The University of North Texas at Dallas Policy Manual	Chapter 14.000
14.001 Electronic Communication	**Information Technology**

Policy Statement. It is the policy of the University of North Texas at Dallas to manage the University's information resources as strategic assets of the State of Texas. Since a large portion of university business is conducted using e-mail, it is important that e-mail services function in an efficient and reliable manner. This policy addresses expected standards for university e-mail usage and other electronic communications.

Application of Policy. This policy applies to all University Users.

Definitions.

1. Information Resources. "Information Resources" mean procedures, equipment, and software that are designed, employed, operated, and maintained to collect, record, process, store, retrieve, display, and transmit information of data and administered both centrally and within individual departments, on-campus and remotely, on a mainframe and network servers, and for use by single and multiple users.

2. Electronic Mail System. "Electronic Mail System" means interdependent computer software applications and hardware that allows electronic mail to be communicated from one computing system to another.

3. Electronic Mail (E-mail). "Electronic Mail" means any message, image, from, attachment, data, or other communication sent, received, or stored within an electronic mail system.

4. State Government Record. "State Government Record" means any information subject to the Texas Public Information Act, including by not limited to written, photographic, machine-readable, or other recorded information regardless of medium created or received by or on behalf of a state agency or an elected state official that documents activities in the conduct of state business or use of public resources.

5. University Users. "University Users" mean all faculty, staff, students, contractors, volunteers, and individuals that maintain a business relationship with University that make use of University electronic communication resources. Information resources may also be included in this category.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

1. **E-mail**. Personal use of university e-mail accounts is a privilege, not a right. The privilege may be revoked at any time and for any reason. Abuse of the privilege may result in appropriate disciplinary action. The University holds ownership and title to all records and information created, received, acquired, or maintained in the normal course of business by any employee or organizational component.

    i.   While the University will make every attempt to keep e-mail messages secure, privacy is not guaranteed and users should have no general expectation of privacy in e-mail messages sent through the University's e-mail system.

    ii.   E-mail messages are official university records therefore considered state government records that are subject to state and university policies. All e-mail messages must be retained or disposed of according to the University's retention schedules.

    iii.   E-mail users shall not disclose information about students or employees in violation of university policies or laws protecting the confidentiality of such information.

    iv.   E-mail users must not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of the University or any unit of the University unless appropriately authorized (explicitly or implicitly) to do so. Where appropriate, an explicit disclaimer shall be included unless it is clear from the context that the author is not representing the University (e.g., "the opinions expressed are my own, and not necessarily those of my employer").

    v.   E-mail users shall include the following disclaimer within all e-mails sent on behalf of the University: "This message (including any attachments) may contain confidential information intended for a specific individual and purpose. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of the original message. Any disclosure, copying, or distribution of this message, or the taking of any action based on it, is strictly prohibited."

    vi.   Individuals must not send, forward or receive confidential or sensitive university information through non-university e-mail accounts (e.g., Yahoo, AOL, Hotmail, Gmail or any other e-mail service provided by other Internet Service Providers).

vii. Departments and individuals should be judicious in sending e-mail to all faculty, staff and students. E-mail addressed to faculty, staff or students may be sent by authorized users when the nature of the message is of sufficient general value and length that it would justify being sent as a memorandum, but requires the immediacy of e-mail. Only select university users, approved by a Dean, Department Head, Vice President or higher level management official, will be granted the ability to send e-mail to the all-staff and/or student e-mail distributions. Campus-wide electronic mail distribution is not to be used for personal announcements (e.g. lost items, items for sale).

Responsible Party: All University Users/Information Technology

2. **Other Electronic Communications**.

   i. Instant Messaging. Employees must download, install and use only Instant Messaging (IM) software approved by the Information Technology Department. IM must only be used for legitimate university business purposes and for any routine official business communication that is not normally filed for recordkeeping, such as a communication that is temporarily needed only for an employee to complete an action. IM may not be used to document a statutory obligation or university decision. IM should not be used when the resulting record would normally be retained for recordkeeping purposes.

   ii. Peer-to-Peer Software. Use of peer-to-peer (P2P) software on university computers, networks, mobile computing device and any other electronic communication devices is strictly prohibited. Personal devices with active P2P software must not be used to connect to the university network. This includes connections to the university wired and wireless networks as well as remote access (VPN) connections. Any exceptions must be approved in advance by the Director of Information Technology. If authorized for use on university systems, P2P may be used for any routine official business communication that is not normally filed for recordkeeping, such as a communication that is temporarily needed for an employee to complete an action.

   Responsible Party: All University Users/Information Technology

3. **Prohibitive Activities**. Accessing, viewing, downloading, uploading, transmitting, printing, copying, posting, or sharing any material (i.e., visual, textual, or auditory entity) that violates university policy is strictly prohibited. Other prohibitive activities are as follows:

i. Sending e-mail or IM that is intimidating or harassing;

ii. Using e-mail or IM for conducting personal business;

iii. Using e-mail or IM for purposes of political lobbying or campaigning;

iv. Violating copyright laws by inappropriately distributing protected works;

v. Posing as anyone other than oneself when sending an e-mail or IM, except when authorized to send messages for another when serving in an administrative support role;

vi. The use of unauthorized e-mail or IM software;

vii. Sending or forwarding chain letters;

viii. Sending unsolicited messages to large groups except as required to conduct university business;

ix. Sending excessively large messages; and,

x. Sending or forwarding e-mail that is likely to contain computer viruses.

Responsible Party: All University Users

References and Cross-references.

Texas Government Code § 2054 – Information Resources

Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 202, Subchapter C and Department of Information Resources, Policy and Standards for Protecting Information Resources for Texas

Texas Government Code § 552 - Public Information

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