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The University of Georgia

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Office of Information Security

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Information Assurance

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Electronic Mail Policy

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<b>Organizational Function</b>	UGA Information Assurance		<b>Policy Number</b>	08-2004-A System Policy
<b>Policy Category</b>	System Policy		<b>Issue Date</b>	January 2005
			<b>Effective Date</b>	01-Jan-2005
<b>Subject</b>	Electronic Mail Policy ( <i>E-Mail</i> )			
			<b>Review On</b>	
<b>Office of Primary Responsibility</b>	UGA Office of Information Security		<b>Authorized By</b>	Office of the CISO
<b>Address</b>	University of Georgia Computer Services Annex (2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor) Athens, Georgia 30602-1911		<b>Responsible Official</b>	UGA Chief Information Security Officer
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			<b>Status</b>	Interim Policy

## 6    **SCOPE**

7    This Policy applies to:

- 8            • All electronic mail systems and services residing within, provided by, or owned by  
9            the University; and
- 10          • All users, holders, and uses of University email services; and
- 11          • All University email records in the possession of University employees or other  
12          email users of electronic mail services provided by the University.

13    This Policy applies only to electronic mail in its electronic form. The Policy does not  
14    apply to printed copies of electronic mail. Other University records management policies  
15    (see "Georgia Records Act." (Ga. L. 1972, p. 1267, 1.) ) however, do not distinguish  
16    among the media in which records are generated or stored. Electronic mail messages,  
17    therefore, in either their electronic or printed forms, are subject to those other policies,  
18    including provisions of those policies regarding retention and disclosure.

19    This Policy applies equally to transactional information (such as email headers,  
20    summaries, addresses, and addressees) associated with email records as it does to the  
21    contents of those records.

22    This Policy is effective immediately, with implementation guidelines to be effective DD-  
23    MM-YYYY.

## 24    **DEFINITIONS**

25    The terms "electronic mail" and "email" are used interchangeably throughout this Policy.

26    The following terms used in this Policy are defined in Appendix A. Knowledge of these  
27    definitions is important to an understanding of this Policy.

- 28        •    Computing Facility(ies)
- 29        •    Electronic Mail Systems or Services
- 30        •    University Email Systems or Services
- 31        •    Email Record or Email
- 32        •    University Record
- 33        •    University Email Record
- 34        •    Use of University or Other Email Services
- 35        •    Possession of Email
- 36        •    Holder of an Email Record or Email Holder
- 37        •    Faculty
- 38        •    Substantiated Reason

- 39       • Compelling Circumstances
- 40       • Emergency Circumstances
- 41       • Time-dependent, Critical, Operational Circumstances

42   **University Property** — As an enhancement to the academic experience while at the  
43   University of Georgia (UGA) and a productivity enhancement tool, the University of  
44   Georgia encourages the academic and business use of electronic mail (email) systems. All  
45   email messages generated on or handled by UGA electronic mail systems are considered  
46   to be the property of UGA, unless the material is copyrighted by a third-party.

47   **Authorized Usage**—The University of Georgia’s electronic mail systems generally must  
48   be used for academic, business, or university authorized activities only. Incidental  
49   personal use is permissible as long as it does not interfere with worker productivity,  
50   impose on the rights of other individuals, and does not preempt any business activity or  
51   system resources. University authorized or sanctioned activities, i.e. charitable fund  
52   raising campaigns, political advocacy efforts, religious efforts, private business activities  
53   will be allowed after written authorization by the Senior Vice President for Academic  
54   Affairs and Provost, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration or the Senior  
55   Vice President for External Affairs. News feeds, push data updates, and other  
56   mechanisms for receiving information over the Internet must be restricted to material  
57   that is clearly related to both UGA academic and/or business and the duties of the  
58   receiving users. Users are reminded that the use of university information system  
59   resources must never create the appearance or the reality of inappropriate use.

60   **User Separation**—These facilities must be implemented where electronic mail systems  
61   provide the ability to separate the activities of different users. For example, electronic

mail systems must employ unique personal user IDs and associated passwords. UGA has established user separation and users must not employ the user ID or the identifier of any other user. If a username and password must be shared by authorized I.T. staff in the course of carrying out duties and responsibilities, account or access logging must be “turned on” and the UGA Password Policy should be reviewed.

If a password is compromised in the course of work performed by I.T. staff, the user must be advised to immediately change the password. Departmental user names, “helpdesk” user names and system administrator accounts are permissible and should be monitored and logged for accountability.

**User Identity**— Users may not, under any circumstances, use “spoofing” techniques or other means to disguise/masquerade their identities in sending email. Misrepresenting, masquerading, obscuring, suppressing, or replacing a user’s identity on an electronic mail system for malicious or misleading purposes is forbidden. The user name, electronic mail address, organizational affiliation, and related information included with electronic messages or postings must reflect the actual originator of the messages or postings.

