

## **E-mail as a Means of Disseminating Information to Employees Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

St. Cloud State e-mail is recognized as a means of disseminating information to all employees at St. Cloud State University (SCSU). The St. Cloud State address will be designated as each employee's e-mail contact in the Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS).

- SCSU requires each employee to activate a St. Cloud State e-mail account after it is assigned, and employees are expected to receive, read, and if appropriate, act upon communication distributed through St. Cloud State e-mail.
- Employees will not be held responsible for their inability to access messages due to problems with St. Cloud State e-mail whether the downtime is scheduled or unscheduled.
- Highly sensitive information should not be sent by e-mail. Notice required by agreements with employee groups will be delivered as required by the agreements.
- E-mail shall not be used as the only means of communication when an employee is not scheduled for work assignments (e.g., vacation, non-duty days, sabbatical, etc.) or if s/he has been given an off-campus assignment at a location where no e-mail is available. When communication is necessary with an employee who is not scheduled for a work assignment or has been given an off-campus assignment with no e-mail access, other means of communication will be used in addition to or in lieu of e-mail.
- E-mail may be used to convey information that is relevant to all University employees. To send a broadcast message, the intended e-mail message must be sent to one of the reviewing offices where it will be considered and, if appropriate, forwarded to all employees. This review is for compliance with system and institutional computer use policies and practices. Designated reviewing offices include: Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Administrative Affairs Office, University Communications, Public Safety and Student Life & Development.
- If there are concerns with the message, a reviewing office representative will contact and work with the sender to address the concerns. SCSU provides optional access to e-mail listservs and electronic bulletin boards for other announcements.
- When information needs to be communicated to a specific subgroup of employees, there are numerous ways to do this, such as listservs and distribution lists, among others.

Employees are required to use their St. Cloud State e-mail in accordance with all federal, and state laws and regulations, and Minnesota State, and SCSU policies. See Appendix A for a partial list of applicable policies. Legal orders to produce documents may be directed at documents in any form, including electronically stored data.

### **Applicability**

This policy applies to all faculty and staff of St. Cloud State University.

### **Appendix A - Statutes and Policies related to E-mail as a Means of Communication for St. Cloud State University Employees**

The following is a non-exhaustive list of statutes and policies provided as a reference. Please note these documents may be updated by the issuing authority as needed.

#### **Federal Statutes**

USA PATRIOT ACT

#### **State of Minnesota Statutes, Policies and Agreements**

Statewide Policy: Appropriate Use of Electronic Communication and Technology (Oct. 2002)

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13 (Government Data Practices)

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 15.17 (Official Records Act)

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 43A.38 (Code of Ethics for Employees in the Executive Branch)

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 138.17 (Government Records)

Council 5 Agreement, Appendix J (Prohibition of Sexual Harassment)

#### **MnSCU Policies and Agreements**

Board Policy 5.22 Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources  
Board Policy 1C.2 Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts  
IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement, Article 27, Section C (Ethical Standards: External Service and Other Activities)

## **University Policies**

Ad Hoc Request Form  
Campus E-mail Policy  
Faculty and Staff St. Cloud State Accounts: Deactivation and Removal Policy  
Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy  
Employees Code of Conduct

## **Appendix B - Guidelines for E-mail as a Means of Communication for SCSU Employees**

E-mail is intended to meet the academic and administrative needs of the campus community. These guidelines are intended to help define the appropriate usage of employee e-mail, in particular those messages sent from academic and administrative offices to employee St. Cloud State accounts.

### **Dealing with Protected and Sensitive Information**

Follow all federal, state, Minnesota State, and SCSU statutes and policies when sending protective and sensitive (see Appendix A).

### **Formatting**

- Care must be taken to ensure that the e-mail is addressed only to the intended recipients.
- Keep messages simple and direct.
- Develop a template that employees can easily recognize.
- The use of file attachments with e-mail communication is discouraged unless the sender has verified that the attachments are accessible to and readable by all intended recipients.
- Often the use of links to web pages is the preferred method to make other materials available to the intended audience.
- When sending an office or department e-mail, the message should be sent from a department account rather than a personal account.
- When a message is to be sent to many recipients, use an e-mail program that will not list all the recipients in the message.

### **Examples of appropriate uses include communicating:**

- Information relevant to campus security and the employee population.
- Important weather information affecting scheduled classes, events, and campus closure.
- Human Resources announcements.
- Commencement and convocation information.
- Official University surveys.
- Other messages as deemed appropriate by the designated SCSU Employee E-mail Reviewing Offices: Office of the President, Office of the Provost, Administrative Affairs Office, University Communications, Public Safety and Student Life & Development.