

Subject: Use of the Student Electronic Mail System for Large-Scale Notifications and Distribution of Information

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1. Purpose

This policy addresses the use of the Virginia Community College System’s (VCCS) Student Electronic Mail System for large-scale communications to Tidewater Community College (TCC) students. This policy also establishes expectations for e-mail communication between the college and its students for college business purposes.

TCC considers electronic mail (e-mail) a primary mechanism of official communication with students for academic and administrative purposes. The college reserves the right to send official communications to credit students by e-mail to their addresses in the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System. Credit students are expected to regularly review their accounts in the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System and to read e-mail sent to them by the college.

2. Policy

Authority to use or to authorize a subordinate to use the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System for mass e-mail to credit students rests with the President and the members of the Executive Staff. The use of mass e-mail is reserved solely for TCC business. To that end, mass e-mail may be used to communicate announcements of the following:

- college- or campus-sponsored events;
- implementation of official college policies or changes in policy;

- disruptions or changes in services (e.g., Blackboard availability);
- TCC Alert information and/or timely warning information under the Cleary Act;
- academic or tuition-payment deadlines; and
- other college business as determined by the President or member of the President's Executive Staff.

When sending mass emails, consideration should be given to the multiple college sources sending emails to students. All efforts should be made to limit mass emails to essential information.

The Vice President for Information Systems shall cause six general purpose student e-mail distribution lists to be maintained and updated periodically:

- all TCC students with active accounts in the VCCS Student E-Mail System (those enrolled in the previous term, the current term, and in the upcoming term);
- all TCC students enrolled in the current term;
- all TCC students enrolled in the current term with one or more classes at the Chesapeake Campus;
- all TCC students enrolled in the current term with one or more classes at the Norfolk Campus;
- all TCC students enrolled in the current term with one or more classes at the Portsmouth Campus; and
- all TCC students enrolled in the current term with one or more classes at the Virginia Beach Campus.

In addition to the six general purpose student e-mail distribution lists, ad hoc lists will be created and provided to the requesting Executive Staff member to meet a specific need. Such lists will have limited utility after their initial use since they are not periodically updated as the general purpose lists are.

The Vice President for Student Affairs shall monitor the use of the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System for large-scale notifications and distribution of information to TCC students. Occurrences of apparent inappropriate use shall be referred to the supervising Executive Staff member for appropriate action.

3. Responsibilities

The Vice President for Student Affairs, in consultation with the Vice President for Information Systems, shall be responsible for developing and maintaining procedures that are consistent with this policy and that comply with applicable policies and

procedures of the Virginia Community College System and that assure that mass e-mail communications sent to TCC students reflect well upon the image of the college.

4. Procedures

Any mass e-mail sent to TCC students will be sent from an official college administrative e-mail account (e.g., "TCC - Registrar"), not from an individually named account. For purposes of uniformity and to clearly identify to students that such e-mails come from TCC, each address created for the purpose of sending mass e-mail to students will begin with "TCC –." The address will include the name of a position, not an office or individual. Once created, such accounts will be authorized to send messages to the student mass e-mail distribution lists in the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System. The individual sending the mass e-mail and the office to which he or she is assigned will be clearly identified in the body of the e-mail.

Mass e-mails will be formatted with consideration for reducing the impact on the VCCS Student Electronic Mail System. To that end, attachments should not be used, plain text (vice HTML) formatting should be used, and the body of the message should be as short as feasible while communicating the essential information.

Senders of mass e-mail to TCC students are responsible for complying with the following requirements.

- Mass e-mail will be sent only from a TCC e-mail address and be sent from the Bcc line to prevent "reply all" instances.
- Any material sent via mass e-mail will be factually and grammatically correct—editing of the content is the responsibility of the sender and his/her supervisor(s).
- Any mass e-mail sent to TCC students will adhere to the protocols of effective written communications, regardless of its means of delivery.
- Any mass e-mail sent to TCC students will comply with college policy and procedures; VCCS policy and procedures; and federal, state, and local laws, including, but not limited to copyright, trademark, patent, and trade secret laws.
- Mass e-mail will be attributable to the college official from whom it originated, based on the administrative e-mail address from which it was sent as well as the sender's name in the body of the e-mail. To send a mass e-mail in a manner that creates the impression it was sent from another source or to otherwise interfere with the delivery, transmission, or receipt of an e-mail is a violation of this policy.
- A mass e-mail will be directed only to the recipient group(s) affected by its content. For example, a mass e-mail that is applicable to students attending a

specific campus will be sent only to that campus's student e-mail address list, not to the college-wide student e-mail address list.

Executive Staff members will monitor the mass e-mail communications sent to student distribution lists from their respective organizational areas for compliance with these requirements.

5. Definitions

Mass e-mail. A single electronic communication sent simultaneously to all TCC students or to a large sub-set thereof (e.g., those attending classes on a particular campus).

6. References

VCCS Policy: Section 6 Student Development Services, 6.0.10 Email Accounts

7. Review Periodicity and Responsibility

The Vice President for Student Affairs shall review this policy annually on the anniversary of its approval and, if necessary, recommend revisions.

8. Effective Date and Approval

This revision to the policy is effective upon its approval by the College President on July 7, 2016.

Policy Approved:

Procedure Developed:

Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.
President

Michael D. Summers, Ed.D.
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

9. Review and Revision History

The initial version of this policy was approved on September 4, 2007.

- The policy was re-formatted to be consistent with the college's format for policies and procedures in July 2009.
- Revision 1 updates the policy with the corrected title of the responsible Vice President. It also establishes clearer separation of purpose, policy, and procedures. Finally, it specifies more clearly how and when mass emails should be sent.

Approved July 7, 2016 by President Edna V. Baehre-Kolovani, Ph.D.