SUBJECT:	Information Technology				
POLICY:	703.1 Student Email				
PROCEDURE:	703.1.1 Student Email Procedure				
EFFECTIVE:	July 2010	**REVISED:**	November 2021	**REVIEWED:**	

Introduction and Purpose

Great Falls College MSU uses electronic communication to provide students with reliable, timely, and consistent access to academic, administrative, financial aid, student services, safety, and information technology. Email is the official means of electronic communication with students and describes how student email accounts are assigned, used, supported, secured, and maintained.

Policy

This policy applies to all Great Falls College MSU students who are issued or use a College provided student email account, including students enrolled in credit courses and other students granted access to College technology resources for student purposes.

This policy also applies to faculty, staff, administrators, and authorized systems when they use student email for official College communication.

Assignment of Student Email Accounts

Great Falls College MSU issues student email accounts as part of the student account provisioning process when students become eligible for College technology access, typically after registration.

A NetID (unique identifier used to authenticate College technology accounts, including email) is required to access the student email account and associated College technology services.

Students may access their College-provided email account through Microsoft 365, the College's designated email platform, using their NetID@gfcmsu.edu account credentials.

Students who have trouble accessing their student email account should contact the Technology Assistance Center (the College's centralized IT support office; hereafter referred to as "TAC") for assistance.

Official Use of Student Email

The College-provided student email account is the official means of communication between Great Falls College MSU and students.

Official email communication includes, without limitation, messages from instructors, academic departments, advising, financial aid, student accounts, registration, student services, campus safety, and technology services.

Official College email communication is intended to meet the academic and administrative needs of the campus community.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for checking their official student email on a regular basis. Students should check their official student email at least twice per week and daily during the following periods:

Add/drop and registration windows
Finals week
Financial aid disbursement and billing deadlines
Any period the College designates as time-sensitive via prior notice
Students are responsible for reading and responding to official College communications sent to their official student email account or to a preferred email address they have designated for official communication.
Failure to check email, failure to maintain access, mailbox storage issues, forwarding problems, or returned messages are not acceptable reasons for missing official College communications.
Students are responsible for keeping their preferred email address and contact information current in MyMSU Great Falls College (~~T~~the College's student self-service portal) or any successor system designated by the College.
Students must protect their credentials, use multi-factor authentication when required, and immediately report suspected phishing, account compromise, or unauthorized email activity to the TAC.

Faculty, Staff, and College Responsibilities

Faculty and staff may use official student email for academic and administrative communication with students.
Faculty must describe course-specific expectations for electronic communication in the course syllabus when email, Canvas, or other electronic messaging tools are used for course communication.
College departments sending official student communications must use accurate student contact data and approved systems or processes.
Confidential or sensitive information should not be included directly in email unless permitted by law and policy and protected by appropriate safeguards. When practical, email should direct students to a secure, authenticated system where the confidential information can be accessed.
Student-wide distributions must be limited to official College business and must be approved in advance, in writing (email approval is sufficient), by the appropriate campus official or office before sending.
Approvers must retain a log of approved student-wide distributions.

Preferred Email Addresses and Forwarding

~~Email is the College's official means of sending electronic messages to students. This may include information from instructors, college administration, the Financial Aid office and the Business Office. Financial Aid award letters and official notifications from the Business Office are sent electronically.~~
Great Falls College MSU allows students to select ~~their~~or update a preferred email address for official correspondence and ~~communications.~~communications as permitted by College systems.
If a student elects to use a preferred personal email address or forwards messages from the College-provided account to another account, the student remains responsible for receiving, reading, and responding to official College communications.
The College is not responsible for delivery failures, filtering, forwarding errors, mailbox limits, account closures, or other problems involving personal or external email accounts.

Privacy, Monitoring, and Records

Students should not assume that email is private or confidential. Email users should use care when sending confidential or sensitive information and should verify intended recipients before sending or replying.
Within the limits of state and federal law, copies of messages created, sent, or received by students using MUS-provided email systems and stored on MUS-owned or managed equipment are the property of the Montana University System.
Authorized personnel may monitor email system usage for purposes such as planning and managing resources, evaluating system performance, troubleshooting, security, compliance, or investigating suspected misuse or abuse.
All use of student email must comply with FERPA and other applicable privacy laws, Board of Regents policies, Montana State University policies, and Great Falls College MSU policies.
Email content associated with disabled accounts will be retained for 30 calendar days post-disablement after which it will be permanently deleted, except where a litigation hold, records request, or legal exception applies.

Acceptable Use and Prohibited Use

Student email must be used in a manner consistent with Great Falls College MSU policies, Montana State University policies, Montana Board of Regents policies, student conduct requirements, and applicable law.
The following are examples of prohibited or inappropriate use: using student email for for-profit activities; circulating chain letters; sending large-scale unsolicited email without prior approval; impersonating another person, office, or organization; sending phishing, fraudulent, malicious, harassing, threatening, discriminatory, obscene, or unlawful messages; transmitting malware; violating copyright or licensing requirements; attempting unauthorized access to another person's email or account; and using email in a manner that disrupts College systems or services.
Misuse of student email will result in action proportional to severity, determined by the TAC and Student Conduct Officer.

Security and Suspicious Email

Great Falls College MSU uses security controls such as authentication, filtering, scanning, malware protection, phishing protection, and other safeguards to protect student email services and College systems.
Students, faculty, and staff must report suspected phishing, malicious email, unauthorized account access, or email security concerns to the TAC.
Students should not click suspicious links, open unexpected attachments, provide passwords by email, or approve authentication requests they did not initiate.

Account Lifecycle and Access Changes

Student email accounts are generally active while the individual remains eligible for College student technology access.

Access may be disabled, limited, reactivated, or terminated based on enrollment status, security risk, disciplinary status, fraud prevention needs, legal requirements, licensing requirements, or other approved College or Montana University System processes.
Under current local practice, student Office and email accounts may be disabled 90 days after the student is no longer enrolled or no longer eligible for student account access, unless an exception applies.
Requests related to former student access, account reactivation, records access, fraud holds, deceased students, expelled students, or litigation hold needs should be coordinated with the Technology Assistance Center and the appropriate College office before access is changed.

Definitions

Official student email account: The College-provided email account assigned to a student for official College communication and access to associated technology services.
Official communication: Academic, administrative, student success, financial, safety, security, technology, or other College business communication sent by the College or its authorized representatives.
Student-wide distribution: A message sent to a broad student audience or large student population rather than to one student or a limited group based on a specific academic or administrative purpose.
Confidential or sensitive information: Information protected by law, regulation, policy, contract, or College data handling requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, student education records protected by FERPA and other restricted or confidential data.

Reference

~~Students are responsible for ensuring their information is kept current.~~
~~Related Policies~~
Montana Board of Regents Policy ~~1304.3 Student~~1304.3, Electronic ~~Mail~~Mail, ~~Montana State University Student Email Policy~~Students
Montana Board of Regents Policy 1304.1, Student User Responsibilities
Montana Board of Regents Policy 1302, Privacy, Security, and Monitoring
Montana State University Student Email Policy