Electronic mail signatures or email addendums indicating job title, University affiliation, address, and other particulars are strongly recommended for all electronic mail messages internal or external. .

**Respecting Intellectual Property Rights**—Users employing the UGA electronic mail systems may repost or reproduce material only after obtaining permission from the source; quote material from other sources only if these other sources are properly identified; and reveal internal UGA information only if the information has been officially

approved for public release by the appropriate University administrative office. Official approval should be in written form and available upon request.

**Respecting Privacy Rights—** By making use of the UGA systems, users consent to permit all information they store on University of Georgia information systems to be divulged to law enforcement or the Administration at the discretion of UGA executive management. The University of Georgia is committed to respecting the rights of its users, including their reasonable expectation of privacy. However, it may be necessary to occasionally intercept or disclose, or assist in intercepting or disclosing, electronic mail. Except as otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the President of the University, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, or the Senior Vice for External Affairs or their designee, users must not intercept or disclose, or assist in intercepting or disclosing, electronic mail. All Open Records requests will be processed by the University Office of Legal Affairs and the University Open records designee.

**No Guaranteed Message Privacy—**The University of Georgia cannot guarantee that electronic mail will be private. Users must be aware that electronic mail can, depending on the technology, be forwarded, intercepted, printed, and stored by others. Electronic mail that is not encrypted can be viewed by people other than the intended recipient, while in transit or on mail servers. Because messages can be stored in backups, electronic mail actually may be retrievable when a traditional paper letter would have been discarded or destroyed.

**Contents of Messages—**Users must not use profanity, obscenities, or derogatory remarks in electronic mail messages. Users must concentrate on business matters in University of Georgia electronic mail. As a matter of standard business practice, all

108 University of Georgia electronic mail must be consistent with conventional standards of  
109 ethical and polite conduct. Please see the UGA Policies on Use of Computers for more  
110 information: <http://www.uga.edu/compsec/use.html> .

111 **Email Systems Monitoring**—Consistent with generally-accepted business practice, the  
112 University of Georgia collects statistical data about its electronic mail systems. UGA  
113 personnel monitor the use of electronic mail to ensure the ongoing availability, reliability,  
114 and security of these systems. The University of Georgia employs computer systems that  
115 analyze these types of statistical information to detect unauthorized usage, toll fraud,  
116 denial of service attacks, capacity planning and network problems.

117 **Incidental Disclosure**—Personnel must not review the content of an individual user's  
118 mail out of personal curiosity or at the request of individuals who have not been granted  
119 authority.

120 Electronic mail users must exercise caution when forwarding messages, either internally  
121 or externally. The University of Georgia's sensitive information such as: social security  
122 numbers, addresses, age, gender etc. must not be forwarded to any party outside of The  
123 University of Georgia without the prior approval of an appropriate authority. Blanket  
124 forwarding of messages is discouraged. Messages sent by outside parties must not be  
125 forwarded to other third parties unless the sender clearly intended this and such  
126 forwarding is necessary to accomplish a customary business objective. In all other cases,  
127 forwarding of messages sent by outsiders to other third parties can be done only if the  
128 sender expressly agrees to this forwarding.

129 **Harassing or Offensive Materials**—Sexual, ethnic, and/or racial harassment, including  
130 unwanted/unsolicited bulk electronic mail, is strictly prohibited. Users who receive

131 offensive unsolicited material from outside sources should forward the entire (with email  
132 headers) email to [abuse@uga.edu](mailto:abuse@uga.edu) Please see UGA Harassment Policy:  
133 <http://www.uga.edu/legal/NDAH.htm> .

134 **Handling Security Alerts**—Users must promptly report all security alerts, warnings,  
135 reported vulnerabilities, suspected security vulnerabilities or problems that they notice to  
136 their respected I.T. support staff or the University Office of Information Security  
137 [abuse@uga.edu](mailto:abuse@uga.edu) .

138 **Unsolicited Bulk Email (UBE) or SPAM**— The sending of unofficial or unsolicited bulk  
139 email is prohibited. If UGA users are bothered by an excessive amount of unwanted  
140 messages from a particular organization or electronic mail address, report UBE to the  
141 abuse email address [abuse@uga.edu](mailto:abuse@uga.edu) or the system administrator in charge of the  
142 electronic mail system. Users must not send large numbers of messages in order to  
143 overload a server or a user's electronic mailbox.

#### 144 **Enforcement**

145 Any student, faculty or staff found to have violated this policy may be subject to  
146 disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

147 **Use At Your Own Risk**—Users access the Internet with the University of Georgia's  
148 facilities at their own risk. University of Georgia is not responsible for material viewed,  
149 downloaded, or received by users through the Internet. Electronic mail systems may  
150 deliver unsolicited messages that contain offensive content.

