

Distributing Mass Internal Emails

University Guideline: GDL-U1600.08

Effective: August 14, 2024

Authority

[POL-U1600.08](#) Using Electronic Methods for University Communication Policy

Purpose of Guideline

The efficient flow of information within a university community is vital for smooth operations. Email serves as a primary tool for sharing information, but misuse, in particular to large groups of recipients, can lead to inbox overload and diminished engagement and effectiveness.

To ensure effective flow and distribution of internal information, this document provides guidelines for effective email distribution. These practices ensure messages reach the right recipients efficiently, fostering a more engaged and better-informed community.

Oversight Responsibility

Department: University Communications
Department Head: Director, University Communications

Guideline

- Identify Relevance:** Before sending any email, carefully consider the relevance of the information to the recipients. Ask yourself whether the content is essential for the entire community you want (or have been directed to send to) or if it pertains only to specific groups or individuals.
- Categorize Recipients:** Be cognizant of the distinct informational needs of the community and its different member categories such as students, faculty, staff, administration, and specific departments or programs. Use these categories to tailor your distribution list accordingly.
- Division and College Points of Contact:** One of the most effective ways of sharing information internally is by distributing it through division and college points of contact. These individuals can forward pertinent details to their respective divisions or college leadership, ensuring targeted distribution from familiar and trusted contacts, optimizing readership and engagement.

4. **Prioritize Communication Channels:** Evaluate whether email is the most effective communication channel for the information at hand. In many cases, alternative channels such as announcements in Western Today or in-person meetings or even physical signage may be more appropriate and effective.
5. **Consolidate Information:** For information intended for larger groups of people, funnelling information through Western Today, or as appropriate, consolidating related content into regular division updates or departmental newsletters can be more effective.
6. **Frequency Control:** Avoid sending recipients excessive emails. Schedule communications strategically to maintain engagement without overwhelming recipients.
7. **Targeted Approach:** When information is relevant to a specific group or department or highly specific information relevant to only a subset of individuals within a department or program, adopt for a targeted approach. Use tailored mailing lists or distribution groups to ensure that only relevant individuals or teams receive the email. Reach out directly to those affected rather than an entire group with irrelevant emails.
8. **Clear and Concise Messaging:** Craft emails with clear and concise messaging to convey information efficiently. Structure emails based on the existing knowledge of the email recipients and with the assumption that employees may not be the topics, specific terminology or acronyms, for example. Where possible, use bullet points, headings, and formatting to enhance readability and facilitate quick comprehension.
9. **Opt-Out Mechanism:** For regular mass mails or newsletters, consider providing recipients with the option to opt out of non-essential communications or select their preferences for receiving certain types of information. Respect individual preferences to maintain a positive communication environment.
10. **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback mechanism to gather input from the university community regarding the effectiveness of email communications. Use this feedback to refine distribution practices and improve communication strategies over time.