IRM-016

# Use of Email as Official Means of Communication with Students

**Effective Date** Thursday, March 26, 2009

**Status** Final

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**Policy Type** University

**Contact Office** University Information Security (InfoSec)

**Oversight Executive**
Vice President and Chief Information Officer Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer

**Applies To** Academic Division.

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## Reason for Policy

The University is committed to using its resources efficiently and email is a cost-effective means of communication. This policy establishes email as the University's official means of communication with students and sets forth obligations members of the University community have regarding email use for this purpose.

## Definition of Terms

### Primary Email Address

**Description**

The address to which the University sends official email notifications. These addresses are created for students within a few days of the University receiving their admission deposits. They are formatted as UVa computing ID @virginia.edu (e.g., mst3k@virginia.edu).

## Policy Statement

Email is the official means for communication with every University student regardless of year or enrollment status. The University will send these official communications to enrolled students by email using their primary

email addresses. Students are expected to open and read those communications in a timely fashion. These official communications may include content related to a student's enrollment, financial responsibilities, and compliance with University policies and procedures, including the policies and procedures of the University's Honor and Judiciary committees.

1. **Assignment of Student's Primary Email Addresses:**
   Information Technology Services (ITS) assigns each enrolled student a primary email address. The University will list a student's primary email address in the University's Directory.
2. **Redirecting of Email:**
   Students may use the UVA Email Address Management System to specify the email service to which messages sent to their primary email address will be delivered. In making these delivery choices, students are responsible for selecting the email service(s) they most frequently use to receive and read official University communications in a timely manner.
3. **Expectations Regarding Student Use of Email:**
   Students are expected to check their email addresses on a frequent and consistent basis to remain informed of official University communications, as certain communications may be time sensitive. Students who fail to check their email on a regular basis are responsible for any resulting consequences.
4. **Educational Uses of Email:**
   Faculty will determine how email or other means of electronic communication will be used in their classes. Faculty can expect students to read messages sent to their primary email addresses in a timely manner.

5. **Appropriate Use of Email:**
   a. Email must not be used to communicate highly sensitive data as defined in the policy IRM-003: Data Protection of University Information.
   b. Emails must comply with relevant federal and state laws, as well as University policies, including those governing public computing resources, security considerations, and ethics in computing. See the Related Information section for key law and policy references.
   c. Email shall not be the sole method for notification where another method of communication is required by law.

6. **Compliance with Policy:**
   Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy and/or its standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

   Direct questions about this policy to the University Information Security office.

**Related Information**

IRM-002: Acceptable Use of University's Information Technology Resources
IRM-003: Data Protection of University Information
STU-002: Rights of Students at the University of Virginia Pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Responsible Computing Handbook for Faculty and Staff
Responsible Computing Handbook for Students

Federal regulations including but not limited to the following:

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”, also referred to as the "Buckley Amendment"), 20 U.S.C. §1232g;
- The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”), Pub. L. 104-191 and implementing regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services including Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information, 45 CFR Parts 160 and 164 (“Privacy Rule”);
- The Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (“GLBA”) 15 U.S.C §6801 et seq, and implementing regulations issued by the Federal Trade Commission including Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information (the "Safeguards Rule”), 16 CFR Part 314; and The Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a (2000).

Commonwealth of Virginia laws including but not limited to:

- The Government Data Collection and Dissemination Practices Act §2.2-3800

**Major Category** Information Resource Management

**Next Scheduled Review** Monday, June 21, 2027

**Revision History**
Confirmed 6/21/24; Clarified official communication 11/9/23; Updated 7/14/21; 6/1/18.

**Category Cross Reference**
Students and Student Programs

**Approved By** Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

**Approved Date** Thursday, March 26, 2009