Access and Responsible Use of University Electronic Mail Systems for Electronic Mass Communications

Policy Title:
Access and Responsible Use of University Electronic Mail Systems for Electronic Mass Communications

Responsible Executive(s):
Robert Barton, Director and Chief Information Security Officer

Responsible Office(s):
University Information Security Office

Contact(s):
If you have questions about this policy, please contact the University Information Security Office.

I. Policy Statement

The University has the responsibility and duty to maintain the integrity, operation and availability of its electronic mail systems for access and use by the University community to advance the University's missions in education, research and public service. This policy pertains to the access and use of university electronic mail systems for electronic mass communications which includes mass emails, broadcast messages, electronic distribution lists and electronic discussion lists.

University Marketing and Communications (UMC) has determined that use of university electronic mail systems for electronic mass communication will be regulated so as not to become a nuisance to the University community, nor to become wasteful of university computing and networking resources by creating unnecessary or excessive network traffic, nor to affect adversely, in other ways, the operation and performance of these systems. In some situations, e.g., mass emails and broadcast messages regarding non-University business, are not to be used at all.

II. Definitions

Listserv: an application that distributes messages to subscribers on an electronic mailing list.

III. Policy

Individuals Covered

This policy applies to all persons accessing and using University electronic mail systems. These persons include students, faculty, staff, persons retained to do University work, and any other person extended access and use privileges by the University given the availability of these systems, and in accordance with university contractual agreements and obligations.

Electronic Mail Systems Covered

This policy applies to all electronic mail systems operated or contracted by the University or connected to the University network. The policy also applies to any electronic mail transmission identified with an electronic mail address containing the Internet domain name assigned to the University, i.e., luc.edu.

Mass Email Messages

To initiate or facilitate the transmission and distribution of mass email messages through any University electronic mail system or through an electronic mail transmission which is affixed with an Internet address containing the University Internet domain, i.e., luc.edu, is prohibited regardless of its purpose and content.

Electronic Broadcast Messages

University electronic mail systems have a mass broadcast electronic mail feature which puts electronic messages in the mailboxes of specific groups of electronic mail account owners, e.g., all accounts on the STUDENT mail server, all accounts on a group of mail servers at a particular campus, or all account owners. It is one way of alerting a portion of the University community to events and important information that needs to be conveyed quickly. UMC must be consulted to send these types of communications.

Systems administrators of University electronic mail systems may initiate and distribute electronic broadcast messages on urgent matters which relate to the availability and operation of their electronic mail systems or the University network.

All other electronic broadcast messages which are to be distributed through any University electronic mail system shall originate from the University Marketing and Communications Office (UMC) although students and student organizations can contact the Office of Student Affairs.

In general, announcements of scheduled events that are advertised to the University through other communication channels (Inside Loyola, Phoenix, the Calendar of Events web page, fliers, and special memos) should not be distributed as electronic broadcast messages.

Electronic Distribution Lists

Electronic mail messages can be sent to a single person or to a group of individuals. Mailing to groups of individuals involves sending an electronic mail message to a list of multiple electronic mail addresses of account owners, or subscribers. Persons subscribed to an electronic distribution list can usually remove their names and electronic mail addresses from a list.

Several university units have established electronic distribution lists to facilitate mass postings of messages to all persons contained on a particular electronic distribution list in an efficient manner and as a cost-reduction measure. Several colleges, schools, departments, student services departments, university committees and student organizations have set up electronic distribution lists.

Distribution lists are a one-way mode of electronic communication in that a small group of list owners can use to post messages. Recipients of these messages can reply to the list owners. But their replies do not automatically go to all the people on the list. The list owners decide whether to forward the reply to the subscribers on the list.

Electronic Discussion Lists, Or Groups

An electronic discussion list (listserv) is similar in structure to an electronic distribution list. A Listserv discussion list is also a list of multiple electronic mail addresses of account owners, or subscribers. Persons subscribed to a listserv can usually remove their names and electronic mail addresses from the list.

A listserv provides a two-way mode of electronic communication. Aside from having the functionality of an electronic distribution list, the listserv empowers all the list subscribers to post messages to the list, and to post replies of received messages to the list. In some cases, individuals not subscribed to the list can also post messages to the list.

Since subscribers to the list can post, receive, and reply to messages originating from the list, they can effectively carry on an electronic discussion on a particular topic. When a university unit decides to set up a listserv it can elect to have the list function as well as an electronic discussion list (or electronic discussion group).

Several university departments have set up lists to function as electronic discussion groups to facilitate mass posting of messages to all people within the department and to facilitate group discussion. Some instructors have set up similar lists for their courses to facilitate student discussion outside of the classroom.

