

Standard Upper Ontology Working Group Policy and Code of Practice for e-mail Lists and Internet based Resources

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Version 1.0 Draft 1

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The Standard Upper Ontology Working Group (SUO WG) meets and conducts its business using the Internet rather than through face-to-face meetings. The work is facilitated through the use of e-mail lists and other Internet based resources such as web pages

This document defines the Policy and Code of Practice of the SUO WG in setting up, administering, and controlling the use of the e-mail lists and other Internet based resources used to conduct its business.

1.2. Intended Audience

The intended audience for this document is all those who are members of any e-mail list of the SUO WG.

2. Policy

The SUO WG shall set up e-mail lists to support the work of the SUO WG. All e-mail lists of the SUO WG shall have an archive accessible from the Web. There shall be one general list where the main business of the SUO WG is conducted. Other e-mail lists may be set up to support projects or minority interests when the volume of e-mail warrants this, both to avoid receipt of unwanted e-mail and to help organising material in the archives.

The SUO WG shall establish and maintain web pages to publish and promote the work of the SUO WG. These shall include:

- The aims and objectives of the SUO WG,
- All formal documents of the SUO WG (e.g. PAR, policy and procedures, drafts and deliverables of approved Work Programmes, issue logs)
- Support for the development of approved Work Programmes,
- Support for members contributions.

3. Code of Practice for e-mail Lists

3.1. Responsibilities of e-mail List Members

Volume

For each list to which they subscribe, members shall restrict themselves to 5 postings per day.

Relevance

Postings shall be relevant to the purpose of the list to which they are sent. The larger the number of posting by an individual, the greater care should be taken to ensure relevance.

Those who post on average less than two e-mails per week are allowed latitude in the relevance of their posting.

Respect for other Members

In conducting themselves on the SUO WG e-mail lists members shall:

- Treat other members with respect,
- Strive for consensus without eliminating the minority voice,
- Listen to the point of view of others.

Postings shall not be abusive or contain foul language.

Consideration for other members – Literary Style

The purpose of postings to the SUO e-mail lists is to communicate with other list members. Those posting messages shall therefore consider their audience in drafting their postings.

- Postings shall be reasonably concise so that the content is not obscured.
- Postings shall be complete, rather than end in mid thought.
- Postings shall be clear and unambiguous, to accurately convey the message and to avoid unnecessary clarification.
- Postings shall use language that reflects that many members do not have English as a first language (i.e. avoid colloquialisms).

Content

The e-mail lists may be used to:

- Propose a motion,
- Make a brief exposition of some point or principle,
- Ask a question,
- Make communications directly related to an approved Work Programme,
- Bring to the attention of members some external material or event,
- Respond to another posting.

Substantial contributions (more than 2-3 pages) shall be made by publishing the material on the web and sending a message to the relevant e-mail list to notify of the material.

3.2. Remedies

In the event of a posting not complying with this Code of Practice, a member may write to the list to point out the nature of the non-compliance. The member accused of non-compliance may apologise or defend his posting. If the complaining member does not accept the defence, then they may call for a vote to determine whether the post was non-compliant. If a member consistently fails to comply with the Code of Practice then the Chair shall give them a formal warning. If the member still consistently fails to comply then the Chair shall propose a motion for the offending member to be excluded from the list.

4. Code of Practice for SUO Web Content

Members may request the Chair to post web pages in a member's area of the SUO web site. This shall not be refused unreasonably.

4.1. *Responsibilities*

Responsibilities of those providing web pages include:

- Material that is posted should be broadly relevant to the work of the SUO WG, but this should be interpreted generously.
- Material posted is the responsibility of the member posting it.
- Material posted shall be respectful of others and not include foul or abusive language.

4.2. *Remedies*

In the event of non-compliance with the Code of Practice for Web Content by a member, any member may post a complaint to the SUO list. If non-compliance is confirmed – if necessary by a vote of the SUO WG voting members – then the offending material shall be removed from the member's area. Revised material may be proposed for posting by the author.