

Policy 500.7 – Student Electronic Communication

Date Adopted: 8/8/07

Issuing Office: Administration & Finance

Date Revised:

Approved By:

References: BOR Policy 1304.1, 1304.3, UMW Policy 500.1

I. POLICY

The University of Montana Western provides electronic communication services to students and utilizes them as a primary communication mechanism between Western and its students.

II. PURPOSE

The UMW email system is a primary communication mechanism between Western and its students. UMW has established generally accepted guidelines for use of this communication medium including university use of email, assignment of student email addresses, and expectations of email communication between faculty and students, staff and students, and administrators and students.

III. PROCEDURES

A. University Use of Email

All students currently actively enrolled at UMW are required to have an email address.

Email is a mechanism for official communication within the university. UMW expects that students will open and read such communications in a timely fashion. Official email communications are intended only to meet the academic and administrative needs of the campus community. As steward of the email system, the Technology Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing the usage of student email. The primary administrative offices (Dean of Students, Registrar, Director of Admissions, Director of Student Success, Director of Financial Aid, and Director of Business Services) will review special requests for access to the campus email system.

B. Assignment of Student Email Accounts

Official University email accounts are created automatically for all actively enrolled students. These accounts expire approximately two weeks after the end of each semester. The email address is stored on Banner as their campus address.

Students may change their email address to a preferred address by forwarding their campus email to an account that they check regularly. If the student should decide to use another email address, it is up to the student to **electronically** forward their campus account to an account that they are checking in a fashion noted in item C below. Students who wish to provide a permanent email address to Montana Western, which can be used when their campus address is not active, may do so by using Banner Student Self-Service (DAWGS).

C. Expectations About Student Use of Email

Students are expected to check their email no less than twice a week in order to stay current with University-related communications. Students have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical. “I didn’t check my email”, and non-delivery of email because the student’s mailbox is full, are not acceptable excuses for missing official University communications via email.

To ensure that necessary communications will be received, students should delete messages no longer needed and empty their electronic mailboxes in a timely manner.

D. Confidential Information

Since email is an insecure method of communication, UMW officials will never transmit nor solicit confidential information via email. Communications to students will always be to contact a campus office, or notify them that their bill is available online, etc. Students should never respond to requests for Social Security Number, credit card, or other personal information via email. Because the Banner Student Self-Service System (DAWGS) is encrypted using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL), **it can be used to provide additional information.** Only DAWGS, face-to-face, or written communications will be used to provide confidential information to or request confidential information from a student.

E. Privacy

Email users should not use email to communicate confidential or sensitive matters and should not assume that email is private and confidential. It is important that users be careful to send messages only to the intended recipient(s).

1. All use of email must be consistent with Board of Regents policy on use of electronic email (<http://mus.edu/borpol/bor1300/1303-3.htm>).
2. Confidentiality of student records is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). All use of email will be consistent with FERPA.
3. Email shall not be used for notification of any legal action.

F. Educational Users of Email

Montana Western faculty will determine how electronic forms of communication (e.g., campus email, WebCT email, WebCT chats, and message boards) will be used in their classes, and will specify their requirements in the course syllabus.

IV. AUTHORITY

BOR Policy 1304.1, 1304.3, UMW Policy 500.1

V. RESPONSIBILITY

Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance/Student Affairs, Director of ITS, Technology Steering Committee