

EXECUTIVE POLICY - ADMINISTRATION

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E2.213 System and Campus-Wide Electronic Channels for  
Communicating with Students

I. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

- A. The advent of cost-effective and efficient electronic channels for system and campuswide communication with students underscores the need to ensure that electronic dissemination of information to students is timely, accurate and appropriate; consistent with the University of Hawai'i's educational mission of teaching and learning, research and service; consistent with the institutional commitment to student development and active engagement in learning; consistent with laws, standards and regulations of the University's use and management of information technology resources; and consistent with relevant federal and state regulations, including those governing the individual privacy of students.
- B. The scope of this policy is limited to system and campuswide channels of communication. This policy does not prohibit individuals or groups from disseminating information electronically through channels to which they have access, such as email, provided that such communications are disseminated in accordance within the mission and policies of the University. Rules governing other channels used by University of Hawai'i administrators, faculty and staff are provided in Executive Policy E2.210 *Use and Management of Information Technology Resources*.
- C. This policy shall apply to all system offices and campuses of the University of Hawai'i, hereinafter called the University. The University President or his/her designees shall have overall responsibility for implementation of this policy.

## II. POLICIES

- A. Educational Uses of Mass Electronic Communication Channels  
The University provides mass electronic communication channels in support of its mission to promote teaching and learning, research and public service; and in support of its core values and commitment to learning opportunities that maximize active engagement and benefit the educational process, such as career and co-curricular programs.

B. Official Use of Email

Email is an official means of communication within the University. Email may be used for notification of legal action, financial notice, and academic or disciplinary action such as academic warning, probation, suspension, provided appropriate confidentiality and privacy of records are strictly maintained.

C. Assignment of Official Student Email Addresses

The University will provide each student, faculty and staff an official UH Username. The Username and a password are required to access UH online services, including registration. The username is the prefix for the email address; i.e. username@hawaii.edu, which shall be the official email address within the University.

D. Authorized Use of Mass Electronic Communication Channels

1. The University must exercise appropriate control when disseminating mass electronic communications to students to ensure appropriate, efficient usage and consistency in practice and procedure. The University system and each campus will designate one or more electronic communication representative(s) whose responsibilities include developing procedures for receiving requests to use a channel; approving requests; and disseminating the information within their respective purviews. Procedures and practices shall ensure that the information is timely, accurate and relevant and that the communication is appropriate and consistent with electronic communication practices and with the University's mission and policies.

2. The representative(s) may consult with System and other campus representatives to determine if requests are appropriate for systemwide or multi-campus electronic distribution.
3. Faculty do not require approval by an electronic communication representative(s) to use most current electronic channels for students currently registered in their courses. However, these channels should be reserved for purposes of educational and active learning and engagement. Faculty may expect that students are accessing their email accounts and, accordingly, may use email for official course-related communication.

E. Privacy and Confidentiality

Care should be taken to ensure that recipients of email or other electronic communications that contain sensitive or confidential information are authorized to receive that information and that email addresses are accurate. Information that is deemed sensitive or confidential shall contain instructions that if the message is received by an unintended recipient, that recipient shall immediately notify the sender and the recipient shall delete the information received in error. Members of the University community shall be advised that further dissemination of such information may result in disciplinary actions and/or loss of the privilege of use of email.

Electronic communication must be used in a manner consistent with rules and laws governing the individual privacy of students, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality regarding student records; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); and other relevant rules and laws. All use of e-mail will be consistent with FERPA (codified in 20 U.S.C., section 1231g) as amended; Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Chapter 708-891, 892 and 893; Chapter 20-20, Hawai'i Administrative Rules, entitled *Protection of Educational Rights and Privacy of Students*; UH Administrative Procedure A7.022; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA); and other relevant rules and laws.

F. Commitment to Access

This executive policy shall comply with Executive Policy E2.210, Section VII Commitment to Access. *The University of Hawai'i is firmly committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment or in the provision of educational services. Technology may be either a barrier or a tool for compliance, depending on how it is used. All units of the University are responsible for ensuring that services they provide via technology are accessible, just as for their on-campus programs and services. If unsure of their obligations, administrators are advised to consult with their campus Equal Employment Opportunity officer for guidance on compliance with ADA or other related mandates.*

Students with special communication needs and not appropriately served by email or other electronic communication methods, should contact the disability services office at their respective campuses to request reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

Campuses shall ensure that contact information for the disability services office is readily available to all students.

G. Policy Dissemination

This executive policy will be publicly available and widely distributed.

Each campus is responsible for assuring that all students are informed of the policy.

