



## Policy 01:006 – Electronic Mail

### 1. Purpose

This policy serves to define the permitted and appropriate use of the electronic mail (Email) system of the University of Montevallo (“University”) and to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and policies.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all University faculty, staff, students, official University affiliates, or any other individual, group, or office currently issued an official University Email account (“User” or “Users”).

### 3. Policy Statement

The University is committed to providing a central Email system to support its academic and administrative activities. Therefore, Email is considered a primary means of official communication with students, faculty, and staff. Each registered student and active faculty and staff member will be assigned an official University Email address by Information Service & Technology (IS&T) according to a naming convention regulated by IS&T. All official University Email communications shall be sent to the assigned address, including but not limited to communications from faculty to students registered in their classes and from administrative Units to students.

The University expects that Users will receive and read Email in a timely manner. Failure to receive and read University communications delivered to an official Email address in a timely manner does not absolve recipients from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.

**3.1. Email Ownership and Privacy:** Because University Email is provided exclusively to facilitate University-related functions, User accounts and information sent via University Email are the property of the University and there should be no assumption that Email content will remain private or confidential. While system administrators do not routinely monitor Email, they may access it for a legitimate business purpose such as diagnosing and resolving technical problems, investigating possible misuse of Email when there is reasonable suspicion of a violation of law or university policy, assisting in an approved investigation, or addressing an imminent health or safety issue. Further, the University must access Email accounts when required by law.

**3.2. Email Forwarding:** The use of non-University Email to send Confidential or Restricted University information, including student information, is strictly prohibited. All

University-related business conducted by faculty, staff, and student employees must be performed exclusively through a *montevallo.edu* Email account. Automatic forwarding of University business-related emails to personal Email address creates significant security and privacy risks and is strictly prohibited.

**3.3. Non-University Related Email:** University Email shall not be used for personal, non-University related purposes. It is understood, however, that incidental personal use of University Email services may occur. Any such personal use is subject to institutional policies and standards. There is no right of privacy or ownership (with the exception of copyrighted material) in a personal Email or any information attached or contained in an Email in a University account. Use of University Email for a private business venture is prohibited.

**3.4. Unacceptable Email Use:** Users must comply with all University policies, including, but not limited to the University's Use of Information Resources Policy and with all applicable state and federal laws when using University Email accounts.

Violations of policy or law may result in temporary or permanent loss of technology-related privileges, University sanctions, disciplinary action including immediate termination of employment, expulsion as a student, and/or other legal action.

Examples of unacceptable Email use:

- Forging or altering Email information with the intent to deceive the reader including timestamp, sender and recipient information, title, IP addresses, and message content.
- Attempting to access the Email accounts of other persons unless authorized to do so by the University.
- Using, attempting to use, or impersonating the accounts of other persons.
- Sending spam, malicious software, or phishing attempts.
- Distributing partisan political or lobbying information or information associated with commercial activities or personal gain.
- Intentionally altering or disrupting University Email services.
- Deliberately distributing or receiving graphic materials such as pornography or threatening, harassing, or violent content.
- Unlawfully distributing or receiving copyrighted, trademarked, or service marked materials.
- Using University Email in attempt to violate the law.

**3.5. Security and Confidentiality:** The password associated with an Email account is not only used to protect the User's Email account but may also be used to authenticate identity in other University online services. To safeguard the User's identity and privacy and the confidentiality of sensitive third-party information stored in Email accounts and devices assigned to the User by the University and other University systems accessible using the Email password, a User must not share their account or give their password to anyone. Subjecting confidential information to disclosure by sharing a User's password is a violation of University policy and may result in a violation of law and/or breach of contracts to which the University is a party. Users are

required to promptly change their Email password upon receiving credible evidence that their password has become known by or disclosed to another party.

#### **4. Definitions**

**Email:** A communication method that uses electronic devices to deliver and receive messages across computer networks. Email refers to both the delivery system and individual messages, including attached files, that are sent and received.

#### **5. Policy Approval, Review, and Administration**

Responsible Office(s): Information Services & Technology

Responsible Individual: Chief Information Officer

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Last Revision: None