1. Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures that must be followed by those individuals or groups wishing to:

a. send email to a significant fraction of the University or campus communities, or
b. request participation in a survey by email.

For the purposes of this policy, a “mass email” is defined to be any unsolicited email, or group of emails, that taken together are sent to 10% or more of the faculty, students, or staff of any individual campus to whose members the mail is being sent.

Further guidance on the appropriate use of mass emails and on technical options for reaching large audiences electronically is available in a Best Practices document, which accompanies this policy.

2. Scope

Except as noted below, this policy applies to all mass emails and to all survey solicitations, regardless of the number of recipients, sent by email.

The policy does not apply to electronic communications within a school, center, or academic unit, i.e.

- emails sent by schools, centers, or academic departments to their students, faculty, or staff
- survey solicitations directed to a class, for educational purposes, with the supervising instructor's approval.

It also does not apply to email from administrative units concerning University-related health, safety, or employment matters.

Requests for exceptions to this Policy shall be made as described in the Procedures section. It is anticipated that exceptions will be made only in extraordinary circumstances.

3. Policy Statement

Mass Emails

Mass emails must directly relate to and facilitate the teaching and learning, research, or service missions of the campus or University and must be relevant to the mailing list members. All mass emails, except as noted above, must be approved by the appropriate campus or University officers, as described in the Procedures section of this document.

Mass emails that do not follow the guidelines detailed in the Best Practices document accompanying this
Policy are unlikely to be approved.

**Personal and Commercial Emails**

*Mass emails* that are personal, political, or commercial in nature are prohibited unless they are in support of university business *and* have been approved following the procedures outline below.

**Surveys**

Any survey solicitation sent by email, regardless of the number of recipients, (except for those cases noted in the *Scope* section of this document) must be approved as stated in the *Procedures* section below.

**Content and Format of Mass Emails**

*Mass emails* should be concise and to the point and should make minimal use of embedded graphics and attachments. These emails must:

- clearly identify the sending entity in the *From:* field of the email
- clearly specify email address in the *Reply To:* field to which replies can be sent – preferably an organizational, rather than a personal, email address
- contain a meaningful description in the *Subject:* field of the email
- mask the email addresses of the recipients of the mailing.

For more information on appropriate formatting of email communications, see the *Best Practices* document.

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**4. Procedures**

Requests for approval of *mass emails, survey solicitations,* or policy exceptions must be directed to the following officers depending on the largest intended audience of the electronic communication.

- the University community: the President
- a campus community: the campus Chancellor/Provost
- the University faculty: the President or his/her designee
- the University student body: the President or his/her designee
- the University staff: the President or his/her designee
- the faculty within a campus: the campus Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
- the students within a campus: the campus Dean of Students
- the staff within a campus: the campus Director of Human Resources
- survey solicitations: the Director of the Center for Survey Research, and the relevant *campus or University officers,* above
- policy exceptions: the President or his/her designee (University-related) the Chancellor/Provost or his/her designee (campus-related).
5. Definitions

**Mass Email:** Any unsolicited email, or group of emails, sent to 10% or more of the faculty, students, or staff of any IU campus to whose members the mail is being sent.

**Communities:** Membership in the *faculty*, *student*, and *staff* communities is determined by the contents of lists maintained by the university such as the “Global Address List”.

**Survey Solicitations:** Any email requesting participation in a survey, aside for those exceptions noted in the **Scope** section of this document.

**Best Practices:** A document accompanying this policy that outlines appropriate mass email usage and gives technical advice on possibilities for electronic communication.

**Appropriate campus or University officers:** The officers listed in the *Procedures* section who have the authority to review and approve mass emails for their respective constituencies

6. Sanctions

Violations of university policies, including the failure to avoid a prohibited activity or obtain required approvals, will be dealt with in accordance with applicable university policies and procedures. Depending on the individual and circumstances involved this could include the offices of Human Resources, Dean of Faculties (or campus equivalent), Dean of Students (or campus equivalent), Office of the General Counsel, and/or appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Failure to comply with university policies may result in sanctions relating to the individual's employment (up to and including immediate termination of employment in accordance with applicable university policy); the individual's studies within the university (such as student discipline in accordance with applicable university policy); civil or criminal liability; or any combination of these.

7. Additional Details

1. Contacts
2. Web Addresses
3. Related Information
4. History