



Internal Mass Email Requirements, Guidelines, and Best Practices

University Marketing & Communications strives to use campus communications resources effectively and efficiently. Email is an efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally friendly way to communicate with large groups of the Baylor Family. However, non-strategic use of mass email can reduce employee productivity and hinder the University's ability to deliver critical messages.

Recognizing these expectations and concerns, the University has created these requirements, guidelines and best practices to ensure email remains an effective form of communication. This document includes the following information:

- Definition
- Appropriate use of mass email
- Required approval and authorization
- Required content
- Best practices guidelines
- Additional internal communication channels

Definition

Email is Baylor University's official means of communicating information to faculty, staff and students as stated in the [Baylor Email Policy](#). Mass email is any email message sent to the entire campus or large subset (e.g., all students, all faculty, all staff). All mass emails must follow Baylor's mass email guidelines and procedures and be consistent with any applicable federal and state laws, and [brand guidelines](#). These requirements do not apply to units when sending messages within their own unit, school, or college or to emails in which all subscribers signed up voluntarily to receive information.

Appropriate Use of Internal Mass Email

Mass email is appropriate for information that pertains to the majority of the recipients, is critical and/or time-sensitive, and meets one or more of the following standards:

- Alerts the campus community to situations about health and safety risk, as defined in the [Baylor University Crisis and Emergency Notification](#) procedures;
- Provides information essential to the operation or execution of University business;
- Notifies the campus community about changes in governance, policy, and practice;
- Communicates important information from the President, Provost, or other University senior leadership as described in the authorization and approvals section below.

Inappropriate use of internal mass email includes, but is not limited to:

- Messages that are not in line with the University's mission of teaching, research, and service;
- Messages that are commercial in nature with the exception of those messages that are in support of University business;
- Political activities that advocate for or against a ballot measure or candidate;
- Messages for job postings or research recruitment;
- Marketing or advertising of programs, events, classes, products, or events offered or sponsored by the University;
- Solicitations for contributions, charities, or participation in personal activities not related to university purposes or not sponsored by the University;
- Solicitations for non-University businesses operated by University faculty or staff; and
- Messages that are discriminatory or infringe on privacy.

Announcements that do not meet the outlined standards, or are inappropriate for mass email should use other communication channels as listed below.

Required Approval and Authorization

1. Official University Announcements

Requests to send out mass email to the following University populations must be approved by the appropriate owning office, when not otherwise authorized. The Division of Marketing & Communications has the ultimate authority of sending emails based timing and content. The appropriate owning offices are listed below for students, faculty and staff.

Students:

Division of Student Life
Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Office of the Registrar
Student Services and Enrollment Management
University Compliance and Risk Services
Marketing & Communications
Information Technology Services

Faculty:

Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Office of the Registrar
Human Resources
University Compliance and Risk Services

Marketing & Communications
Information Technology Services

Staff:

Office of the President
Office of the Provost
Office of the Registrar
Human Resources
University Compliance and Risk Services
Marketing & Communications
Information Technology Services

2. Emergency

In an emergency, approval may be bypassed, as is detailed in the Baylor University's Emergency Operations Plan.

3. Local Units

Schools, colleges, departments, units, and administrative offices are authorized to send messages to their students, faculty, or staff, in accordance with department or school guidelines and procedures. Units are encouraged to use best practices detailed here. Contact your supervisor or unit-specific communication staff member for direction and/or approval.

Required Content

Messages sent to internal (@baylor.edu) email addresses must include all of the following:

- Approved Baylor logo at the top or prominently placed with an HTML message. (See [brand guidelines](#))
- "Baylor University" clearly identified in plain text messages and in the text-only portion that accompanies an HTML message.
- Name of the sending unit (preferred) or the sending individual in the "from" field.
- Name of the sending unit and the audience the message was sent to in the footer (e.g., "This message was sent by the Office of the President to all Baylor University faculty and staff.").

Best Practices

To promote operational efficiency and network security, the following guidelines govern internal mass email:

- A mass email message should be brief, self-explanatory, clear, and concise – ideally under 400 words. If there is a need to convey more information, the sender should link to a webpage or seek other communication channels.
- Include a succinct subject line that conveys the emails purpose.
- Provide a link or contact information about where people may ask questions or get more information.
- Avoid sending frequent or repeated messages. Follow-up messages or reminders should seek other communication channels, with the exception of emergency communications.
- Collaborate with others at the University to avoid redundancy and reduce the number of messages sent.
- Attachments are not allowed in mass email. A link to a webpage is recommended.
- Avoid acronyms and jargon. Do not use acronyms on first reference in the body of a message. For example, write out “Engineering and Computer Science (ECS)” on first reference, then use ECS on future references.
- Check spelling and grammar, and copy edit message to align with the Baylor brand guidelines and AP Style.
- Senders should avoid sending emails at the end of the day or on Friday afternoons to prevent their message from getting “lost” during non-work hours.
- Unified JPEGs should not be used. All images should contain appropriate ALT text to better ensure compliance with accessibility guidelines.

Additional Internal Communication Channels

Before deciding on mass email as the choice for any communication, units are strongly encouraged to use:

- What’s New BU (Division of Student Life)
- Friday Student/Faculty/Staff Digest (NEW!)
- Printed and digital signage
- Direct mail
- College, campus, and departmental communications channels such as websites, list-serves, social media, or group or interpersonal communications. Contact your unit, school or college’s communications professional for additional options.

Adopted President’s Council, January 2020.