E-mail Policy

Purpose
Electronic Mail is a tool provided by the College and serves as a primary means of communication, to improve education and administrative efficiency. For emailing purposes, Colby College utilizes Google G Suite for Education (Google), a cloud-based system using Colby’s domain name pursuant to an agreement between the College and Google, Inc. This e-mail system is known as “College E-mail Accounts.”

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of College E-mail Accounts. Users have the responsibility to use this resource in an efficient, ethical, and lawful manner.

Scope
This policy applies to all individuals who use or maintain a Colby allocated e-mail account.

The latest version of this document can be found on the Colby College website at:

http://www.colby.edu/its/policies-and-procedures/

Account Creation
College E-mail Accounts are created based on the official name of the staff or faculty member as reflected in Human Resource or Provost’s Office records. Student and alumni accounts are created based on a user ID reflective of the name on file with the Registrar. Requests for name changes to correct a discrepancy between an e-mail account name and official College records will be processed in which case the e-mail account name will be corrected. This could be due to error or a person legally changing their name. Requests for e-mail aliases based on name preference, middle name, etc., are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Faculty, staff, or departments can request temporary e-mail privileges for users outside of the College. Full time faculty or staff requesting these types of accounts will be required to submit user information, rationale for the account, expiration date, and sponsor information. Such requests shall be approved by Human Resources (HR) and acted upon by Information Technology Services (ITS). Temporary accounts will be regularly reviewed to determine whether access is still required.

Ownership of E-mail Accounts
The College owns all College E-mail Accounts. The College reserves the right to revoke e-mail privileges at any time.

Privacy and Right of College Access
While the College will make every attempt to keep e-mail messages secure, privacy is not guaranteed and users should have no general expectation of privacy in e-mail messages sent through Colby E-mail Accounts.

Under certain circumstances and under the specific direction of Colby’s General Counsel, it may be necessary for Information. Technology Services (ITS) staff or other appropriate College officials to access Colby E-mail Accounts. These circumstances may include, but are not limited to: maintaining the system, investigating security incidents, investigating allegations of misconduct, or investigating violations of this or other College policies, and in support of the College responding to a situation involving the health and safety of a member of the Colby community or public, and, in the case of Gmail, violations of Google’s Acceptable Use Policy or the College’s contracts with Google. If the College is presented with a valid subpoena, court order, or other governmental “hold” order requiring Colby E-mail Account(s) be produced (or preserved) the College may be bound by law to comply. The Office of the General Counsel will be contacted prior to disclosing any information in response to any investigation related to information technology resources, subpoenas, court orders, or other information requests from private litigants and government agencies. ITS staff or College officials may also require access to a Colby E-mail Account in order to continue College business where the Colby E-mail Account holder will not or can no longer access the College E-mail Account for any reason (such as death, disability, illness or separation from the College for a period of time or permanently). Such access will be on an as-needed basis and any e-mail accessed will only be disclosed to individuals who have been properly authorized and have an appropriate need to know or as required by law.

All e-mail users are bound by the acceptable use policy of both Colby College (see below) and Google.

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Google also retains the right to access College E-mail Accounts for violations of its Acceptable Use Policy. ([http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/admins/use_policy.html](http://www.google.com/a/help/intl/en/admins/use_policy.html))

**E-mail Data Purging**

**Gmail Accounts**

E-mail messages held under Gmail Accounts will be subject to Google’s retention and use policies, which may change from time to time, with or without notice. As of this writing, retention times and storage limits are unlimited.

Colby uses Google as its e-mail provider, and works within Google’s retention and use policies to administer this service. Colby does not specify the automatic deletion of messages, nor set a maximum retention time. Your messages are retained until you delete them. Messages you mark for deletion (i.e. put in the Trash folder) or store in the Spam folder are deleted permanently after 30 days unless you empty them prior to automatic deletion.

**E-mail Record Retention**

It is the responsibility of employees to preserve College records, including e-mails or instant messages in particular circumstances:

- Those who have actual knowledge of matters in which it can be reasonably anticipated that a court action will be filed.
- A subpoena has been served or notice of same has been given.
- Records are sought pursuant to an audit or similar pending or possible investigation.

**E-mail Data Recovery**

Because restoration of an e-mail system is a lengthy process, requests for e-mail account restoration are generally granted only in the case that loss of the data significantly affects a business unit. If a user deletes data and later wants to get it back, an administrator may be able to recover the data. Only data that has been permanently deleted can be restored. An Item is permanently deleted when the user’s Trash is emptied.

