

# North Dakota State University

## Policy Manual

---

### SECTION 609

#### EMAIL AS AN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION METHOD TO STUDENTS

SOURCE: NDSU President

1. **POLICY STATEMENT:** Electronic mail (Email), like postal and campus mail, is an official means by which the University may communicate with students. NDSU exercises the right to send email communication to students and expects that email communication is received and read by students in a timely manner.
2. **RATIONALE:** As email 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 email an effective and efficient means by which to communicate with students enrolled at NDSU.
3. **DEFINITIONS:**
  - 3.1 **Official email address:**  
An email address assigned to an individual by the NDSU Information Technology Division.
  - 3.2 **Official email communication:**  
An email 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 email 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 email:**  
Email redirected from an official email 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 1202.1 Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#) 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 email.

- 5.1 **Account Monitoring:**  
Students are responsible for frequently monitoring their email 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 email 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 Email 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 email addresses to the NDSU Information Technology Division (IT) Service Center. ([www.ndsu.edu/it/help](http://www.ndsu.edu/it/help)) or 701-231-8685)

## 6. UNIVERSITY USE OF EMAIL:

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 email system and to minimize the amount of storage required to deliver this service, attachments may not be used in email announcements sent to large groups such as the entire student body or all students in a given college.

6.4 Instructional Use of Email:  
Instructors may determine how email or other forms of electronic communication (i.e., Blackboard) shall be used to facilitate teaching and learning. Instructors may establish email lists to communicate with students (e.g., regarding class assignments) and may expect that students are accessing their email on a regular basis as specified in this policy.

6.5 Email Sent by Students:  
In efforts to protect student privacy and better ensure student authenticity, University personnel may require that emails received from students, which request a response, be sent via their official email address.

## 7. EMAIL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

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

- 7.2     Activating Email:  
After initial email account setup by Information Technology Services, students activate their email addresses and accounts. Instructions are available online [Account Hub \(ndsu.edu\)](https://www.ndsu.edu/account-hub)
- 7.3     Redirecting of NDSU Email:  
Official University electronic communication is sent to students' official NDSU email address. Failure to receive official University messages when using a non-official email address does not absolve students from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to their official NDSU email addresses.
- 7.4     Privacy and Confidentiality:  
Communication via email is subject to all of the same public information, privacy, and records retention laws as other forms of communication. While NDSU email affords some measure of privacy, the redirecting of email 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 email 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 email before it is read does not exempt individuals from the policy outlined in this document.

For more information on the email assignment process visit <https://www.ndsu.edu/it/help/>

---

HISTORY:

New	May 2007
Amended	September 28, 2011
Housekeeping	June 15, 2018
Housekeeping	August 30, 2024
Housekeeping	September 2, 2025