's mass e-mail guidelines and procedures and be consistent with any applicable state and federal laws.

Mass e-mail is restricted to information that (i) pertains to the majority of the recipients, (ii) is critical or time sensitive, and (iii) meets one or more of the following standards:

- Alerts the campus community to situations about health and safety risks, as defined in the UO Crisis and Emergency Notification procedures;
- Provides information essential to the operation or execution of business;
- Notifies the campus community about changes in university governance, policy, and practice; or
- Communicates important information from the president, provost, or other member of university senior leadership as defined in the mass email guidelines and procedures.

~~III.~~IV.   Forwarding of E-mail

Individuals who choose to forward e-mail received on a UO e-mail account to a different e-mail address do so at their own risk. The University is not responsible for e-mail, including attachments, forwarded to any e-mail address.

~~IV.~~V.   Instructional Use of UO E-Mail Accounts

Faculty should use UO e-mail accounts for e-mail communication with students. The University's course management system requires that faculty and students use their UO e-mail account to gain access to the system.

~~V.~~VI.   Departmental Servers

E-mail accounts with addresses such as hr.uoregon.edu or law.uoregon.edu do not qualify as a UO e-mail account for purposes of this policy. Employees and students who prefer to use such accounts must forward e-mail to them. Such accounts are subject to Section III above.

VII.   Accessibility

E-mail sent by the University must use best practices for being accessible to message recipients. When creating an HTML mass e-mail message, senders must follow University guidelines and procedures.

Related Resources

[Insert link to UO mass email guidelines and procedures (attached for purposes of this concept submission)]

[insert link to accessibility/HTML guidelines (attached for purposes of this concept submission)]

Emergency Notifications via Email ("UOAlert!") - http://safety.uoregon.edu/content/uo-alert

Internal Mass E-mail Requirements, Guidelines, and Best Practices

The Office of the President expects the university to use campus communications resources effectively and efficiently. E-mail is an efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly way to communicate with large groups of people. However, non-strategic use of mass e-mail can reduce employee productivity and hinder the university's ability to deliver critical messages.

Recognizing these expectations and concerns, the university has created these requirements, guidelines, and best practices to ensure e-mail remains an effective form of communication. This page includes the following information:

- Definition
- Appropriate use of mass e-mail
- Required approval and authorization
- Required content
- Best practices guidelines
- Additional internal communication channels

Definition

E-mail is the University of Oregon's official means of communicating information to faculty, staff, and students as stated in UO e-mail policy [link]. Mass e-mail is any e-mail message sent to the entire campus or large subset (e.g., all students, all undergraduates, all graduate students, all tenure-track faculty, all non-tenure track faculty, classified employees, officers of administration). All mass e-mails must follow the UO mass e-mail guidelines and procedures and be consistent with any applicable state and federal laws [links to laws or pages on laws.] These requirements do not apply to units when sending messages within their own unit, school or college or to emails in which all subscribers signed up voluntarily to receive information.

Appropriate Use of Internal Mass E-mail

Mass e-mail is appropriate for information that pertains to the *majority of the recipients*, is *critical and/or time-sensitive*, and meets one or more of the following standards:

- Alerts the campus community to situations about health and safety risks, as defined in the UO Crisis and Emergency Notification procedures [link];
- Provides information essential to the operation or execution of business;
- Notifies the campus community about changes in governance, policy, and practice;
- Communicates important information from the president, provost, or other university senior leadership as described in the authorization and approvals section below.

Inappropriate use of internal mass e-mail includes, but is not limited to:

- Messages that are not in line with the university's mission of teaching, research, and service;
- Messages that are commercial in nature with the exception of those messages that are in support of university business;
- Political activities that advocate for or against a ballot measure or candidate, as prohibited by Oregon law;
- Messages for job postings or research recruitment;
- Marketing or advertising of programs, majors, classes, products, or events offered or sponsored by the university
- Solicitations for contributions, charities, or participation in personal activities not related to university purposes or not sponsored by the university;
- Solicitations for non-university businesses operated by university faculty or staff;
- Messages that are discriminatory or infringe on privacy;

Announcements that do not meet the outlined standards, or are inappropriate for mass email should use other communication channels as listed below.

Required Approval and Authorization

Authorization to send mass e-mail is automatically granted in the following three cases:

1. **Official University Announcements**

   Requests to send out mass e-mail to the following university populations must be approved by the appropriate owning office, when not otherwise authorized.

