



CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DEPARTMENT POLICY

Title: <i>Electronic Communication Policy</i>	Number: PL405.0	Eff: 5/7/01 Rev: 4/19/07
Purpose: This policy covers all electronic communications provided for the Central Washington University community, including electronic mail and voice mail resources.		
<i>I. Introduction</i> Central Washington University encourages the use of electronic communication to support learning, teaching, research and University business. This policy statement is with regard to the use of, access to, and disclosure of electronic communications to assist in ensuring that the University's resources serve those purposes. This policy applies to all active students, faculty, emeriti, staff, administrators and approved affiliates.		
Policy: <i>II. Allowable Use</i> Electronic communication is to be used to support the University's mission of learning, teaching, research and University business. Electronic communication at Central Washington University is not a right, but a privilege. Any electronic communication addresses, mailboxes or accounts assigned by the University are the property of the University. All electronic communications on Central Washington University computing or networking systems are the property of the University. Electronic communications users are required to comply with state and federal laws, University policies and ethical conduct.		
<i>III. Prohibited Use</i> Unacceptable uses of electronic communication include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducting unlawful activities;• Use for any commercial activities;• Sending offensive or abusive messages;• Use to gather or otherwise collect information about others for commercial or private use;• Use for fund raising, political campaign activities, or public relations activities not specifically related to Central Washington University activities;		

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CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

- Use to conduct or forward illegal contests, pyramid schemes or chain letters, or to spam;
- Use to sell access to the Internet;
- Use to conduct any activity which adversely affects the availability, confidentiality or integrity of Central Washington University's technology;
- Use to benefit personal or financial interests;
- Forging electronic communications;
- Intentionally transmitting computer viruses;

IV. System Protection and Resource Limitations

The technical staff at Central Washington University reserves the right

- To set the amount of disk space available for electronic communications mailboxes;
- To carry out necessary purges of information stored on the servers to preserve the integrity of the system;
- To run virus scans and quarantine electronic communications that contain viruses;

Users are responsible for retaining their own records and therefore are advised to keep back-up copies of important documents, distribution lists, calendars and/or voice mail, on their hard-drives or appropriate backup media.

V. Security

Central Washington University attempts to provide secure and reliable electronic communication services. However, secure and reliable services do not in any way guarantee the confidentiality and privacy of electronic communication, which is the electronic equivalent of sending a postcard. Confidentiality may be compromised by applicability of law or policy, unintended redistribution, network 'sniffing' and interception, or inadequacy of current technologies to protect against unauthorized access. All users should be aware of the following:

- You should not assume confidentiality or privacy of electronic communications. It is not recommended that you send confidential university communications (as determined by law, policy, etc.) via electronic communications.
- In the course of routine systems maintenance, troubleshooting and mail delivery problem resolution, technical staff may inadvertently see the content of electronic mail messages. Technical staff shall not intentionally search electronic communication records or transactional information for violations of law or policy. However, they shall report violations discovered inadvertently in the course of their duties.
- Electronic mail that constitutes University records is subject to archival and records

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management policies as established by the University.

- Electronic communication may be subject to disclosure under law. Back-up copies may be retained for periods of time and in locations unknown to senders and recipients even if you have deleted it from your account or PC.
- Messages can be easily forwarded without your permission to individuals or groups, even though it violates copyright law.
- Messages can be intercepted while in transit through the network.
- Forwarded messages can be altered from the original.
- Once a message is received on a machine outside of Central Washington University, all of the above concerns continue to apply.
- Electronic communication is not confidential.
- Records of electronic communications are University records subject to disclosure under the Washington Public Records Act, other laws, or as a result of litigation.
- University employees are expected to comply with University requests for copies of records in their possession, or whose disclosure is required to comply with applicable laws, regardless of whether such records reside on University electronic communications resources.

VI. Privacy and Confidentiality

The University does not routinely inspect, monitor, or disclose electronic communications without the holder's consent. Nonetheless, subject to the requirements for authorization, notification, and other conditions specified in this Policy, the University may deny access to its electronic communications services and may inspect, monitor, or disclose electronic communications under very limited circumstances as described below.

Access without consent

Prior to any inspection, monitoring, or disclosure of the contents of University electronic communication records in a University employee's possession, the employee's consent shall be obtained except as provided for below.

- when required by and consistent with law;
- when there is substantiated reason to believe that violations of law or of University policies have taken place;
- when there are compelling circumstances;

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- under time-dependent, critical operational circumstances

When, under the circumstances described above, the contents of electronic communications must be inspected, monitored, or disclosed without the holder's consent, the following shall apply:

- *Authorization.* Except in emergency circumstances, such actions must be authorized in advance and in writing by the President, Vice President of Business and Financial Affairs, University Public Records Officer, or the Business and Finance Office. This authority may not be further redelegated. Authorization shall be limited to the least perusal of contents and the least action necessary to resolve the situation.
- *Emergency Circumstances.* In emergency circumstances, the least perusal of contents and the least action necessary to resolve the emergency may be taken immediately without authorization, but appropriate authorization must then be sought without delay following the procedures described in *Authorization* above.
- *Notification.* In either case, the responsible authority or designee shall, at the earliest possible opportunity that is lawful and consistent with other University policies, notify the affected individual of the action(s) taken and the reasons for the action(s) taken.

VII. Retention and archiving

The management and retention of all records sent or stored via electronic communications systems are subject to state records management laws and regulations. Electronic communications themselves are not considered a record series or category. They are the means of transmission of messages or information ... and the *medium* on which they are to be temporarily held. Retention or disposition of those records must be related to the information they contain or the purpose they serve ... their *content*. The content, transactional information, and any attachments associated with messages are considered public records. Records communicated using electronic communications need to be identified, managed, protected, and retained as long as they are needed to meet operational, legal, audit, research, or other requirements.

University department heads or unit directors are required to comply with approved records retention schedules. They must ensure provision of filing systems for all public records, on acceptable media, outside the electronic communications systems. The University General Records Retention Schedule is accessible on-line for viewing or printing at <http://www.cwu.edu/~purchase/recordsmgmt.html>. Official electronic communication records can be deleted after they have been retained for the correct time period as determined by the University's state approved retention schedules.

The University *originator or receiver* of an electronic communications message is the official record copy holder and is responsible for retaining the record copy under the records retention schedules approved for the University by the State. [Computer Support Services](#) offers classes and individual training on use of our University's electronic communication system which

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includes information about appropriate network archiving.

An Official Record that is stored and accessible after its required retention period has expired is still a public record and must be produced upon request. A systematic deletion program not only eliminates obsolete documents from the file, but also saves resources by not indefinitely and unnecessarily storing information beyond appropriate time lines.

ITS does not archive documents.

Electronic communications privileges start on the date employment begins and ITS issues an ID number and password. They end at 5pm of the date of employment termination. The contents of the mailbox on the date of termination may be turned over to the head of the departing employee's department.

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