

Contact Information, Electronic Mail (Email) & Texting

University Operations

EWU Policy 203-06

Effective: October 22, 2021

Authority: EWU Board of Trustees

Proponent: Vice President of Student Affairs and Vice President for Business & Strategy

Purpose: This policy establishes and describes the official email, texting, and contact information policy for students and employees at Eastern Washington University.

History: This policy updates and supersedes a previous version of the policy dated December 6, 2019. The revisions were approved by the Board of Trustees on October 22, 2021. Housekeeping edits to position titles were made on July 22, 2025.

Scope: This policy applies to all students and employees at Eastern Washington University.

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

All students and employees are required to provide current contact information in accordance with published university procedure.

2. EMAIL

2-1. Purpose of University Email

This policy sets forth basic rules for email use and establishes email as an official means of communication for Eastern Washington University students, employees, and anyone else eligible for a university-provided email account. All EWU email users are bound by this policy.

Employees, students, and other eligible email users will be informed that their university-provided email account is the primary means of communication from the university community.

While email is an official method of communication, it is not the only official method of communication and does not preclude the university's use of other methods, including, but not limited to, text messages, other writings or oral communications.

2-2. Email Account Eligibility

All university employees are assigned an official EWU email account during the term of their employment. Faculty Emeriti may keep their account indefinitely.

All admitted students are assigned an official EWU email account. Eligibility for an account is in accordance with published university procedure.

2-3. Deletion and Expiration of Email Accounts

The expiration and deletion of official university email accounts is carried out in accordance with published university procedure.

2-4 Email Forwarding

Email forwarding is discouraged, but not prohibited. If a university member chooses to forward their university-provided email account, they are responsible for all information and attachments sent to the forwarded email account. EWU assumes no responsibility for ensuring that forwarded email is received.

University members are responsible for safeguarding the privacy and security of information sent electronically in accordance with applicable laws and university policies. Anyone who forwards a copy of email sent to an official university email account to a non-university provided email account expressly assumes personal responsibility for the security and privacy of that email and any information contained therein. Forwarding or copying email into a non-university account may subject the non-university account to review in response to a subpoena, a public records request, or other legal process. In addition, emails, regardless of location, are subject to laws, regulations, and university policy concerning retention of public records.

2-5. Ownership of Email Data

EWU owns all university-provided email accounts. The University also owns information transmitted or stored using a university-provided email account, subject to any underlying copyright or other intellectual property rights under applicable laws, contracts, and policies.

2-6. Privacy

While the University will make every attempt to keep email messages secure, privacy is not guaranteed and users

should have no general expectation of privacy in email messages sent through University email accounts. All university email accounts are subject to the Washington State Public Records Act, RCW 42.56.

Under certain circumstances, it may be necessary for University staff or other appropriate University officials to access University email accounts. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to, maintaining the system, investigating security or abuse incidents or investigating violations of law or this or other University policies, discovery or public records requests, and, in the case of Office 365 Accounts, violations of Microsoft's Acceptable Use Policy or the University's contract with Microsoft.

2-7. Records Retention

University-provided email accounts are subject to state laws regarding records retention, public records requests, and other legal obligation such as preservation and discovery. Use of a non-university email account to conduct university business/operations is strongly discouraged and does not eliminate this requirement.

3. EMAIL USE

3-1. Expectations

Official communications will be sent to students, employees, and other university members using their university-provided email address. University members are responsible for all information sent to them via their university-provided email account. Students, employees, and other university members are required, in a timely manner, to read (including any attachments) and respond (if appropriate), to all official university email messages sent to their university-provided email account.

3-2. Appropriate Use and User Responsibility

All use of university-provided email accounts must comply with university policies, state and federal laws and regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, EWU Policy 203-01 (Information Security), 203-02 (Copyright Infringement), 901-01 (Ethical Standards), 901-02 (Appropriate Use of University Resources), WAC 172-121 (Student Conduct Code), and WAC 172-191 (Student Education Records).

4. E-MAIL LIST AND ANNOUNCEMENT COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

To ensure that mass email list communication is relevant and to avoid overwhelming campus community members with an unmanageable volume of communication, EWU has adopted the following protocols. Broadcast email messages are a useful and convenient way of informing the campus community. However, due to their potential for unnecessarily consuming resources and cluttering campus inboxes, senders of such messages must adhere to university guidelines and may only be sent by authorized users as defined in this chapter.

4-1. Definitions

Accessibility - Ensuring that the design of products, devices, services, or environments provide equal or equivalent use to persons with disabilities.

Active Students - Students meeting at least one of the following criteria are considered active:

- Registered for current/future term
- Registered for the most recent summer term, if enrolled in a summer term-only program.
- New admits for current/future term if prior to last day to register for that term.
- General student record exists for current/future term if prior to last day to register for that term. Generally, this indicates a new admit who has accepted admission or student returning after an absence.
- Participation in a special academic program that does not require admittance.