Target Groups	Owning Office	Other authorized units
Students:	Division of Student Life and Registrar's Office	Office of the President, Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs, Student Services and Enrollment Management, University Communications, Safety and Risk Services
Faculty:	Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs	Office of the President, Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs, University Communications, Office of the Registrar, Human Resources, Safety and Risk Services

Staff: OAs and Classified Employees	Human Resources	Office of the President, Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs, University Communications, Human Resources, Safety and Risk Services

2. **Emergency**

In an emergency, approval may be **bypassed**, as is detailed in the University of Oregon's Emergency Operations Plan [link].

3. **Local Authority**

Schools, colleges, departments, units, and administrative offices are authorized to send messages to their students, faculty, or staff, in accordance with department or school guidelines and procedures. Units are encouraged to use best practices detailed here Contact your supervisor or communication staff member for direction and/or approval.

Required Content

Messages sent to internal (uoregon.edu) e-mail addresses must include all of the following:

- Approved UO logo at the top or prominently placed within an HTML message. (see brand guideline [link])
- "University of Oregon" clearly identified in plain text messages and in the text-only portion that accompanies an HTML message.
- Name of the sending unit (recommended) or the sending individual in the "from" field.
- Name of the sending unit and the audience the message was sent to in the footer (e.g., "This message was sent by the Office of the President to all University of Oregon faculty and staff.").

Example of branded and required message content (click for larger image).

Best Practices Guidelines

To promote operational efficiency and network security, the following guidelines govern internal mass e-mail:

- A mass e-mail message should be brief, self-explanatory, clear, and concise—ideally under 200 words. If there is a need to convey more information, the sender should link to a webpage or seek other communication channels such as Around the O. (See full listed below.)
- Include a succinct subject line that conveys the email's purpose.

- Provide a link or contact information about where people may ask questions or get more information.
- Avoid sending frequent or repeated messages. Follow-up messages or reminders should seek other communication channels, with the exception of emergency communications.
- Collaborate with others at the university to avoid redundancy and reduce the number of messages sent.
- Attachments are not allowed in mass e-mail. A link to a webpage is recommended.
- Avoid acronyms and jargon. Do not use acronyms on first reference in the body of a message. For example, write out "Officers of Administration (OA)" on first reference, then use OA on future references.
- Check spelling and grammar, and copy edit message to align with the UO brand guidelines and Chicago Style. [link to brand guide]
- Senders should avoid sending emails at the end of the day or on Friday afternoons, to prevent their message from getting "lost" during non-work hours.

Additional Internal Communication Channels

Before deciding on mass e-mail as the choice for any communication, units are strongly encouraged to use:

- Around the O website [link]
- Around the O weekly workplace email [link]
- Around the O weekly student email
- Academic, Administrative, HR partners email lists
- Events Calendar [link]
- Mailman list serves [link to IT website]
- Printed and digital signage [link to design editing/printing and mailing]
- Direct mail
- College, campus, and departmental communications channels such as websites, list-serves, social media, or group or interpersonal communications. Contact your unit, school or college's communications professional [link] for additional options.

Applying the Brand

Email

<u>Accessibility</u>

We are committed to ensuring email communications are accessible and inclusive. Doing so also provides the peace of mind that you're complying with federal and state requirements for accessibility.

HEADER: Message format

- Set message format to HTML.

HEADER: Font size

- Use 11 pt or larger when using absolute font sizing.
- When possible, use relative font sizing (% and em) rather than absolute font sizing (px and pt) to allow recipients to adjust text size to meet their needs and preferences.

HEADER: Contrast

- Do not rely on color alone to convey information.
- Ensure sufficient contrast between text and background. Color combinations other than black-on-white may require a web color contrast checker application to verify accessibility.

HEADER: Formatting

- To create headings, use HTML tags (or the built-in heading formatting options of your e-mail program, if available). Do not simply change the font style, size, weight, or other attributes.
- To create lists, use HTML tags (or the built-in list formatting options of your e-mail program). Do not simply insert bullets or other characters.
- Complex formatting may be better suited to a webpage (accessibility guidelines: http://brand.uoregon.edu/accessibility) linked to from the e-mail message, or a PDF (accessibility instructions: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/create-verify-pdf-accessibility.html) attached to the e-mail message. *Note: Attachments are not allowed in mass e-mail.*

HEADER: Images

- For images that convey meaning or represent branding logos and other marks, add alternative text ("alt text").
- If an image contains any text that conveys meaning (e.g., a graphic representation of words), that text must be reproduced verbatim either as image alt text or within the body of the e-mail message.
- Hide decorative images from screen readers using an empty alt attribute (i.e., alt="").

HEADER: Links

- Link text (the words you see in a hyperlink) should be clear, meaningful, and able to stand alone. Avoid link text such as "click here," "read more," etc.

Guidelines for creating accessible web content are available at http://brand.uoregon.edu/accessibility.

Additional Contacts

James Bailey, adaptive technology, 541-346-1076; jbailey@uoregon.edu

Reason for Policy

Provide guidelines on using official mass email.

