

Committee Purpose

The Data Stewards were informed on December 18, 2001 of a significant data quality problem with the email addresses in the University directory. There is currently no policy requiring all students, faculty and staff to have an email ID. Consequently, while most faculty have an email ID, many students and staff do not. Furthermore, there is no automatic "registration" of the individual's email address in the official University directory, and it is only available if the individual voluntarily registers the email ID. Both of these facts contribute to poor quality of the email addresses in the directory and result in incomplete distribution of electronic communication.

The University is constantly attempting to reduce costs, improve efficiency and improve service to our students and employees. Electronic communication is timelier and less expensive than paper and oral communication. Furthermore, electronic communication supports President Todd's philosophy of openness and transparency. Consequently, it is not surprising there has been an increase in requests for custom lists of email addresses and electronic distribution of official University communications. Given the policy issues noted above, and this increase in demand for electronic communication, the poor data quality of email addresses in the University directory will become increasingly problematic.

In early 2002 the Data Stewards requested Jayna Cheesman, Director of Information Resources Management, convene a committee(s) to evaluate the feasibility of requiring an email ID for all students, faculty and staff. These committees were asked to review the costs and benefits of such a requirement and to develop recommendations for the implementation of such a requirement if it was deemed desirable. The recommendations concerning the student email ID were presented to the Data Stewards at the March 26, 2002 meeting. It was determined a separate committee should be convened to address the issue of requiring the email ID for all faculty and staff, as there are different policy and implementation issues for these groups. This committee subsequently met over the last several months, and developed the following recommendations.

Core Recommendations

To achieve complete and timely official communication, improve efficiency, reduce costs and support President Todd's philosophy of openness and transparency, this committee submits the following core recommendations:

- I. Email is the primary mechanism for official communication within the University, except for strictly personal communications, and is only supplemented by other forms of official communications as required.
- II. A UK email address should automatically be assigned to all employees when they are hired. The address should be a UK approved "uky.edu" email address.
- III. All employee email IDs should be in the UK email directory; this should not be a voluntary process. The employees are responsible for "forwarding" their email to a different email address if they wish.
- IV. As with official paper communications, employees will be responsible for promptly reading any email they receive concerning the policy and procedures of the University. Employee's use of email will be consistent with AR II-1.7-2, "Policy Governing Access to and Use of University of Kentucky Computing Resources".

Implementation Recommendations

To implement our core recommendations expeditiously, to capture the benefits, and to avoid negative consequences, we offer the following recommendations:

- A. The policy requiring an email ID should include all current and new employees: faculty and staff; regular and temporary; full-time, part-time and half-time; STEPS employees, post-docs, house-staff and if financially viable, all retirees.
- B. A better means of ensuring departments complete the Separation Sheets for terminated employees needs to be developed. (Failure to do so could result in significantly higher costs.)
- C. A process should be implemented to delete terminated employees from the UK email directory on at least a monthly basis, but weekly is preferable.
- D. UK needs to do a massive Public Relations and education campaign to ensure all employees are informed of the process concerning the creation and maintenance of their email IDs and how official communication will take place.
- E. Communication concerning the email ID requirement should include instructions for hourly employees to not read work-related email during their "off-hours".

- F. UK cannot solely rely on electronic information delivery at this time, but expects the dependence on such electronic communication to increase. The University should develop a strategy to provide universal electronic access in the near future. In the interim, other means of communicating with employees who do not have access to a computer or are unable to read should be developed.
- G. Supervisors should be responsible for determining what the official means of communicating with their employees should be. Use of individual or group meetings and bulletin board postings are possible means to supplement electronic communication as needed.
- H. Higher-level administrators need to define what responsibility departments have to supply access to computers for employees, and when this access should be available.
- I. A method for training employees to read their email must be established.
- J. Training and/or documentation must be developed to instruct employees how to forward their email to another address.
- K. To protect the UK email directory and control the mass email mailings, UK should appoint one office to process requests for mass email mailings.
- L. To improve institutional efficiency and enhance services to all faculty and staff, the University should take the necessary steps to create self-service applications where feasible.
- M. The institution should aggressively pursue the development of a project plan that details the communication, education and technical plan. This project plan should be developed in an attempt to fully implement the above recommendations by January 2003. A possible pilot project for this implementation would be a mass email mailing sent in January 2003 to all employees concerning Open Enrollment. This mailing would request all employees to send the Benefits Office an electronic confirmation, if they wish to receive an electronic copy of their benefits information for Open Enrollment. Those who do not request an electronic copy will subsequently receive the paper copy of the benefits information.