Announcement Administrators - Individuals granted authority to send email via the official lists for matters of University business.

Official Lists - The University maintains a number of official campus email lists, managed by the Department of Information Technology (IT). Recipients do not have the ability to opt out of any official list. These lists include:

- All Students - all currently active students
 - Learning Management System - all students by enrolled course, maintained for only the current term, accessible only through the LMS
- Eastern Employees - all current employees
 - Classified - all classified staff
 - Exempt - all exempt staff
 - Faculty - all faculty, except quarterly faculty and visiting faculty
 - Adjunct Faculty - all adjunct faculty
 - VisitingProfs - visiting faculty from other institutions
 - GradStudent - all graduate students employed by EWU
 - NonStudent - Non-student, non-employees who have been provided EWU accounts

User-Managed Lists - These are email lists managed by departments, programs, or individuals that include a subset of the campus community or even external members. They are created by IT upon request, but IT takes no responsibility for updating or moderating these lists. User-managed lists must not replicate official lists. Recipients must have the ability to opt out of these lists.

4-2. Creation and Maintenance Authority

All university-hosted official and user-managed email lists are created by IT. IT is responsible for maintaining all official email lists. All user-managed email lists must have

an assigned representative who will respond to inquiries, manage membership, and, if necessary, moderate the list.

4-3. Sending Authority

A. Constituent Email Lists

Divisions, departments, and programs are authorized to send messages to their students, faculty, or staff, without any further approvals. This only applies to the following official email list types: Colleges, Divisions, Department/Programs, and those maintained in our learning management system. Messages sent to constituent mailing lists must be directly related to their business purpose. Constituent mailing lists are not a substitute for the all student, eastern employee, or other similar lists.

B. User-Managed Email Lists

The owner or manager of the list determines approval authority and sending requirements, subject to the requirements and guidelines of this policy.

C. Eastern Employee and All Student Official Email Lists

Certain administrative departments that need to make periodic announcements to the university community are granted authority to send messages through the official "all" email lists for matters of university business. Vice presidents can approve the Announcement Administrator for each department. The following offices have been granted this authority:

Audience	Authorized Offices or Individuals
All Students (all currently enrolled students)	Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Center for Academic Advising & Retention, Campus Police, Enrollment Services and Registrar, Facilities & Planning, Human Resources, Information Technology, Marketing & Communications, Payroll, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Housing & Residential Life
Eastern Employees (all faculty and staff)	Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Business Services, Policy Administrator, Campus Public Safety, Enrollment Services and Registrar, Facilities & Planning, Business & Strategy, Human Resources, Information Technology, Marketing & Communications, Payroll,

	Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Office for Employee Belonging, Development & Leadership; Faculty Organization (faculty only)
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D. Emergencies

In a university-wide emergency, approval may be bypassed. As detailed in the university's Emergency Response Plan, emergency communications are coordinated by the Crisis Management Team.

4-4. Common Requirements for Email Lists

A. All messages sent to official or user-managed email lists must:

- Include a text version if composed in HTML
- Include a text or HTML version of any content contained in images or attachments. Messages consisting of only an attachment are not acceptable.
- Be in an accessible format or provide a link to an accessible version of the message.
- Must carry a definite and appropriate "from" address as well as an appropriate "reply to" address (if different).
- Be timely and of broad interest to the targeted audience.
- Adhere to the guidelines provided herein and all other applicable University policies.

B. Official Email Lists

For official email lists, messages are restricted to those that meet some or all of the following criteria:

- Be sent by an approved Announcement Administrator.
- Directly relate to carrying out the mission or business functions of the University.
- Relate to changes in University policy, procedures, organizations, colleges, divisions, or departments.
- Announcement of an event that is inclusive of all members of the selected list (e.g. convocation, state of the university address, opening breakfast).
- Emergency and crisis situations.
- Weather-related closings and delays.
- Health and safety issues.
- Crimes, or a series of crimes, that threaten public safety.
- Related to bookstore or food service operations, but excluding direct marketing of these programs.
- Notifications required by federal or state statute (e.g. Clery Act reporting).
- Significant changes in traffic, vehicular access and parking.
- Surveys that are inclusive of all members of the selected list.

- Disruptive situations related to University facilities.
- Official statements by the university president.
- Other pressing situations deemed necessary to communicate by broadcast email.

