

Email and Electronic Mass Communications Policy Implementation Guidelines

Purpose

This document provides a recommendation for a consistent and streamlined email communication process that works within the CSU-Pueblo email policy made effective on February 6th, 2015. Not only does the recommendation address the size, format and categories emails might fall into, it aims to improve email mass communication across campus.

Overview

This recommendation document outlines the implementation strategy with the intent to streamline information related to campus activities, events and announcements across campus via the use of email. It is the consensus of the Email Ad Hoc Committee that mass distributed emails on this campus fall into various categories. Based on an email's content, it should be routed to appropriate designees to be compiled into a single message that will then be sent out to campus at regularly scheduled intervals throughout the week with the intent of reducing the volume of mass emails sent out campus wide. This cultural shift in how campus email communications are distributed will be a phased-in approach shaped by user feedback and the availability of new technology resources. The process will be flexible to accommodate changes and adjustments to ensure ultimate success of this strategy.

Timeline

The implementation will initially undergo two phases to ensure that users are comfortable with the change and to develop a solution that adapts to the needs of users and the distribution of their important messages.

Phase One - Interim Phase

Phase One will begin in fall 2015. The first iteration of a form will allow users to submit notifications for distribution in a digest style email. Anticipating that there will be changes on the form, it will be considered a "beta form." This means there will be opportunity to gather input to improve this collection method before a final release in Phase Two. The form will provide a variety of routing options that will include a box to "add the event to calendar" option as the use of the online web calendar should continue to be used and will be encouraged for event and activity descriptions when applicable.

Email delegates will receive and collect the summary email details from the beta form. The message information will be added to their queue for email digest distribution and/or posted onto the online calendar.

Beta Form:

<http://www.csupueblo.edu/emaildigest>

Phase Two - Final Implementation

Phase Two will begin once the email digest submission form is finalized based on user input and analysis of how best the form is used. The final form will be available to submit information, only authenticate CSU-Pueblo users, and will contain options to send messages through a variety of media channels available at the university such as the Howl, digital signage, press releases, etc.

Eventually, the preferred area to post announcements and notifications will be the university website and online calendar. Mass emails and digest emails will still be sent out to ensure timeliness and urgency are addressed. The web redesign may eventually offer additional capabilities for sending out automated digests based on the online calendar and news feed.

Message Format

Mass emails sent across campus should adhere to certain format guidelines to minimize the impact to our network services. Large attachments and overall email size can negatively affect the network and other email users.

Size: 1MB (1000 KB) or below for all mass emailed message

Details: Messages should identify:

- o point(s) of contact
- o dates and times (if applicable)
- o location
- o a brief summary
- o links to attachments shared in a cloud hosted area (if applicable)
- o detailed information hosted using the university website and/or online calendar (if applicable)
- o all contacts should be added to the BCC field of the email

Distribution List Access

Access to distribution lists are available to designees as stated in the policy. Exceptions can be made when approval has been granted by a designee to become a delegate. Those with mass email capabilities still need to determine if a message is appropriate for campus wide distribution, or for inclusion in the summary/digest process. In some cases messages will be sent out in both a summary and as a separate email. The default action should be to submit the message for inclusion in the summary email.

Email Digests

Designees have the ability to send out approved/appropriate mass email messages on behalf of users that do not have access to distribution lists. This process is streamlined by providing users with a form that requests specific details about the message. Once the form is completed, the message and details are routed to an inbox for inclusion in a digest email. The digest email will include multiple messages in the body of a single email, and will be sent at regular intervals to the campus community.

Email Digests will be sent out regularly by selected designees on a rotating schedule. Template emails will be designed from a single source and available to use by each designee for a consistent presentation.

Specific Distribution Group Emails

Messages that need to reach a specific distribution group and not the entire campus community can be sent out as a separate email to the distribution group at the discretion of the designee and appointed delegates. The message itself should contain the same details as messages used in summary emails (i.e. contact, dates/times, and web links to additional information hosted in a cloud area) and should utilize the submission form to submit information when appropriate.

Submission Form

The submission form exists in a single location for users to submit information that needs to be mass distributed. The form itself is designed in such a way to capture all the crucial information needed for a mass message. The objective is to get campus email users accustomed to providing and receiving information in both an efficient and effective way.

The form itself will iteratively undergo adjustment based on user feedback and improvement throughout the implementation process. The early iterations of the form allow entry of basic textual information and web links in

required and optional fields. Future iterations of the form will adjust these fields and offer additional abilities as needed.

Categories

- Administrative
- Campus Announcement
- Deadline
- Event
- Grant
- Instruction Related
- Other
- Policy/Procedures
- Research

Distribution Groups

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Retirees
- Community Partners

Website / Online Calendar

Mass email messages should contain a brief summary with pertinent details as listed in **Message Format** above. It is highly suggested that detailed messages are posted on the campus website, online calendar, blog, wiki, or other publicly accessible web area to provide details that further explain the summary provided in the initial email message. It is suggested that the same details posted in the email message are provided on the referred online location. Whenever possible, an outside resource should provide a link-back to a webpage on the www.csupueblo.edu domain. Web editors of the CSU-Pueblo website undergo mandatory training to receive editing permissions. Training sessions will be available to refresh current editors on the process and to keep up to date on emerging technologies.

Sharing Documents in the Cloud

Sending an attachment to a mass distribution list creates a copy of the attachment for everyone that receives the email. While this may be necessary in certain cases, it is advised to use cloud shared links to documents instead. Sending out large attachments causes the bandwidth through the email servers to be impacted, mailboxes fill up, and a version of a document now lives on many computers.

While improvements are being done to increase bandwidth and storage, sending files to hundreds or thousands of users still affect network systems. Providing users a link to publicly shared documents makes it easy for interested users to download the document on any number of devices and the file is not sent to every inbox.

Training and Support

Training materials and sessions in cloud hosting, web editing, and graphic design will be delivered throughout and after the implementation to help maintain understanding on the how to operate these technology tools. The training will be delivered by the Instructional Technology and Web Development department in various formats including live sessions, online videos, and documentation. The department is available to answer questions and schedule one-on-one consultations.