As with electronic distribution lists, electronic a listserv is managed by a small group of owners, who are usually subscribers on the list. The list owners set the rules for group membership, participation, and discussion, and may moderate postings to the list, either postings from the subscribers themselves or postings from persons not subscribed to the list.

Before a person sends electronic mail messages to the list, the sender must check out the rules and procedures that apply to the list. Posting to an electronic discussion list without regard to the rules and regulations covering such postings to the list or without permission of the list owners will be viewed as a wasteful use of university computing and networking resources.

Concerns Regarding the Use of University Electronic Mail Systems for Electronic Mass Communications

The University recognizes the potential of using an electronic mail system for electronic mass communications, e.g., dissemination of information to targeted groups of persons within the University community quickly, efficiently and with cost-benefits. At the same time, the University is sensitive to complaints from recipients of electronic mass communications because the messages contained information that should have been targeted to others within the University community or information which was of a non-University business nature.

The University does not have sufficient resources to support unlimited use of its electronic mail systems for electronic mass communications. Therefore, the University community is encouraged to limit their use of the University electronic mail systems for electronic mass communications and to seek alternative modes of electronic communications, e.g., electronic news groups (Usenet), a listserv, and the Calendar of Events feature on the University web site, to distribute and receive information.

University electronic mail systems make it possible for an individual to create a personal list of electronic mail addresses of several, many or all account holders on these systems. The University urges individuals to act in a responsible and ethical manner when setting up and using their personal lists of electronic mail addresses. Individuals must take care on how they target groups of e-mail account holders for their electronic mail messages. Individuals should be considerate not to send messages to those for

whom the message would be irrelevant. Therefore, the University will continue to be sensitive and responsive to complaints from recipients of inappropriate electronic mass communications.

Actions of System Administrators of University Electronic Mail Systems

A system administrator of a university electronic mail system may determine within his or her discretion when it is necessary to temporarily suspend access to the electronic mail system to ensure the integrity and operation of the electronic mail system and its availability to the University community.

System administrators who suspend access to University electronic mail system should report the action to the Office of Student Affairs as soon as possible, along with an explanation for taking the action. In some cases, system administrators may need to work with the Office of Student Affairs to make arrangements to permit these students sufficient access to the University electronic mail to complete course work.

Appeal of an Administrative Decision

Individuals who disagree with an administrative decision may submit an appeal to their manager or administrator. Students may submit an appeal to the Dean of Students, faculty through their department administration to the Provost, and a staff member through their management to the Vice President for Human Resources. Individuals must submit these appeals according to any rules and procedures issued by system administrators or component administrators.

Noncompliance and Sanctions

Reports of incidents regarding inappropriate electronic mass communications as they pertain to this policy should be referred to the Dean of Students if the alleged sender is a student, to the academic department or institute administrator, if the alleged sender is a faculty member, and to the immediate supervisor if the alleged sender is a non-faculty staff member.

Breach of or disregard for this and other policies and procedures concerning access and acceptable use of computing, networking, telephony and information resources may result in the denial or removal of access privileges by system or network administrators and may lead to disciplinary action under the applicable University's standards of conduct, i.e., Student Handbook (students), Faculty Handbook (faculty) and Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies (staff). Additionally, such disregard may be referred to

other authorities for civil litigation and criminal prosecution under applicable state and federal statutes.

Legal Context for This Policy

Regarding legal context, all existing laws (local, state and federal) and University policies, regulations and rules apply, including not only those laws, policies, regulations, and rules that are specific to computers and networks, but also those that apply to personal conduct including Policy and Procedures on Sexual Harassment and Policy and Procedures for Racial Discrimination, Abuse and Harassment.

Relationship of This Policy with Others

This policy supplements the Acceptable Use Policy and the Electronic Mail and Voice Mail Use and Disclosure policy.

The University reserves the right to change the information, requirements and procedures announced in this policy.

Suggestions and comments concerning the Policy and Guidelines Regarding Use of University Electronic Mail Systems for Electronic Mass Communications can be directed to the Information Services Advisory Council at datasecurity@luc.edu.

IV. Related Documents and Forms

Not applicable.

V. Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Information Security Officer	Enforcing the Policy at the University by setting the necessary requirements.

VI. Related Policies

Please see below for additional related policies:

- Security Policy
- Access Control Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Network Firewall Policy
- Electronic Mail and Voice Mail Use and Disclosure policy

Approval Authority:	ITESC	**Approval Date:**	October 12th, 2012

Review Authority:	Robert Barton	**Review Date:**	November 6, 2026
Responsible Office:	UISO	**Contact:**	datasecurity@luc.edu