

Appendix M: Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students

G. Authoritative Source

The authoritative source on this policy and responsibility for its implementation rest with the Chief Information Officer.

H. For Assistance

Contact the Service Desk for technical support at (512) 475-9400 or send e-mail to the help@utexas.edu.

A. Policy Statement

Electronic mail (e-mail), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students, and the University will expect that e-mail communications will be received and read in a timely manner.

B. Scope

This policy applies to all admitted and enrolled students of The University of Texas at Austin. Official communications using e-mail can include e-mail to a group, such as all admitted students, or an e-mail message to only one student.

C. E-mail Addresses

Every student must provide the University with their official e-mail address using the online update form in [UT Direct](#). The student's official e-mail address is the destination to which the University will send official e-mail communications.

It is the responsibility of every student to keep the University informed of changes in their [official e-mail address](#). Consequently, e-mail returned to the University with "User Unknown" is not an acceptable excuse for missed communication.

All admitted and enrolled students may [create or manage an e-mail address](#) at no additional cost as provided by Information Technology Services (ITS). Information on obtaining an e-mail address is given at the ITS [website](#). ITS is responsible for providing centrally managed email services and addresses that assist the University in sending official communications.

The University cannot be responsible for the handling of e-mail by outside vendors (e.g., @aol.com, @hotmail.com) or by University departmental servers.

D. Expectations Regarding Frequency of Reading E-mail

Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. Regular e-mail management will also minimize the risk that the inbox will be full, causing the e-mail to be returned to the sender with an error. Undeliverable messages returned because of either a full inbox or use of a spam filter will be considered delivered without further action required of the University.

E. Privacy and Confidentiality

Official University communications sent by e-mail are subject to the same public information, privacy, and records retention requirements and policies as other official University communications.

F. Instructional Uses of E-mail

Faculty members retain autonomy in determining how e-mail or other forms of electronic communication will be used in their classes, but they must specify the requirements in the course syllabus. Faculty may expect that students are checking e-mail regularly, and faculty members may use e-mail for their courses accordingly.