Each campus will encourage increased usage of mass electronic communication channels by administrators, faculty, staff, and students in accordance with this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Campus. A baccalaureate institution or community college within the University of Hawai'i System.

- B. Electronic Communication Representative(s). The UH System and each campus of the System designates an individual or individuals to serve as the representative(s) authorized to request or implement usage of system or campuswide electronic channels to communicate with students.
- C. Channels. Mass electronic media for communicating with students. Channel options are likely to change as new technology becomes available. Channels currently available include the following:
- E-mail lists, including listservs
  - MyUH for Personal Announcements and Calendars
  - Mass Email directed to an identified group of students
  - University Web Pages directed to specific groups of students or all students.
- D. Educational Purposes. The University provides information technology resources for the purpose of supporting its mission of teaching and learning, research, and public service. Usage will be primarily educational in nature in support of this mission. (Executive Policy E2.210 *Use and Management of Information Technology Resources*.) Educational purposes may include usage that contributes to the University's commitment and core values of student learning opportunities that maximize active engagement, benefit from regular program, and lead to lifelong learning, such as career, student life, and student development.
- E. Students. Individuals currently admitted, registered, or enrolled in a course or program of study at a campus of the UH System.
- F. UH Username. The UH Username and password together constitute an individual's unique electronic credentials. These credentials authorize an individual to access University information, services and resources. Use of the UH Username as the basis of the official email addresses for all students in the UH System provides for consistent email access that is available for appropriate University usage consistent with University policy.
- G. University. The University of Hawai'i System including its campuses.

IV. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY

- A. The University shall ensure that information conveyed through mass electronic communication channels shall be consistent with institutional purposes.
- B. The University shall enable each student admitted to a UH campus to establish his/her UH Username and an associated official email address. The University will send official email communications to the official email address.
- C. The University has the right to send communications to students via email and to expect that those communications will be received and read in a timely fashion.
- D. The University shall ensure that mass electronic communication will be used in a manner consistent with appropriate rules and laws governing the individual privacy of students. The University shall ensure that recipients of email or other electronic communications that contain sensitive or confidential information are authorized to receive that information and that the email address is accurate. Confidentiality regarding student records is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). All use of email will be consistent with FERPA (codified in 20 U.S.C., section 1231g) as amended; Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 708-891, 892 and 893; Chapter 20-20, Hawaii Administrative Rules, entitled *Protection of Educational Rights and Privacy of Students*; and UH Administrative Procedure A7.022.
- E. The University is responsible for ensuring that information it provides through mass electronic communication channels is accessible. Campuses shall ensure that contact information for the disability services office is readily available to all students so that students with disabilities may request accommodations such as receiving the information in an alternate format.

V. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CAMPUSES

- A. The President and Campus Chancellors or designees shall designate and supervise electronic communication representatives who will authorize usage of mass electronic communication channels for their campuses.

- B. Each campus shall develop specific procedures for usage of each mass electronic communication channels.
- C. Electronic Communication Representatives shall convene as needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures, determine the degree of adherence to the procedures, and recommend improvements.
- D. Campuses are responsible for informing students of their rights and responsibilities as written in this policy, section VI. *Rights and Responsibilities of Students*.

#### VI. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

- A. Students must establish their UH Username by the time they are admitted to a UH campus. Establishment of the UH Username by a student automatically enables a student's email address as official in University records.
- B. Students must be responsible for protecting their own privacy. Students will be advised that they can best protect their privacy by not sharing their UH username and password credentials and the contents of communication they received.
- C. Students are responsible for checking their email account frequently and consistently to remain current with University communications. They are expected to monitor and manage their email storage quota to insure that their mailboxes are not saturated and are able to receive new messages.
- D. Students may redirect email from their official UH address to another address. However, the University cannot guarantee the proper handling of email by external vendors or by department servers. Redirecting e-mail does not absolve the student from responsibilities associated with communication sent to an official UH email address. Students who forward e-mail do so entirely at their own risk.
- E. Students have the right to expect that the University will adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) when communicating electronically and that information of a confidential nature shall not be disclosed via mass electronic communication channels.

F. Students with disabilities have the right to receive communication in an accessible format. It is their responsibility to contact the disability services office on his/her home campus to request accommodations.

#### VII. RESPONSIBLE USE

Usage of electronic communication channels shall be consistent with Executive Policy on the Use and Management of Information Technology Resources E2.210. See Executive Policy E2.210 III *Responsible Use* for a detailed list of related e-mail privileges and responsibilities.

Violation of a University policy may result in disciplinary action and/or revocation of access to the use of the University's technology resources.