



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY®

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Electronic Mail Policy (“Policy”) is to establish the College’s policy regarding the use of SUNY College of Optometry (“SUNY Optometry”) electronic mail (“email”) facilities. Authorized Users of College email facilities are responsible for using and maintaining their email account in accordance with the procedures and guidelines set forth in this Policy.

This Policy applies to all Authorized Users who are issued an official SUNY Optometry electronic mail account ending in *@sunyopt.edu*.

POLICY

Electronic mail is the official means for communicating and a resource intended to be used for College business, including instruction, instructional support, patient care, research, service, administration, and college-related correspondence in support of the College’s mission.

All Authorized Users are expected to read, and shall be presumed to have received and read, all email messages sent to their official SUNY Optometry email account.

College employees must exclusively use their College email for College business.

Official email to registered students should be sent only to the student’s College email addresses. Emails sent to new students (prior to receiving their College account) or non-active students may be sent to their personal email.

Policies and regulations that apply to other forms of communications and the use of Information Technology Resources (“IT Resources”) also apply to email.

Authorized Users must familiarize themselves with the terms of the College’s Acceptable Use Policy and comply with the terms thereof.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

In addition to anything else set forth in this Policy or in other College policies, the following specific actions and uses of SUNY Optometry email are prohibited:

- Use of email in violation of the SUNY Optometry Acceptable Use Policy;
- Use of email that interferes with College activities and functions or does not respect the image, brand and reputation of SUNY Optometry;
- Misrepresentation of names or affiliations in email messages;
- Alteration of source or destination address of email;

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- Use of email for commercial or private business purposes that have not been approved by the College;
- Use of email to send mass or chain messages in violation of the SUNY Optometry Mass Internal Email Policy;
- Use of email to circulate unauthorized solicitations and advertisements for non-College related purposes, including religious and political entities and/or causes, as described in The New York State Office of Information Technology Services policy;
- Use of email to harass or threaten other individuals in violation of SUNY or College policy;
- Sending unsolicited junk mail, or spam to individuals who did not specifically request such material;
- Forging or the unauthorized use of email header information;
- Forwarding or redirecting their campus email to their personal email account insofar as related to college-related business;
- Discriminating on the basis of race, shared ancestry, sex, sexual orientation or identity, gender, national origin, age, marital status, religion, disability or other classifications protected by law;
- Sending, viewing, or downloading offensive content of any kind, including pornographic material or messages of a sexist, obscene, harassing, threatening, or racist nature;
- Creating or forwarding chain letters, Ponzi, or other pyramid schemes or any type; and
- Gambling or any other activities that are illegal, violate any other College policy, or are contrary to the College's interest.

Authorized Users are responsible for the content of their email messages and should consider how their message may impact others.

Any email messages that do not meet the standards set forth in this Policy may be removed without notice.

PERSONAL USE

College email may be used for incidental personal purposes provided that such use does not:

- Directly or indirectly interfere with the College operation of computing facilities or email service;
- Interfere with the email user's employment or other obligations to the College;
- Violate this Policy, the College's Acceptable Use policy or any other applicable policy or law, including but not limited to use for personal gain, conflict of interest, harassment, defamation, copyright violation or illegal activities; AND
- There is no expectation of privacy with regards to email messages of a personal nature sent or received from College email accounts or from College computers.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Data files and email communications created and/or maintained on the College's email system are neither private nor confidential. Users have no right or expectation of privacy in any records stored on the College's email system.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the College respects the privacy of its email users. It does not routinely inspect, monitor, or disclose email. However, under the specific written instruction of the President, the Chief Information Officer or the Office of General Counsel, or their designee, the College may inspect, monitor, or disclose email contained in an Authorized User's email account, without the Authorized User's prior consent when:

- required by, or consistent with, applicable law, including but not limited to the New York State Freedom of Information Law, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (regarding access to health records), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (regarding access to student records), and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (regarding access to customer records); or any validly issued subpoena or court order.
- there is a reasonable suspicion that violations of law or College policy have occurred or may occur;
- there are time-dependent, critical operational needs of College business, if the College determines that the information sought is not more readily available by other means.

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In such instances, the College will, as a courtesy, try to inform email users prior to any inspection, monitoring, or disclosure of email records, except when such notification would be detrimental to an investigation of possible violation of law or College Policy.

