To help protect against phishing and other malicious emails, a new security feature will begin tagging all messages from outside the College's email system with the prefix [EXTERNAL] in the subject line. This makes it easier to identify messages that may be suspicious or impersonating internal contacts. Always use extra caution when opening links or attachments in [EXTERNAL] emails—especially if they seem urgent or unexpected. If you're unsure about an email, contact ITS at helpdesk@hillsdale.edu before taking action. This change enhances your ability to spot threats and keep College data safe.

Here's why this is important and how it can help you:

Why are we implementing this?
- Phishing and email scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated.
- Cybercriminals often impersonate senders you trust to trick you, also known as "spoofing."
- The [EXTERNAL] tag provides an immediate visual cue to help you identify emails that did not originate from senders inside the College.

How does this help you?
- It encourages extra caution when opening with emails from external senders.
- It can prevent accidental disclosure of sensitive information to outside parties by helping you recognize when a bad actor has spoofed a trusted source.
- It helps you better identify potential phishing attempts or suspicious emails.

You may notice the [EXTERNAL] tag on some legitimate email addresses that end in @hillsdale.edu. Here's why this happens and what it means:

1. **Bulk email services:** We use software systems that send bulk emails on our behalf. Even though these emails may have an @hillsdale.edu address, they're actually sent from bulk email servers, not the College's Microsoft email system.
2. **Email marketing tools:** Emails sent using HubSpot or Mailchimp, such as newsletters or announcements, will be tagged as external.

This doesn't automatically mean the email is suspicious, it just means it was sent from a bulk email service or email marketing tool. Some common examples include:
- Help Desk Emails
- ITS Status Notifications
- Faculty & Staff Newsletter

What this means for you:
- While the [EXTERNAL] tag doesn't always indicate a threat, it's an extra layer of awareness to help you identify potentially harmful emails.
- If you're unsure about an email's legitimacy, even if it seems like it is from a familiar source, verify with the sender through a separate channel (such as a phone call or text message) or contact our ITS Help Desk at helpdesk@hillsdale.edu