151 Approved By: [insert approving executive's name]

152    Approved Date: DD/MM/YY

153    Effective Date: DD/MM/YY

154    Version Number: 10.0

155    Document Reference Number: XXXX-XXXX

156 APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

157 **Computing Facility(ies):** Computing resources, services, and network systems such as  
158 computers and computer time, data processing or storage functions, computer systems  
159 and services, servers, networks, input/output and connecting devices, and related  
160 computer records, programs, software, and documentation.

161 **Electronic Mail Systems or Services:** Any messaging system that depends on  
162 computing facilities to create, send, forward, reply to, transmit, store, hold, copy,  
163 download, display, view, read, or print computer records for purposes of asynchronous  
164 communication across computer network systems between or among individuals or  
165 groups, that is either explicitly denoted as a system for electronic mail or is implicitly  
166 used for such purposes, including services such as electronic bulletin boards, listservers,  
167 and newsgroups.

168 **University Email Systems or Services:** Electronic mail systems or services owned or  
169 operated by the University or any of its sub-units.

170 **Email Record or Email:** Any or several electronic computer records or messages  
171 created, sent, forwarded, replied to, transmitted, stored, held, copied, downloaded,  
172 displayed, viewed, or read by one or several email systems or services. This definition of  
173 email records applies equally to the contents of such records and to transactional  
174 information associated with such records, such as headers, summaries, addresses, and

175 addressees. This Policy applies only to electronic mail in its electronic form. The Policy  
176 does not apply to printed copies of electronic mail.

177 **University Record:** A "public record" as defined in the Georgia Open Records Act.  
178 "Public records" include any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the  
179 public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained (by the University) regardless of  
180 physical form or characteristics. With certain defined exceptions, such University records  
181 are subject to disclosure under the Georgia Open Records Act.

182 *Records held by students, including email, are not University records unless such*  
183 *records are pursuant to an employment or agent relationship the student has or*  
184 *has had with the University. This exemption does not, however, exclude student*  
185 *email from other aspects of this Policy, regardless of whether such email is a*  
186 *University record.*

187 **University Email Record:** A University Record in the form of an email record  
188 regardless of whether any of the computing facilities utilized to create, send, forward,  
189 reply to, transmit, store, hold, copy, download, display, view, read, or print the email  
190 record are owned by the University. This implies that the location of the record, or the  
191 location of its creation or use, does not change its nature as: (i) a University email record  
192 for purposes of this or other University policy, and (ii) having potential for disclosure  
193 under the Georgia Open Records Act.

194 *Until determined otherwise or unless it is clear from the context, any email record*  
195 *residing on university-owned computing facilities may be deemed to be a*

196        *University email record for purposes of this Policy. This includes, for example,*  
197        *personal email. Consistent, however, with the principles of least perusal and*  
198        *least action necessary and of legal compliance, the University must make a good*  
199        *faith a priori effort to distinguish University email records from personal and*  
200        *other email where relevant to disclosures under the Georgia Open Records Act*  
201        *and other laws, or for other applicable purposes of this Policy.*

202    **Use of University or Other Email Services:** To create, send, forward, reply to, transmit,  
203    store, hold, copy, download, display, view, read, or print email (with the aid of University  
204    email services). A (University) Email User is an individual who makes use of  
205    (University) email services.

206        *Receipt of email prior to actual viewing is excluded from this definition of "use"*  
207        *to the extent that the recipient does not have advance knowledge of the contents of*  
208        *the email record.*

209    **Possession of Email:** An individual is in "possession" of an email record, whether the  
210    original record or a copy or modification of the original record, when that individual has  
211    effective control over the location of its storage. Thus, an email record that resides on a  
212    computer server awaiting download to an addressee is deemed, for purposes of this  
213    Policy, to be in the possession of that addressee. Systems administrators and other  
214    operators of University email services are excluded from this definition of possession  
215    with regard to email not specifically created by or addressed to them.

216           *Email users are not responsible for email in their possession when they have no*  
217           *knowledge of its existence or contents.*

218   **Holder of an Email Record or Email Holder:** An email user who is in possession of a  
219   particular email record, regardless of whether that email user is the original creator or a  
220   recipient of the content of the record.

221   **Faculty:** A member of the faculty as defined by *Academic Personnel Policy*.

222   **Substantiated Reason:** Reliable evidence indicating that violation of law or of a  
223   university policy probably has occurred, as distinguished from rumor, gossip, or other  
224   unreliable evidence.

225   **Compelling Circumstances:** Circumstances where failure to act may result in significant  
226   bodily harm, significant property loss or damage, loss of significant evidence of one or  
227   more violations of law or of University policies, or significant liability to the University  
228   or to members of the University community.

229   **Emergency Circumstances:** Circumstances where time is of the essence and where  
230   there is a high probability that delaying action would almost certainly result in  
231   compelling circumstances.

232   **Time-dependent and Critical Operational Circumstances:** Circumstances where  
233   failure to act could seriously hamper the ability of the University to function  
234   administratively or to meet its teaching obligations, but excluding circumstances

235   pertaining to personal or professional activities, or to faculty research or matters of shared  
236   governance.