

12-07-00 Mass Communications Policy

PURPOSE

Digital communications are an institution's primary means of communicating information to the campus community. The objective of this policy is to establish and maintain standards for sending mass email and other mass communications to students, faculty, staff, and other constituencies utilizing institutional email, software, systems, media, and other resources.

POLICY/GUIDELINE

I. Introduction

- A. A "mass communication" is any communication sent on, over, or using college computing, email, social media, and/or other college-owned or operated communications systems to an entire college, to a large subset of a college, or to another large group of individuals, particularly those whose contact information is in possession of the college. Examples of such groups include, but are not limited to, all students, all faculty, all staff, all adjunct instructors, all employees on a specific campus, all alumni, and all prospective students. Mass communications include not only email and text messages, but also other forms of communication utilizing institutional resources.
1. "Mass communication" does not include a communication: to a unit within a college (e.g., a single department or business unit), to a list of subscribers who have elected to receive information, or to periodic announcements or other communications whose content has been reviewed and approved by the college regarding non-urgent matters of general interest to large segments of the college, such as periodic campus announcements.
 2. Although colleges must have processes in place to ensure that only college-approved information is disseminated through institutional websites, social media, advertising, and marketing platforms, information on those platforms does not fall within the definition of mass communications under this policy.
- B. Mass communications may be sent only by individuals authorized to communicate on behalf of the college and only for information that furthers the College's mission, applies to a majority of the recipients, and is either very important or time sensitive. Appropriate subjects for mass communication include, but are not limited to:
1. Safety and security notices and alerts;
 2. Information essential to College operations;

3. Notification of changes to policies and procedures; and
 4. Information considered sufficiently important by the president, chief academic officer, police chief, chief marketing/communications officer(s), human resources, information technology, or other senior administrators.
- C. Inappropriate uses for mass communication, include, but are not limited to:
1. Messages that are personal in nature, including those that express personal opinions;
 2. Messages sent by an individual that are not directly related to that individual's job duties;
 3. Messages that are commercial in nature, with the exception of those messages in support of college operations or business;
 4. Messages that are political in nature, including those in support of or against any candidate, party, or position or that otherwise violate state law regarding political activity (T.C.A. § 2-19-201 *et seq.*);
 5. Solicitations for contributions or participation in activities not sponsored by the college; and
 6. Messages that are discriminatory or in violation of any college policy, including, but not limited to information technology and human resources policies.
- D. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as contrary to the policy on [Freedom of Speech and Expression : 1.03.02.60 | policies.tbr.edu](#)

II. **Consent**

- A. Any individual using text messaging to send a mass communication is responsible for ensuring that consent has been obtained as required by the Telephone Consumer Protection Act.

III. **Approval Process**

- A. The President is responsible for determining a limited group of administrators who have authority to approve mass communications.
- B. The chief information officer is responsible for implementing processes that permit only authorized administrators to use mass email and other mass communication distribution lists, for disabling the "reply to all" function for mass email.

- C. During an emergency or time of crisis, the President or designee may temporarily suspend applicable requirements of this policy.

SOURCES

- T.C.A. §§ 49-8-203, 8-35-101 et seq., 8-35-403 et seq., 8-36-714
- TBR [9.01.06.00 Mass Communications \(formerly 1.08.05.10\) v.1](#)

Approved by NSCC Cabinet 3/24/25