Users are required to comply with College requests for access to and copies of email records when access or disclosure is required or allowed by applicable law or policy, regardless of whether such records reside on a computer housed or owned by the College. Failure to comply with such requests can lead to disciplinary or other legal action pursuant to applicable law or policy, including but not limited to appropriate College personnel policies or Codes of Conduct.

All data files and email communications created and/or maintained on College email are College records and are the property of the College.

Destruction of email records is governed by SUNY Optometry Email Retention Policy or SUNY Email Retention Guidance (<https://www.suny.edu/sunypp/docs/753.pdf>).

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

Emergency Notifications are mass emails sent regarding an unforeseen situation that threatens students, faculty, staff and campus visitors, or causes or has the potential to cause physical or environmental damage. College emergencies include, but are not limited to, the following: public health emergencies, severe weather emergencies, building and utility failures, acts of terrorism, fires, explosions, civil disturbances, chemical spills, radiological incidents, toxic gas releases, cybersecurity threats, and workplace violence. Emergency notifications are managed by the Emergency Response Resource Group, included in the *SUNY Optometry Emergency Response Plan*. It is important to note that there are other means of communication during a campus emergency that can be utilized in conjunction with mass email (texts, websites, etc.).

EMAIL ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

All students and employees are assigned an official SUNY Optometry email address, which is the official address to which the College sends email communications, as well as the address that is listed in the directory and other appropriate College publications.

Standard Email Format

The SUNY Optometry email address standard format is *jsmith@sunyopt.edu*, where *j* is the first initial of the first name, and *smith* is the last name. In the case of individuals with common names where this approach might duplicate an existing account name (e.g., John Smith & Jim Smith), IT will create unique user account names through the use of letter/number combinations (e.g., jsmith2).

Disabling Accounts

It may be occasionally necessary to make an account inaccessible. This could be necessary for reasons including the following:

- As a prelude to a further investigation (e.g., preventing an individual from tampering with their computer files before they can be examined)
- Technical problems: An account is in some manner disrupting the system, for example, because of a network intensive application.

Account Termination

The following is a list of the most typical kinds of separations and the impact on the individual's account privileges:

Population	Email Account Termination Policy
Students – Disciplinary Dismissal	Immediate termination of account privileges.
Students – Academic Inactive Status	Retain account privileges for 14 days after effective date as listed on their separation/exit form provided by the Office of Student Affairs.

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Students – Academic Inactive due to Graduation	Retain account privileges through the first of August following Commencement. Extension of account privileges must be requested in writing to Chief Information Officer by the student and/or advisor (or chair of student’s program) stating the “need” for the extension.
Students – Leave of Absence	No changes to account privileges.
Employees – Disciplinary Termination of Employment	Immediate termination of account privileges.
Employees – Resignation	Retain account privileges for 14 days after resignation date as listed on their separation/exit form provided by the Office of Human Resources; account privileges can be extended from resignation date by written request to the Chief Information Officer from the supervisor.
Employees – Retirement (non-Emeritus)	Retain account privileges for 14 days after retirement date as listed on their separation/exit form provided by the Office of Human Resources.
Employees – Retirement (Emeritus status)	Retain account privileges (with quota limit), use of lab computers, library privileges (including access to digital information resources) for life.
Employees – Leave of Absence	No changes to account privileges.

Any deviation from account termination schedule is under the discretion of the Offices of the President, Student Affairs and Human Resources, respectively.

Messages sent to terminated accounts may respond with an auto-reply message informing the sender to redirect their email message to a different email address, be forwarded to another Authorized User for follow-up, or bounced from the email system – resulting in the sender receiving an error message that the email account no longer exists.

ENFORCEMENT

Any Authorized User found to have violated this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, and/or the limitation or revocation of account privileges. A serious violation could result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension or termination from the College or investigation and/or prosecution by the appropriate local, state, or federal authorities.

RELATED LINKS

New York State Freedom of Information Law (Article 6 of NYS Public Officers Law):

<https://opengovernment.ny.gov/freedom-information-law>

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

<https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>

Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act

<https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/privacy-security/gramm-leach-bliley-act>

RELATED POLICIES

Acceptable Use Policy

Email Retention Policy

Mass Internal Email Policy

ELECTRONIC MAIL POLICY (cont.)

DATE	RECORD OF REVISION & CHANGES	PAGES	REVISED BY
7/1/2024	Original Document		RP/WLR