



Learning with Purpose

## University of Massachusetts Lowell

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Email Usage Policy
<b>Policy Number:</b>	IT-5-108
<b>Effective As Of:</b>	February 1, 2017
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	February 1, 2018
<b>Responsible Office:</b>	Information Technology
<b>Responsible Position:</b>	Information Security Officer

### I. POLICY STATEMENT

UMass Lowell's Email services support the educational and administrative activities of UMass Lowell and serve as a means of official communication between users and the University. This policy statement sets forth the University's policy with regard to use of, access to, and disclosure of Electronic Mail (Email) to assist in ensuring that the University's resources serve those purposes. The use of Email services is a privilege, not a right, and it should be treated as such by all users. All UMass Lowell Emails are the property of the University and not personally owned by the Email user.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the permitted and appropriate use of University Email in order to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and university policies.

### III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all university employees, retirees, contractors, and guests who have been assigned an Email account to support the research, educational and administrative activities of UMass Lowell. Email communications and associated attachments transmitted or received over the university network are subject to the provisions of this policy.

### IV. DEFINITIONS

*Official Email Address:* The official University Email address is the address from which, and to which, University business-related Email is to be sent and received. The official Email address will be used for all University correspondence lists, for populating lists for classes, and for the official online directory. Official communications from University departments, including faculty and staff, will be directed to the official Email address, not the employee's personal email address.

## V. PROCEDURES

### A. Privacy and Confidentiality Considerations

The University does not routinely monitor the content of computer systems/resources including files, programs, and electronic communications and Emails. UMass Lowell will make reasonable efforts to maintain the integrity and effective operation of its Email systems, but users are advised that those systems should in no way be regarded as a secure medium for the communication of sensitive or confidential information. Because of the nature and technology of electronic communication, the University can assure neither the privacy of an individual user's use of Email resources nor the confidentiality of particular messages that may be created, transmitted, received, or stored.

### B. Permissible Uses of Email

#### 1. Authorized Users:

Only University faculty, staff, and students and other persons who have received permission under the appropriate University authority are authorized users of UMass Lowell's Email systems and resources.

#### 2. Purpose of Use:

Email services are primarily intended to allow employees to conduct University business. Incidental and occasional social/personal use of Email may occur when such use does not interfere with an employee's job duties or University business or operations. Any such incidental and occasional use of University Email resources for personal purposes is subject to the provisions of this policy.

#### 3. Confidentiality Notice:

The University strongly encourages the use of a confidentiality notice at the bottom of every Email. Refer to Appendix A for more information.

### C. Prohibited Uses of Email

#### 1. Automatic Email Forwarding

- a. UMass Email may not be automatically forwarded to a non-university Email account (i.e. Gmail, Yahoo, Comcast, Verizon...).
- b. Auto-forwarding of UMass Lowell Email is only permissible to internally-administered University Email systems; these Email systems are subject to the provisions of this policy and other University policies.
- c. Students employed by the university and have been assigned a staff email account, may not auto-forward to their student email account
- d. Manually forwarding University Email to a non-university Email account is not permitted.

Note: Personal Email sent to a university account may be manually forwarded to the employee's personal (non-university) account.

2. University data, including email, must remain on University-managed systems. Moving and/or copying of University Email to non-University Email systems (i.e. Gmail, Yahoo, Comcast, Verizon) via IMAP or POP3 protocols is strictly prohibited.
  
3. Additional Prohibited Use
  - a. UMass Email users are prohibited from sending messages that violate either state or federal law or University policies, including, but not limited to, the Acceptable Use Policy reference in Section VIII.
  - b. UMass Lowell's Email resources shall not be used for personal monetary gain or commercial purposes that are not directly related to University business.
  - c. The use of Email for non-university sponsored solicitations, fund raising, or political activities
  - d. The use of Email to send restricted and/or confidential data to external recipients *without* the use of encryption software is prohibited.
  - e. Use of Email to harass or intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct University business.
  - f. "Snooping," i.e., obtaining access to the files or Email of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial University business purpose.
  - g. Attempting unauthorized access to Email or attempting to breach any security measures on any Email system, or attempting to intercept any Email transmissions without proper authorization.
  - h. Email users may not send Emails that appear to be sent by another institution or individual (aka "spoofing"), but are actually sent through UMass Email systems.
  - i. Use of Email systems in violation of existing Collective Bargaining Agreements
  - j. Use of Email systems for illegal procurement of export controlled technology, equipment, or materials, or the procurement of other restricted technology, equipment, or materials not authorized as part of University business.

