
TITLE:	Email: Guidelines for Official Mass Email Communications
NUMBER	716 (formerly 491)
APPROVED BY	President
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Purpose

Provide guidelines on using official mass email communications.

Overview

Email is a strategic tool for carrying out the mission of Whatcom Community College. It can be used to quickly and effectively communicate with individuals and with large groups of people. Recognizing this need, current email groups are maintained to enable offices, work units, departments and programs to reach large segments of the college community.

College administration or their representatives depend on email to communicate important information to the campus community; accordingly, it is expected that email communications that have been authorized as an “official communication” should be received and read as any other official communication.

Procedure

Official mass email communications are restricted to those messages that meet one or more of the following standards:

- Provides essential information for the operation or execution of daily business;
- Notifies the campus community of significant events or changes in governance, policy, and practice;
- Alerts the campus community to situations around health and safety;
- Communicates important information from executive leadership; or
- Announces unit or departmental-sponsored campus events.

For mass emails that do not meet these requirements of essential or important information, (e.g., personal correspondence; advertising or solicitations; political statements or purposes; sales of any kind; anything for-profit; advertising, even for academic or college business and even if there is no fee), other methods of communication should be employed.

Routine, periodic, targeted electronic mailings from an administrative office or official to any substantial portion of campus or the college community, such as all students, all faculty, or all staff, must be approved in the first instance by the appropriate college officer. Mass email communications must directly relate to and facilitate the teaching and learning or service missions of the College, and be relevant to the vast majority of the distribution list.

Authorities, Ownership and Responsibilities

Employees are assigned to email membership lists based on their current employment (e.g., faculty, classified, exempt, hourly, etc.). Email membership lists are managed by the Information Technology Department; however, requests to send communications to mass email membership lists must be routed to the appropriate office for approval (refer to Request for “Mass Email Communication Routing Procedures” section).

This procedure does not preclude the right of an employee to use the college email system to communicate freely with all members of the same employee group.

Request for Mass Email Communication Routing Procedures

Requests for approval of mass email communications should be directed as follows:

- For mass email communication to the entire college community, contact the Public Information Officer at 360.383.3310 or pio@whatcom.ctc.edu or request distribution through your respective vice presidential office depending on the nature of the communication.

Further, in order to conduct the business of the College, employees serving in official leadership positions (e.g. division chairs, committee chairs, union leadership representatives, and designated managers) shall have authority to send mass email communications.

In approving a mass email communication, the appropriate college officers shall consider whether coordination or consultation with the College's public information and communications office is prudent or desired to ensure mass emails are aligned with other communications on topics that may be planned by other college entities.

Bear in mind that a request may not be honored if it does not meet the requirements specified above. The College President or his/her designee and Vice Presidents and his/her designee may make exceptions to this procedure, if in the respective officer's judgment the benefits of a mass email communication with respect to immediacy of communication, universal distribution, and significance of content for the fulfillment of the College's mission, substantially outweigh the costs and/or burdens associated with distribution of the mass electronic mailing.

Alternatives

Alternative forms of campus-wide communications are available and encouraged.

- The Insider (<http://insider.whatcom.edu>)
Primarily, use of The Insider, the College's web-based employee newsletter/blog has been identified as the optimal medium for exchanging information and ideas within the campus community that may not meet the requirements for a mass email communication.
- Campus Event Calendar (www.whatcom.ctc.edu/wccevents)
Share an upcoming college-related event with the Public Information Office at pio@whatcom.ctc.edu. Events submitted must be affiliated with the College. Approved events are posted on the campus event calendar on the public website, as well as other event calendars in the broader community.
- Campus News (www.whatcom.ctc.edu/wccnews)
Share ideas for a story with the Public Information Office by emailing pio@whatcom.ctc.edu or call 360.383.3310.