Entities Affected by this Policy

Faculty, Students, Staff

Web Site Address for this Policy

http://policies.uoregon.edu/policy/by/1/01-administration-and-governance/email-guidelines-official-mass-email

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Responsible Office

For questions about this policy, please contact the Chief Information Officer at 541-346-1702, cio@uoregon.edu.

Enactment & Revision History

12/28/2010 Enacted by President

Policy

Email is a strategic tool for carrying out the mission of the University of Oregon. It can be used to easily, quickly, and effectively communicate with large groups of people. Recognizing this need, regularly refreshed mass email groups (see Appendix 1) were established and a mailing mechanism created to enable central offices, departments and organizations to reach large segments of the university community.

Official messages come from university administration or their representatives, to be sent to the entire community or large subgroups. As such, mass email that has been authorized as an "official communication" should be received and read as any other official communication, since such communication may affect day-to-day activities and responsibilities.

The official mass email service is restricted to those messages that meet one or more of the following standards:

- Provides essential information for the operation or execution of daily business;
- Notifies the campus community of significant events or changes in governance, policy, and practice;
- Alerts the campus community to situations around health and safety, as defined in the UO Crisis and Emergency Notification Policy; or
- Communicates important information from executive leadership.

Mass emails that do not meet these requirements of urgency and/or critical information, (e.g., personal correspondence; advertising or solicitations; political statements or purposes; general departmental announcements about campus events; sales of any kind; anything for profit; anything viewed as advertising, even for academic or university business and even if there is no fee), should seek other methods.

Authorities, Ownership and Responsibilities
It is acknowledged that the membership list of particular groups belongs to the offices which maintain them. Appendix 1 describes the lists, their ownership, and who is allowed to use them. These lists are intended to facilitate high-level communication with broad groups and not be so granular that they become unmanageable. List owners have the right to communicate with their constituents as they deem best, and may send out mass email to those groups without need of further authorization. In addition, these offices can delegate to other offices or individuals the authority to communicate with these groups. In general, it is expected that this delegation will parallel the existing delegation models for regular email list communications.

The following describes list ownership, authorities, and responsibilities for managing mass email distribution at the University of Oregon.

Office of Communications: will administer access levels to stakeholders and their delegates and be the point of contact for changes to list users. Changes to the lists will be coordinated through the Office of Communications. They will also provide final determination of messages that do not meet clear criteria for list owners or ambiguous situations that may arise. Examples of messages from the Office of Communication include community-wide announcements and special meetings.

Information Services: will maintain up-to-date list information and integrate it into the mass email service as coordinated by the Office of Communications.

Office of Human Resources: owns and is responsible for lists necessary to communicate with faculty and staff in conjunction with the Senior Vice President and Provost's Office. Examples of messages from Human Resources include matters related to employment (benefits, payroll, closure due to inclement weather); announcements and policy changes affecting all or most of the campus community.

Registrar's Office: owns and is responsible for lists necessary to communicate with students in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs.

Department of Public Safety (DPS): is authorized, as defined in the UO Crisis and Emergency Notification Policy to launch, without further approval, mass email to all faculty, staff and students when an emergency (e.g. an event, expected or unexpected, that poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of students, faculty and staff) has been confirmed; timely notification is necessary and requires immediate action. Confirmation of an emergency is determined when an Incident Commander, Public Safety Officer, or local law enforcement agency provides confirmation to DPS Dispatch.

Emergency Management: is authorized, as defined in the UO Crisis and Emergency Notification Policy, to send mass email to all faculty, staff and students in the following situations:

- **Emergency situation** - an event, expected or unexpected, that poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of students, faculty and staff and requires immediate action.
- **Urgent situation -** an incident or condition that does not pose an imminent threat to life or safety, but that is of a nature where timely receipt of information or instructions may directly affect the well-being of the recipient.
- **Information only situation-** information about a situation that does not present an imminent threat but where the campus community may be concerned about safety or security.

Office of the President: is authorized to send to all faculty, staff and students.

Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost: is authorized to send to all faculty and staff and students. Examples of messages from the Senior Vice President and Provost Office include important meetings and seminars, training, special faculty events and news.

Office of Student Affairs: is authorized to send housing information and student services announcements to all students.

Requests
Requests to send out mass email to the following populations must have the approval of the owning offices or their delegated authority (office or individual) and must meet the criteria listed above. Contact the Office of Communications at 346-3134 to coordinate any requests after determining they meet these requirements. Bear in mind that a request may not be honored if it does not meet the requirements specified above.

Related Resources

Cross Reference to Related Policies: [Use of Email for Official University Communication](#)

Appendix 1: [Mass Email Lists](#)