UWL mass email strategy: Emergent communications

University Marketing & Communications

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

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Last revised 6-2024, reviewed and approved by cabinet 6-2024

NOTE: This document should be reviewed by the cabinet and approved by the chancellor annually.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to define a consistent methodology for decision-making about large-scale communications at UW-La Crosse and provide clear procedures for these communications.

2. Scope

This standard applies to all communications sent to all recipients within a broad or general segment of the campus community using a defined email distribution list managed by ITS. Campus-wide distribution lists include students@, personnel@ and miscellaneous@.

3. Definitions

- Mass email – any email that is not targeted or personalized, but is sent to all recipients in an audience, e.g., all personnel (faculty and staff) or all students or both. All messages sent on behalf of the institution should be considered public statements and could be obtained by media outlets.
- Active communication strategy – accommodates a blend of planned and emergent communications. Campus is able to plan ahead and communicate to meet objectives, but also be nimble and responsive.
    - Planned communications are known/expected messages developed as a part of a proactive campus communication strategy.
    - Emergent communications are unplanned communications that allow campus to respond to needs that emerge.
- Operational-area – Residence Life, Divisions/colleges, HR, Parking, etc.
- Public statements – messages where the content is oriented toward encouragement, gratitude or sympathy; expectation setting and addressing campus culture; or leadership announcements or changes.
- Procedural communications – messages that contain detailed information such as policy changes, step-by-step instructions, logistical details, etc.
- Distribution list – list of recipients automatically populated by ITS through identifiers stored as data in HRS or Wings.
- FYI-fwd – “For Your Information forward”

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4. Roles

- Campus leadership – Chancellor, Provost, cabinet members, Dean of Students
- Governance leaders – shared governance
- UComm – University Marketing & Communications, ucomm@uwlax.edu
- Operational-area communicators – e.g., Director of Residence Life, CHRO, CIO

5. Decisions

Decisions regarding mass email procedures must consider four primary questions:

- Timing:
  - Urgency: Can this message be included in an existing scheduled communication, such as the Campus Connection or another regular newsletter?
- Audience: What is the most appropriate audience?
  - Targeted, operational-area specific audience (not included with this SOP)
  - Mass audience
- Message type: What is the type of information being shared?
  - Procedural information
  - Public statement
  - Information of campus-wide interest or importance such as administrative searches (see HR specific meaning - https://kb.uwlax.edu/103675)
- Sender: Who is best positioned to manage replies and questions?
  - Operational-area communicator
  - UComm
  - Campus leadership

6. Procedures

6.1 A need is identified for an emergent communication with operational-area specific information and/or to their target audience
***Refer to list of expected/planned communications by operational area.*

6.1.1 Default option – Campus Connection: The message is submitted as an announcement in share.uwlax.edu to be included in an upcoming Campus Connection.

6.1.2 Operational newsletter option: The message is appropriate for an existing operational newsletter. Operational communicator will proceed at their own discretion. Cc: UComm if not already a recipient of the newsletter.

6.1.3 Mass email option: The content of the message is significantly distinct from existing communication methods, or it is urgent in nature. Operational area will proceed with the following actions:

6.1.3.1 Collaborate with UComm on the plan for a mass email. Include the nature of the content, intended recipients and intended time for sending. Work with UComm to review/edit content for voice, clarity and compliance with the UWL style guide.

6.1.3.2 At time of sending, bcc: UComm.

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6.1.3.3 If there is any likelihood that other faculty or staff may encounter questions or discussions about the content of the message and they were not recipients of the original message, UComm will send and FYI-fwd to the @personnel distribution list.

6.1.3.4 When appropriate, additional distribution lists may be included as recipients of campus messaging, e.g. community engagement stakeholders, emeriti/retirees, alumni, etc.

6.2 A need is identified for a mass-email for ONLY students@:

6.2.1 The message is drafted and reviewed by Dean of Students and UComm, in collaboration with identified stakeholders and campus leadership.

6.2.2 Message will be sent by Dean of Students to the students@ distribution list with a clear indication that it is going to all students.