#### D. University Access and Disclosure

##### 1. General Provisions

- a. As a public institution, with limited exceptions, virtually all University records, including Email communications, are subject to state laws governing public records. To the extent permitted by law, the UMass Lowell reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of faculty, staff, students', and other users' Email without the consent of the user. UMass Lowell will do so when it believes it has a legitimate business need including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph 3 (below), and only after explicit authorization is obtained from the appropriate University authority.
  
- b. Student Email may constitute "education records" subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). UMass Lowell may access, inspect, and disclose such records under conditions that are set forth in the statute.
  
- c. Any user of UMass Lowell's Email resources who makes use of an encryption device to restrict or inhibit access to his or her Email must provide access to such encrypted communications when requested to do so under appropriate University authority.

## 2. Monitoring of Communications

UMass Lowell will not monitor Email as a routine matter, but it may do so to the extent permitted by law and as UMass Lowell deems necessary for purposes of maintaining the integrity and effective operation of UMass Lowell's Email systems.

## 3. Inspection and Disclosure of Communications

UMass Lowell reserves the right to inspect and disclose the contents of Email:

- as a result of legal discovery, court order, or subpoena
- in the course of an investigation triggered by indications of misconduct or misuse, or violations of the UMass Lowell Acceptable Use Policy
- as needed to protect health and safety
- as needed to prevent interference with the academic mission
- as needed to locate substantive information required for University business that is not more readily available by some other means, and/or
- when there's a threat to the University computer system's security or integrity

## 4. Procedures to Approve Access to, Disclosure of, or Use of Email Communications

Individuals needing to access the Email communications of others, to use information gained from such access, and who do not have the prior consent of the user, must obtain approval in advance of such activity from the appropriate University authority. That procedure shall take into consideration ways to minimize the time and effort required to submit and respond to requests, the need to minimize interference with University business, and sensitivity to the rights of individuals.

## E. Compliance and Enforcement

Violations of law or University policies in the use of University Email services may result in access restriction or suspension to University Information Technology resources. Additionally, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may be applicable under University policies, guidelines, procedures, or respective collective bargaining agreements.

For Information Technology email administrators, access to email messages outside of their job functions is prohibited. Employees responsible for maintaining, repairing and developing email resources shall exercise special care and shall access email messages only as required to perform their job function and as permitted under this email policy. These employees will not discuss or divulge the contents of individual email messages viewed during maintenance and trouble-shooting. Any employee found to violate these requirements, may be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or termination of employment.

## F. Retention and Archival of Email

The University does not maintain a central or distributed Email archive of ALL Email sent or received. However, Email is normally archived or "backed-up" daily only for system restoration and disaster recovery purposes, and are not designed to facilitate retrieval of deleted messages. Backup copies of Email will be kept for no more than six weeks. Information Technology cannot recover individual messages or mailboxes unless there is a university critical reason, or as described in Section D above.

Email, as a University record, is subject to the University of Massachusetts Record Management, Retention and Disposition Policy as referenced in Section VIII of this policy.

## **VI. RESPONSIBILITY**

Information Technology is the responsible organization for implementing the provisions of this policy. The University's Chief Information Officer and the Information Security Officer are the designated point of contacts.

## **VII. ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

## **VIII. RELATED POLICES, PROCEDURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Acceptable Use Policy, IT-5-101

University of Massachusetts Record Management, Retention and Disposition Policy, [T99-061](#)

## Appendix A

### Approved Confidentiality Notice

The notice below has been approved by the Office of the General Counsel, to be included in email users' signature:

#### Confidentiality Notice

**Confidentiality Notice:**

This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential, proprietary, and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender immediately and destroy or permanently delete all copies of the original message.