Messages explicitly excluded from the official email lists include:

- Advertising or marketing of campus programs, activities, or events. These announcements are to be shared via Inside EWU and other mechanisms that are available for this purpose.
- Personal content.
- Content that would assist a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion or opposition to a ballot proposition.
- Commercial advertising for merchants or service providers external to the University, except for notices of services and discounts arranged for members of the University community by the University.
- Solicitations for contributions, charities, or participation in personal activities not related to University purposes or not sponsored by the University.
- Supporting, promoting the interests of, or soliciting for an outside organization or group, including, but not limited to, a private business, a nonprofit organization, or a political party, unless it has been approved in advance by the ethics officer in accordance with EWU Policy 901-02 (Appropriate Use of University Resources).
- Surveys or solicitations to members of the community selected on demographic characteristics, such as to selected groups or individuals identified as candidates for research subjects.
- Targeted audiences that might appear discriminatory or may appear to be an infringement on privacy.
- Content that would violate another university policy, regulation, or state/federal law.

C. User-Managed Lists

Due to the nature and many purposes of user-managed lists, such as the APSOU and SEIU lists, there are different requirements and restrictions. User-managed lists have the following requirements:

- Any faculty or staff member can request a user-managed list.
- Official student organizations may request a list, with approval from their faculty/staff advisor.
- A faculty or staff member must be officially designated as the point-of-contact and manager of the list.
- It must not replicate an existing official email list.

Messages sent to user-managed lists must:

- Meet the standards of the list owner or manager.

- Follow the requirements above common to both official and user-managed lists.

Messages explicitly excluded from the user-managed email lists include:

- Personal content.
- Content that would assist a campaign for election of a person to an office or for the promotion or opposition to a ballot proposition.
- Commercial advertising for merchants or service providers external to the University, except for notices of services and discounts arranged for members of the University community by the University.
- Solicitations for contributions, charities, or participation in personal activities not related to University purposes or not sponsored by the University.
- Supporting, promoting the interests of, or soliciting for an outside organization or group, including, but not limited to, a private business, a nonprofit organization, or a political party, unless it has been approved in advance by the ethics officer in accordance with EWU Policy 901-02 (Appropriate Use of University Resources).
- Surveys or solicitations to members of the community selected on demographic characteristics, such as to selected groups or individuals identified as candidates for research subjects.
- Targeted audiences that might appear discriminatory or may appear to be an infringement on privacy.
- Content that would violate another university policy, regulation or state/federal law.

4-5. Opt-Out

Recipients do not have the ability to opt out of any official list. Recipients of user-managed lists should have the ability to opt out of user-managed lists.

4-6. Review and Approval

Messages sent to official email lists and user-managed lists are subject to review and approval by University Relations and/or other authorized offices.

4-7. Mass Email Guidelines

- A mass email message should be brief, self-explanatory, clear, and concise, and should only be used for important messages relevant to all recipients.
- Avoid sending frequent or repeated messages (such as reminders for events).
- Avoid sending the same message to multiple groups if there is overlapping membership.
- Avoid sending attachments. A link to a web site (URL) or a document sharing solution is preferred. If it is necessary to send attachments, the total message size should be under 5 MB and any

- attachments should be accessible (i.e., posters/fliers should be in an accessible PDF format rather than an image).
- Avoid using mail merge as Office 365 has explicit limits on the number of messages an account may send on a daily basis. Multiple violations may result in an automatic ban on your account by Microsoft.

4-8. Enforcement

Failure of university faculty, staff, or students to follow this policy may result in interruption of mail messages, loss of mailing privileges, and/or discipline.

5. UNIVERSITY TEXT MESSAGING OF STUDENTS

5-1. General

The university recognizes text messaging is a useful tool for communicating with students, but recognizes that students should not be overwhelmed with text messages from the university.

Any texting should be conducted using university phones or systems. Use of personal phones to text students for university purposes is strongly discouraged.

The use of texting for non-emergency purposes is subject to published university guidelines for appropriate content and usage.

All text messaging services and software must be reviewed by the department of Information Technology.

5-2. Types of Permitted Texts

Text messages can be used by authorized university officials to relay information closely related to the educational purposes of the school from the following offices or contractors performing services on their behalves:

- [Academic Advising](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Dean of Student's Office](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Health and Wellness Services](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Records and Registration](#)
- [Student Financial Services](#)
- [Public Safety](#)
- [Program Leading to University Success](#)
- [Immigration Advising](#)

5-3. Opt-In and Opt-Out; Accessibility

Clear opt-in and opt-out processes are required for any text messaging service or software.

Text messages must be accessible for all intended recipients as set forth in EWU Policy 203-05 (Accessible Technology).

5-4. Records Retention & Public Records

University-related text messages are subject to state laws regarding records retention, public records requests, and other legal obligation such as preservation and discovery whether or not a EWU system/tool or personal telephone is used for texting.

5-5. Exceptions

The limitations above do not apply to situations where a student individually signs up to receive text messages for a specific, limited purpose, such as students engaged in extra-curricular activities, athletics, study abroad, fieldtrips, etc. In such instances, students must individually consent to receiving text messages and must have the ability to opt-out of receiving such messages. This chapter also does not apply in cases of emergency or to the university's police department.