

**COLLEGE EMAIL**

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

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**51 Mass Email**

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

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

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

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**62 Mass Email Distribution Lists**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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79 Appropriate information items to send via distribution lists include:

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

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89 Information not appropriate for use of distribution lists include:

- 90 • Information unrelated to College business
- 91 • Solicitations or fundraising efforts not sanctioned by the College
- 92 • Promotion of political viewpoints
- 93 • Personal information
- 94 • Surveys not sanctioned by the College

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- 95       • Messages containing confidential information such as course grades, financial aid award amounts, or  
96       tuition/fee payments amounts  
97       • Messages that violate Board Policy, Ridgewater College Policy or state or federal laws  
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**Access and Appropriate Use of Mass Email Distribution Lists**Access to College-Wide and Campus-Wide Distribution Lists

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101 All College faculty and staff are granted access to send messages to college-wide and campus-specific email  
102 distribution lists. This access is intended to support effective communication, operational needs, and timely  
103 dissemination of information relevant to the College community. Use of these distribution lists is a privilege and  
104 must align with the College's professional standards and mission. Messages sent to these lists must be directly  
105 relevant to the majority of recipients and appropriate for a broad college-wide audience. If you have questions about  
106 whether a topic is relevant, contact your supervisor.  
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Required Use of BCC

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109 All mass emails using any college-wide or campus-wide distribution list must be sent using the blind carbon copy  
110 (BCC) field.  
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112 Each message must include a brief notation at the top of the email identifying the intended distribution list (e.g.,  
113 "Sent to: Faculty & Staff – Willmar Campus").  
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115 Using BCC reduces unnecessary "reply all" responses and supports a professional communication environment.  
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Appropriate Use Expectations

117 Faculty and staff who use college-wide or campus-wide distribution lists must adhere to the following expectations:

- 118       • Messages must meet the College's Guiding Principles and Respectful Workplace requirements in regard to  
119       tone and language, as well as related to official College business or information of broad, institution-wide  
120       relevance.
- 121       • Distribution lists must not be used for personal announcements, solicitations, political messages, or content  
122       unrelated to college operations.
- 123       • Users should consider whether a more targeted distribution list or departmental communication method  
124       would be more appropriate before sending a mass email.  
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Consequences of Misuse

126 Failure to follow this policy, including misuse of distribution lists, sending inappropriate or unrelated content, or  
127 repeated disregard for BCC requirements—may result in:  
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- 129       • Temporary or permanent removal of access to college-wide and campus-wide distribution lists.
- 130       • Additional corrective or disciplinary action consistent with applicable College policies, collective bargaining  
131       agreements, and HR procedures.  
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133 Intentional or willful violations may be treated as misconduct and addressed under the appropriate employee or  
134 student conduct codes.  
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History:

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138 *12.05.2005 Adopted; Implemented Fall Semester 2006*

139 *06.15.2018 Proposed; 09.14.2018 Revised*

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- 140 *08.24.2021 Proposed; Reviewed for Equity Compliance; 12.10.2021 Revised*
- 141 *03.01.2025 Proposed; 12.15.2025 Revised*
- 142 *04.15.2026 Proposed; 05.01.2025 Revised*