



Guidelines for Use of Campus (Email) Announcements

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Issuance Date:	September 14, 2018
Effective Date:	September 15, 2018
Summary:	To provide recommendations to ensure the quality and consistency of campus-wide email announcements as complement to the UC Merced Guidelines on Use of Mass Communications (Email) Services .
Scope:	Applies to all campus-wide announcements sent via email in an official capacity, including communications from senior-level administrators to students, staff and faculty.

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I. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Federal Laws and Regulations

- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)

UC Policies

- [Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [UC Electronic Communications Policy](#)
- [UC Merced Policy on the Use of Email for Official Communications with Students](#)
- [Minimum Security Standards for Networked Devices](#)
- [BFB-IS-3 Electronic Information Security](#)

Guidelines/Resources

- [CAN-SPAM Act](#)
- [Guidelines on Use of Mass Communications \(Email\) Services](#)

II. GUIDELINES SUMMARY & SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to standardize the way campus-wide announcements authored by senior-level administrators are distributed via email and to provide recommendations to ensure the quality and consistency of those communications. It also serves to offer best practices to avoid message fatigue, reduce complaints and confusion, and maximize limited resources by eliminating redundancy.

These requirements apply to all campus-wide announcements sent via email in an official capacity. The guidelines are specific to communications sent to the general internal groups of students, staff and faculty.

These requirements do not apply to communications within schools or departments, or in communications to students regarding academic status or deadlines.

III. DEFINITIONS

Announcements: Email communications on topics of broad interest to internal audiences.

Mass email: Unsolicited email sent quickly in large quantities, and recognized as an efficient, cost-effective and environmentally friendly use of technology for facilitating communication within the UC Merced community. The communication can be sent to a list of email addresses or to a pre-defined audience.

Senior-level administrator: For the purpose of this guidelines document, a senior-level administrator is the Chancellor, Associate Chancellor, Chief Legal Counsel, Chief Information Officer, the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, the Vice Chancellors, or Deans.

IV. GUIDELINES

Campus-Wide Announcements

Managed by Internal Communications, UC Merced Announcements are primarily sent to faculty members, staff employees and students under the authority of campus senior-level administrators. Campus announcements are governed by the [Guidelines on Use of Mass Communications \(Email\) Services](#), but not all mass communications qualify as campus announcements.

Likewise, not all communications require campus-wide emails. Events, for instance, are best shared with the campus community through events.ucmerced.edu. Campus news can also be shared via social media, with channel subscribers on the [Connect App](#), through the [Newsroom site](#) or weekly campus email newsletters (Cat Chronicle, Monday Memo and ICYMI). For information on these distribution channels, email internalcomms@ucmerced.edu.

Guidelines and Criteria

Messages governed by this document must be related to official UC Merced business and may include:

- High-level leadership appointments;
- Information regarding campus-wide initiatives that affect faculty and/or staff members (examples: business systems and process, benefits open enrollment, sustainability, etc.);
- Calls for volunteers or participants for signature campus events (i.e. commencement, move-in weekend, homecoming, etc.) or high-level committee representation;
- Campus-wide meetings of interest (Town hall meetings, webcasts, community forums);
- Messages from the UC Office of the President intended for faculty and staff members; and
- Warnings or alerts regarding unavailability of campus services.

Emergency notifications and notices of issues related to campus and public safety supersede this document and will be handled as necessary by the appropriate department or agency.

V. PROCEDURES

Before requesting a campus-wide announcement through Internal Communications, first verify that your requested communication meets the criteria and procedural recommendation outlined in the [Guidelines on Use of Mass Communications \(Email Services\)](#). This document outlines non-emergency communications. Emergency communications will be handled as needed by the appropriate department or agency.

To appeal a rejected non-emergency communications request, contact the [Assistant Vice Chancellor of External Relations, Jim Chiavelli](#).

- A. Request email announcements through internalcomms@ucmerced.edu.
- a. Requests must be received at least two working days before the preferred distribution date.
 - b. Requests shall contain the following:
 - i. Authorization from the senior-level administrator (forwarded or direct email is sufficient);
 - ii. Draft message;
 - iii. Preferred publication date and time;
 - iv. Intended audience;
 - v. Named sender and from/reply to email address;
 - vi. Suggested subject line; and
 - vii. Links for more information

B. Review and Approval

- a. Announcement will be assigned within Internal Communications for review and editing.
- b. A draft of the message will be sent to the requestor and authorizing vice chancellor for content approval.
- c. Approved final content will be uploaded to email distribution service(s) and test message sent to requestor and authorizing senior leader.

C. Scheduling and Distribution

- a. Upon approval of the test message, email will be scheduled for distribution.
- b. Requested date may not be fulfilled for the following reasons:
 - i. Approved copy not received in a timely manner;
 - ii. Multiple announcements are requested for the same date; or
 - iii. Emergency announcement takes precedence.
- c. Once the announcement is scheduled, the request is considered fulfilled.

D. Internal Communications may:

- a. Proofread and edit submissions. Any substantial suggested changes will be returned for approval before publication.
- b. Time announcement distribution for maximum impact.
- c. Limit the number of message reminders or repeats.
- d. Change dates or times of scheduled announcements.
- e. Suspend publication of all announcements in the case of an emergency, when all channels will be utilized for emergency communications only.

VI. GUIDELINES REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action/Summary of Changes
March 16, 2021	Technical updates, including updates to contact information and addition of revision history.
September 14, 2018	Policy issued