

Official Student E-mail Policy

A. Introduction

Electronic mail ("e-mail"), as a means of communicating official University information to students, is convenient, rapid, environmentally aware, and cost effective. The University of Cincinnati issues a UC e-mail address, a Bearcat Online e-mail account and disk space (for e-mail storage) to all students, at no cost to the student. The University also distributes e-mail client software for a nominal charge that covers the cost of media, makes it available for download at no cost, and provides it on computers in public labs. This practice ensures that all students have e-mail communication readily available to them. Students who do not have access to computers in their homes or workplaces may use several public computer labs on campus, or computers in public libraries off campus, to access their e-mail. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the rights and responsibilities of both users and providers of electronic mail for students.

B. Policy

1. Assignment of student e-mail addresses and accounts.

The University will issue a Bearcat Online e-mail account and disk storage to all registered students at no cost. Students may elect to forward e-mail from their UC e-mail address to a different e-mail address, such as one provided by an employer or obtained from an external Internet Service Provider (ISP) like AOL, RoadRunner, Hotmail, etc. This forwarding is at the student's own risk. The University has no control over the delivery of e-mail that has been forwarded outside of its domain to external providers. It is the student's responsibility to maintain up-to-date forwarding address information for electronic mail in the same way as for postal mail.

2. University uses of e-mail

The University of Cincinnati will use electronic mail to communicate official University information of many kinds to students. Examples include, but are not limited to, financial aid announcements, registration or enrollment information, course cancellations, etc. Students are responsible for reading their e-mail on a frequent and regular basis, since some official communications may be time-sensitive. The University suggests that students access their Bearcat Online e-mail accounts daily, or at a minimum, three times a week.

3. Educational uses of e-mail.

Faculty will determine the appropriate use of e-mail in their classes. In addition, the Blackboard Learning System widely in use at UC also employs e-mail as a component in its overall approach. If faculty intend to use e-mail to communicate course content, schedule changes, class discussion or other class related

material, they should clearly communicate this expectation in their course syllabus.

4. Security and Privacy

The University makes every effort to secure its computer systems, networked resources, and e-mail accounts, but cannot guarantee the infallibility of these systems to unauthorized intrusion, nor the authenticity of the sender of an electronic communication. For this reason e-mail is not appropriate for transmitting confidential or sensitive information of any kind (for example, E-mail should not be used to notify students of disciplinary or any other legal action.)

Students are responsible for keeping their e-mail passwords confidential, and should never share this information or access to University resources with others, including family members. Students who lose or forget their passwords may contact the UCit Help Desk for assistance.

The University does not routinely monitor or inspect individual accounts, files, or communications. There are situations, however, in which the University has a legitimate need to do so: to protect the integrity of University systems and resources; with appropriate authorization, when there is a reasonable suspicion that the user has violated either laws or University policies; or when required by law to do so. All monitoring and inspection shall be subject to proper authorization, notification and other legal requirements. The principles and policies set forth in the University's General Policy on the Use of Information Technology (<http://www.uc.edu/ucit/itgenpolicy.html>) apply to the use of electronic mail. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this and any other University policies (such as the Student Code of Conduct) that may apply and be enforced.

C. Procedures

This policy will be reviewed as needed by the **Office of the Vice President and Chief Information Officer for information Technology** and changes will be approved by the **Executive Technology Strategy Committee**. Students with questions or comments concerning this policy should contact the **UCit Helpdesk** at 556-3785.

This policy is in effect from the date of issue until further notice.

Policy Effective Date: January 1, 2004
Date