

COLLEGE EMAIL

POLICY**College Use of Email**

Students have a right to accurate and timely communication about matters affecting them. To disseminate critical and official college communications to students in a timely and cost-efficient manner, Ridgewater College (hereinafter “the College”) has designated the College’s email system to be the official method of communication with students regarding topics of an academic, student service, or administrative nature. The College retains the right to disseminate official notes and other communications via traditional methods (i.e., USPS mail).

Assignment of College-Issued Email Accounts

All students registered for credit coursework shall be assigned an official Ridgewater College email account upon admission or registration. The student email account will remain active for 365 days after the student’s end date.

College Obligations

- Faculty shall use college-issued email addresses to communicate with students.
- The College shall provide access to computers with internet capabilities on campus.
- The College shall not lease or sell student email addresses.
- The College shall take a proactive approach to block unsolicited spam or junk email messages from reaching college-issued email accounts.

Student Obligations

- Students bear the responsibility to read and respond to official college notices and other college email messages.
- Students are expected to check their email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to stay current with college-related communications.
- Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time sensitive.
- Students bear the responsibility to comply with appropriate use of email in accordance with Minnesota State Board policy 5.22.1 “Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources” and the College Student Code of Conduct.

Redirecting Email

Students may redirect or forward their Ridgewater College assigned email address to a personal email address, but students do so at their own risk. If a student chooses to forward their college email account, they are responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other email account. The College is not responsible for the delivery or delay of delivery into an alternate forwarded account. Students will retain all responsibility associated with official communications sent to their student email account.

Privacy

Messages and notices sent via the student email system are subject to applicable privacy laws and policies, including, but not limited to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA) and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and applicable Ridgewater College policies. Users of the student email system should exercise caution when communicating confidential or sensitive information. Students who choose to suppress any data fields will not be included in the student email directory.

Appropriate Use of College-Wide and Campus Email Distribution Lists

College email is only to be used for official college business and is intended to meet the academic, administrative, and operational needs of the college community. Appropriate use of email addresses is essential to the success of

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this mode of contacting students and college employees. The College is committed to using it as efficiently and effectively as possible, keeping the following definitions and guidelines in mind.

Mass Email

The College uses email as the primary means for communicating important information to students and employees. Mass email messages are a useful and convenient way of distributing information to students, campuses and/or to the college community. However, they have the potential for unnecessarily consuming resources and cluttering inboxes when not used appropriately. As such, mass emails must be approved or sent by authorized users only.

Definition: A mass email is an email message sent to a broad group of campus email addresses.

- Sending a message to members of a club, class or a work unit does not constitute a mass emailing.
- Sending messages to limited numbers of employees in groups, committees, or divisions also does not constitute a mass emailing.

Mass Email Distribution Lists

There are three basic types of college-wide and campus email distribution lists:

- All Faculty and All Staff (both campuses and online)
- All Students (both campuses and online)
- Students segmented by campus (depending on where they take their courses) or fully online.

Email primarily of interest to a particular campus should use the appropriate individual campus distribution list(s).

Student clubs and/or organizations with announcements (i.e., fundraiser events, student meeting or recruitment notices, etc.) should be shared with the appropriate campus Student Life and Wellness Coordinator.

Faculty, staff, and student email distribution lists are not made available to outside organizations other than as specified by legal or policy requirements.

Students and employees may maintain personal group lists, but those lists should not be used to send emails that violate any of the College's policies.

Appropriate information items to send via distribution lists include:

- Deadline notices (registration, tuition payment, financial aid, graduation, etc.)
- Class or registration cancellation notices
- Ridgewater College sanctioned events, invitations, announcements
- Campus crime and security notices
- New policy, policy change or service notices
- Surveys sanctioned by Ridgewater College
- Recruitment communications
- Student Senate participation notices

Information not appropriate for use of distribution lists include:

- Information unrelated to College business
- Solicitations or fundraising efforts not sanctioned by the College
- Promotion of political viewpoints
- Personal information
- Surveys not sanctioned by the College

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- Messages containing confidential information such as course grades, financial aid award amounts, or tuition/fee payments amounts
- Messages that violate Board Policy, Ridgewater College Policy or state or federal laws

Authorized Users: Access to College-Wide and Individual Campus-Wide Email Distribution Lists

The following individuals are deemed to be authorized users and as such, have access to use college-wide and campus-specific email distribution lists:

- College President
- Executive Assistant to the President
- Vice Presidents
- Assistants to the Vice Presidents
- Deans
- Assistants to the Deans
- Title IX Coordinator
- Directors and Supervisors
- Information Technology Staff
- Human Resources Staff
- Student Life Coordinators
- Athletic Coordinator
- Foundation Staff
- Maintenance Leads

Individuals not on the authorized users list who wish to send a mass email must have their supervisor approve and send the message on their behalf.

Mass emails using distribution lists must be sent using the blind carbon copy (BCC) option and must include a notation at the top of the email message indicating who the recipients are. Using BCC prevents “reply all” responses.

Sanctions

Willful or intentional violations of this policy are considered to be misconduct under applicable provisions of the Student Conduct Code. Students who violate this policy may be denied access to Information Technology (IT) resources and may be subject to other penalties and disciplinary action both within and outside the College. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary actions.

History:

12.05.2005 Adopted; Implemented Fall Semester 2006

06.15.2018 Proposed; 09.14.2018 Revised

08.24.2021 Proposed; Reviewed for Equity Compliance

12.10.2021 Revised

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