6.2.3 At time of sending, bcc: UComm.

6.2.4 If there is any likelihood that other faculty or staff may encounter questions or discussions about the content of the message and they were not recipients of the original message, UComm will send an FYI-fwd to the personnel@ distribution list.

6.3 A need is identified for procedural or logistical communication that is not specific to a single operational area. The audience is personnel@, or personnel@ and students@:

6.3.1 The message is developed by the unit. UComm willing to assist in drafting new emails but need not be involved in the traditional set of emails listed below.

6.3.2 Intended time of sending is determined by the unit in consultation with UComm to avoid overlap with other planned communications.

6.3.3 Message is sent by UComm to personnel@ with a clear indication that it is going to all personnel (and or all personnel and students) Optional "on behalf of" in introduction or signature.

6.4 A need for a public statement is identified.

*6.4.1 **Refer to UWL communication SOP: public statements.*

7. Related resources

- UWL public statement strategy
- UWL event strategy
- Search & screen communication standards

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Expected/planned communications:

Follow these standards when sending mass emails:

- Collaborate with UComm on the plan for a mass email, including the nature of the content, intended recipients and intended time for sending. Work with UComm to review/edit content for voice, clarity and compliance with the UWL style guide.
- All mass emails should clearly indicate the recipients in the salutation.
    - Use descriptive salutations. "Dear colleagues (sent to all UWL faculty and staff)" would be appropriate, or "Dear UWL students, faculty and staff," *Recommended: students are listed first, then faculty, then staff*.
- Always bcc: (blind carbon copy) recipients of mass emails. When recipients are bcc'd, only the sender will receive email replies.
- Always include ucomm@uwlax.edu as a bcc: recipient on mass emails.

SENDER	TOPIC	ALL	@personnel	@students
UComm				
	Excellence award nominations		X	
	Administrative searches: Announcing committee, website, timeline, open forum invitations, feedback Announcing selected candidate (press release for cabinet level)		X	As needed
	Search & screen open forum notifications		X	
Chancellor				
	Fall address invitation, reminder		X	
	Free speech week message	X		
	Safe Oktoberfest	X		
	Spring address invitation, reminder		X	
	Safe spring break	X		
	Chancellor service award	X		
	Good luck finals, commencement	X		
	Monthly chancellor reflections	X		
Provost				
	Fall Academic Affairs personnel updates		X	
	Fall syllabus expectations		X	
	Teaching excellence awards		X	
	START announcement		X	
D&I				
	Patchwork magazine	X		
	Monthly UWL celebrates	X		
	Social Justice Week	X		
	Compliance notifications		X	
Advancement (Foundation)				
	One Day for UWL campaign	X		
	Scholarship application			X

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	Lantern/Light Reads		X	
Student Affairs/Dean of Students				
	Conduct expectations		FYI-fwd	X
	Cleary Act	X		
	Employees – Eagle Excellence in Leadership nomination request		X	
	Employees – RecSports payroll deduction		X	
	FERPA Rights Notification		FYI-fwd	X
Stryker Eagle				
	Eagle Fest invitations	X		
	Stryker mail			X
Admin & Finance				
	IT	X		
	HR newsletter		X	
	Police	X		
	Business Services operations		X	
	Parking	X		
CASSH				
Sent by UComm	Newsletter: Capstone	X		
	2 CASSH (including VPA) announcements per semester	X		
CBA				
Sent by UComm	Newsletter: Building Bridges	X		
	1 CBA announcement per semester	X		
CSH				
Sent by UComm	Newsletter: Science and Health News	X		
	1 CSH announcement per semester	X		
SOE				
Sent by UComm	Newsletter: Eagle Edge (Fall & Spring)	X		
	1 SOE announcement per semester	X		
MURPHY				
	Newsletter: Fine Print (Fall & Spring)		X	
	1 Murphy announcement per semester	X		
GEL				
	Summer Session	X		

Distribution list access

Account NetID	Personnel@	Students@

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