

North Dakota State University

Policy Manual

SECTION 609

E-MAIL AS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION METHOD TO STUDENTS

SOURCE: NDSU President

1. **POLICY STATEMENT:** Electronic mail (e-mail), like postal and campus mail, is an official means by which the University may communicate with students. NDSU exercises the right to send e-mail communication to students and expects that e-mail communication is received and read by students in a timely manner.
2. **RATIONALE:** As e-mail is readily available from any Internet connection it has been designated as an official communication medium by the University. Reliability, coupled with the convenience, speed, cost-effectiveness and environmental advantages of using electronic communication, make e-mail an effective and efficient means by which to communicate with students enrolled at NDSU.
3. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - 3.1 **Official e-mail address:**
An e-mail address assigned to an individual by the NDSU Information Technology Division.
 - 3.2 **Official e-mail communication:**
An e-mail message regarding official University business sent from an NDSU faculty, staff, or departmental representative to a student or group of students.
 - 3.3 **Official student mailing list:**
A mailing list populated with official e-mail addresses used by administration and University offices for official mass communication to the student body. Students are expected to read all messages, and act appropriately on, all messages sent to this list.
 - 3.4 **Redirected e-mail:**
E-mail redirected from an official e-mail address to an address not issued by NDSU Information Technology Division (e.g., jane@yahoo.com, john@english.ndsu.edu).
4. **SCOPE:** This policy applies to all admitted and enrolled students at North Dakota State University.
5. **STUDENT USE & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Security: Students are required to comply with all institutional and University System policies and procedures, especially [North Dakota University System Policy 1901.2 Computing Facilities](#) and [North Dakota University System procedure 1901.2 computer and Network Usage](#) and [NDSU 158: Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications Devices](#), and relevant local, state, and federal law. It is a violation of policy to share usernames and passwords as potentially sensitive information may be transmitted via e-mail.

- 5.1 **Account Monitoring:**
Students are responsible for frequently monitoring their e-mail for official campus communication. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communication is time sensitive.

- 5.2 Special Accommodation:
Students with a disability who are unable to use e-mail as an official University communication may request an exemption to this policy in the form of an alternate format accommodation. To request the accommodation, students should contact NDSU Disability Services. Students will be required to submit documentation from a licensed professional that states the disability and the functional limitations.
- 5.3 E-mail problems:
So as to not interfere with the receipt of official University communication, students must report any technical problems in accessing or using their official e-mail addresses to the NDSU Information Technology Division (IT) Help Desk. (www.ndsu.edu/helpdesk or 701-231-8685)

6. UNIVERSITY USE OF E-MAIL:

- 6.1 Campus Wide Announcements:
The University works to minimize the number of messages sent to the entire student body. Messages sent to the entire student body are sent through the official student mailing list. This list is moderated by NDSU officials, and is reserved for official University communication that impacts all or most students. Students may not unsubscribe from the official list. Other (non-official) notifications may be sent via the Student Announce list managed by Student Government.
- 6.2 Mail Formatting:
The message body of official campus communications shall be sent as plain text messages. Contact information for the originating department must be clearly denoted in the message signature.
- 6.3 Attachments:
In order to facilitate the timely operation of NDSU's e-mail system and to minimize the amount of storage required to deliver this service, attachments may not be used in e-mail announcements sent to large groups such as the entire student body or all students in a given college.
- 6.4 Instructional Use of E-mail:
Instructors may determine how e-mail or other forms of electronic communication (i.e., Blackboard) shall be used to facilitate teaching and learning. Instructors may establish e-mail lists to communicate with students (e.g., regarding class assignments) and may expect that students are accessing their e-mail on a regular basis as specified in this policy.
- 6.5 E-mail Sent by Students:
In efforts to protect student privacy and better ensure student authenticity, University personnel may require that e-mails received from students, which request a response, be sent via their official e-mail address.

7. E-MAIL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1 Initial E-Mail Assignment and Service Setup:
E-mail accounts, which create electronic identities and assign e-mail addresses, are automatically setup for new and returning students by Information Technology Services upon admission or readmission to the University. E-mail addresses are free of charge and remain active as up to eighteen months after the student's last enrolled semester.

- 7.2 **Activating E-mail:**
After initial e-mail account setup by Information Technology Services, students activate their e-mail addresses and accounts. Instructions are available online (www.ndsu.edu/its/ndsu_live/).
- 7.3 **Redirecting of NDSU E-mail:**
Official University electronic communication is sent to students' official NDSU e-mail address. Failure to receive official University messages when using a non-official e-mail address does not absolve students from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to their official NDSU e-mail addresses.
- 7.4 **Privacy and Confidentiality:**
Communication via e-mail is subject to all of the same public information, privacy, and records retention laws as other forms of communication. While NDSU e-mail affords some measure of privacy, the redirecting of e-mail by students to outside accounts and the sharing of messages with third parties can negate the privacy protection rights afforded by students to the University.
- 7.5 **University Spam Policy:**
In an effort to reduce the amount of spam the NDSU e-mail system must process, some messages considered to be spam or sent from known spammers are blocked. Use of additional spam fighting tools that delete official e-mail before it is read does not exempt individuals from the policy outlined in this document.

For more information on the e-mail assignment process visit <http://www.ndsu.edu/its>.

HISTORY:

New	May 2007
Amended	September 28, 2011