

**OFFICIAL STUDENT EMAIL POLICY**  
**(Use of Email for Official Correspondence with Students)**  
**(updated June 2014)**

**1. College official use of email**

Email is an instrument for official communication within Muhlenberg College. The College has the right to expect that such communication will be accessed and read in a timely fashion. Official email communication is intended only to meet the academic and administrative needs of the campus community. The Dean of Students Office is responsible for directing the appropriate use of official student email. (See Appropriate Use Guidelines on Page 88.)

**2. Creation and dissemination of student email accounts**

Official College email accounts are available for all enrolled students. Students receive their email address and password in a summer mailing from the Office of Information Technology in July. The official email addresses are maintained in Capstone (the student information system). Official email addresses will be included in directory information unless the students request otherwise, under FERPA, through the Office of the Registrar.

**3. Redirecting of email**

Redirecting email does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to their @muhlenberg.edu account. If a student wishes to redirect email from their official @muhlenberg.edu address to another email address (e.g., @aol.com), they may do so by following directions provided on the College website. **Such forwarding is done by the student, and at the student's own risk. The College does not accept responsibility for services performed by outside providers.**

**4. Student responsibilities regarding use of email**

Students are expected to access and read their email daily to remain current with College-related communication. Further, routine maintenance of the account content is expected, to avoid exceeding maximum storage allocation.

**Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communication may be time-critical. "I didn't check my email", error in forwarding mail, or email returned to the College with "Mailbox Full" or "User Unknown" are not acceptable excuses for missing official College communication via email.**

**5. Confidentiality**

Where practical, users should avoid using email to communicate confidential or sensitive information. Users should exercise extreme caution in using email to communicate confidential or sensitive matters, and should not assume that email is private or confidential. It is especially important that users are careful to send messages only to the intended recipient(s). Particular care should be taken when using the "reply" command during email correspondence.

**6. Academic uses of email**

Capstone (the student information system) and Blackboard (course management system) provide facilities for electronic communication between faculty and students. Faculty will determine how electronic communication (e.g., email) will be used in conjunction with their classes. This "Official Student Email Policy" will ensure that all students will be able to comply with any email-based course requirements specified by faculty. Faculty can therefore make the assumption that students' official @muhlenberg.edu accounts are being accessed, and faculty can use email for their classes accordingly. Further, this policy affords other College officials a reasonable expectation that utilizing email for expedient correspondence with students would be effective.

## **Faculty/Staff Email to Students Appropriate Use Guidelines**

When sending official email to a student, clearly indicate the College office from which the message originates. Include the "From:" or "Reply-to:" name and email address of the sender.

Use plain text in messages--do not include HTML or formatted content.

Send email messages only to the student or specific group of students for whom the message is pertinent.

When a message is to be sent to multiple recipients, use an email program in such a manner that the message will not contain a list of all the recipients.

Avoid inclusion of confidential, sensitive, or non-directory information.

### **Examples of appropriate uses**

- Communicating emergency information regarding safety and security.
- Communicating commencement and convocation information.
- Degree check information.
- Notification concerning students' change of course schedules (drop/adds), general petitions, and withdrawals.
- Notification concerning housing.
- Notification concerning registration.
- Student aid processing issues and deadlines.
- Academic departmental information such as class changes, registration issues, or new courses.
- Information about academic services or academic policies.
- Information about the Career Center deadlines and program schedules.
- Advising appointments.
- Payment deadlines and other Bursar information.

### **Examples of inappropriate uses**

- Information unrelated to College business.
- Solicitation.
- Promoting political viewpoints.
- Personal information.
- Surveys unrelated to College business.
- Messages containing confidential information such as course grades, financial aid award amounts, or tuition/fee payment amounts.
- Emails that violate the College Electronic Communication and Information Policy.

**Contact: Office of Information Technology, 484-664-3440**