

# California University of Pennsylvania Electronic Mail Policy

## **Terms:**

- Electronic Mail System – A combination of computers, servers, and data storage devices that manages and allows electronic messages to be communicated from one computer to another. This equipment may be owned or leased by the university and is administered by California University of Pennsylvania's Computing Services Center.
- Electronic Mail (email) – Any message, form, attachment such as a Word document, or other communication that is sent, received and/or stored within an electronic mail system.

## **Purpose:**

- Electronic mail systems provide a means of enhancing productivity and maintaining effective communications to support the mission of the University.

## **Ownership:**

- All electronic mail sent, received or stored on the university electronic mail system is the property of California University of PA, not the property of employees.

## **Privacy:**

- Electronic mail sent, received or stored on the university electronic mail system is not private.
- Employees are advised that e-mail or computer files may be accessed by the system administrators or the employee's manager or supervisor at any time.

## **Unacceptable use activities:**

Activities identified in this section are not all inclusive. University electronic mail must never be used in any manner that violates university policies, state law or federal law.

1. E-mail messages should not be sent anonymously.
2. Unauthorized access to another employee's or user's email files is a breach of security and ethics and is prohibited. An e-mail user may not access the mail or account of another user unless granted permission to do so by the user. This restriction does not apply to system administrators and management staff in the user's chain of command who are authorized to access e-mail for legitimate business purposes.
3. In accordance with university policy, employees and other e-mail users must safeguard their passwords so that unauthorized users do not gain access to their e-mail.
4. Be courteous and remember that you are representing the university with each e-mail message. Be as clear and concise as possible. Be sure to clearly complete the subject field so that recipients can easily identify different messages.

5. Consider that each message sent, received, deleted or stored has the potential to be retrieved, seen and reviewed by audiences who were not the intended recipient of the message.
6. Individuals wishing to send e-mail bulletins to a large university audience must adhere to the Electronic Announcements Guidelines established March 13, 2003.
7. Employees should be prudent in retaining e-mail messages. Unnecessary messages should be deleted immediately and other messages reviewed for retention on a periodic basis, at a minimum at least once a month.
8. Do not send or store inappropriate messages. Examples include but are not limited to the following list:
  - a. Any form of a "chain" letter
  - b. Any sexually suggestive, pornographic, or obscene material or material that a reasonable individual may find personally offensive or inappropriate
  - c. Material which promotes political or personal causes or material for fundraising or charity activity not sponsored by the university
  - d. E-mail that contains information for "hacking" into any computer system or network
  - e. E-mail to transmit copyrighted or other unauthorized software or property
  - f. Business activities unrelated to University business or activities for personal gain
  - g. Material that is illegal or prohibited in other ways, including violations of local, state or federal law
  - h. Harassment or threats, including but not limited to, the distribution of defamatory, fraudulent, intimidating, abusive, or offensive messages

#### **Incidental Personal Use:**

California University of PA recognizes that incidental use of the electronic mail system may occur. The following restrictions apply:

1. Incidental personal use of the university electronic mail system is restricted to employees only and does not extend to family members or friends.
2. Incidental use must not result in any direct costs to California University of PA's email system.
3. Incidental use must not interfere with the normal performance of an employee's work duties.
4. No personal messages should be sent or received that may cause embarrassment to the State System of Higher Education and by extension California University of PA.
5. No personal message should be sent or received or stored that may expose the university's computer systems and network to viruses or other harmful programs.
6. Storage of personal messages, attachments, and files should be kept to a minimum. Employees are encouraged to remove personal messages as soon as possible to eliminate abuse of storage space.
7. Employees should remove themselves from any personal email lists that contain messages not in adherence with this policy.
8. All messages, whether personal or not, are owned by California University of PA and may be subject to review by university personnel as well as state and federal open records requests.

**Result of misuse:**

- Misuse of e-mail privileges can result in disciplinary action ranging from a warning to a dismissal from the University depending on the circumstances of the incident.
- When warranted, criminal prosecution may be pursued against persons who violate state or federal laws in the course of using e-mail.

**Email Retention:**

- Each university employee is allocated a generous portion of the email system to store their messages. It is the responsibility of the employee to monitor and manage their space.
- Most email messages are transitory in nature (Example: a “Thank You” message) and can be deleted as soon as they are read or their purpose is addressed.
- Messages that must be maintained for any length of time should be moved to an alternative device such as a CD and stored externally from the email system.

**Electronic Mail Backup and Recovery:**

- Computing Services Center performs a backup of the email system solely for the purpose of restoring the entire electronic mail system in the event of a disaster. Tapes are retained off campus for this purpose. Backup tapes do not allow for restoration of individual mailboxes or messages and cannot be used to conveniently recover deleted or lost messages.
- Backup tapes do not serve as records retention media. The tapes are on a regular cycle and are routinely being erased and overwritten.