Data restoration services for College E-mail Accounts are only offered for data that have been deleted no longer than 25 days.

**Expiration of Accounts**

Individuals may leave the College for a variety of reasons which gives rise to differing situations regarding the length of e-mail privileges or expiration of accounts. The policy governing those privileges is set forth below.

- **Faculty who leave before retirement** - Faculty who leave before retirement may keep their e-mail account for one year from the end of the last term in which they taught. If such separation is for cause, e-mail privileges may be immediately revoked without notice.
- **Staff who leave before retirement** - Staff members who leave the College will have e-mail privileges removed effective on their last worked day. If such separation is for cause, e-mail privileges may be immediately revoked without notice.
- **Retired Faculty & Staff** - Faculty and staff retired e-mail account access is outlined in the [Retiree E-mail Account Policy](#).
- **Contractors** - E-mail access will be managed in consultation with human resources.
- **Students who leave before graduation (transfer/withdraw)** - Students who leave the College without completion of their degree may keep their e-mail privileges for two months after the last term in which they were enrolled.
- **Deferred students** - Students who defer their admission will have their account closed.
- **Students on approved leave** - Students will be permitted to retain their e-mail privileges.
- **Expelled students** - If a student is expelled from the College, e-mail privileges may be terminated immediately upon the directive of the Dean of the College Office.
- **Suspended students** - If a student is temporarily suspended from the College, they will be permitted to retain their e-mail privileges.

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- **Special students** - [High school students, children or spouses of employees, visitors, exchange students] e-mail privileges will be terminated two months after the last term in which they were enrolled.
- **Auditors** - E-mail will be terminated two months after the audited course ends.
- **Docents** - E-mail will be terminated one month after their relationship with the college ends.
- **Alumni** - Students who have graduated from the College will be permitted to retain their e-mail privileges if their account remains active until December 31 of the graduating year when their account will become inactive. Accounts are deleted on March 1 of the following year.

This list is not considered to be a complete list of e-mail account types; for guidance on how other e-mail accounts are expired, please contact the ITS Support Center (support@colby.edu).

**User Responsibility**

No data that is classified as Sensitive by the Data Classification Policy shall be stored in or transmitted via e-mail. This includes but is not limited to personally identifiable information, Social Security number, bank account information, tax forms, background checks, sensitive research data, or other Protected Data. See the Colby Data Classification Policy for further information.

Users who use e-mail communications in other countries or with persons in other countries should be aware that they may be subject to the laws of those other countries and the rules and policies of their systems and networks. Users are responsible for ascertaining, understanding and complying with the laws, rules, policies, contracts and licenses applicable to their particular uses.

Approval and transmission of e-mail containing official College announcements is automatically granted to Senior Staff and their proxies. Other students, faculty, and/or staff who wish to post must submit their message to the appropriate VP.

Approval and transmission of e-mail for general college notices to students, faculty, and/or staff have standard membership which is detailed in the document [web page here]

- For sending to all students, approval from the Dean of Students and the VP for Communications is required. Students with posting permission need to complete training with the VP of Communications prior to granting access to send.

In order to prevent the unauthorized use of personal e-mail accounts, the sharing of passwords is strictly prohibited. Each individual assumes personal responsibility for the use made of their college e-mail account. This responsibility begins with selecting a secure password, and involves maintaining the confidentiality of that password to assure the continued security of your account. All e-mail originating from an account is assumed to have been authored by the account holder, and it is the responsibility of that holder to ensure compliance with these guidelines. The account holder is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their password, as described in The Code of Ethics for Information Technology at Colby College ([http://www.colby.edu/its/policies-and-procedures/](http://www.colby.edu/its/policies-and-procedures/)).

ITS maintains the College’s official e-mail system; faculty, staff and students are expected to read e-mail on a regular basis and manage their accounts appropriately.

**Departmental Accounts**

Requests for shared departmental accounts will be accommodated, but require a designation of an account holder, who will administer the password and related access to the account, as well as manage the account as per these guidelines. If an account must handle sensitive information it must also be secured by 2-step authentication.

**Personal E-mail Accounts**

In order to avoid confusing official College business with personal communications, employees must never use non-college e-mail accounts (e.g. yahoo, personal Gmail, etc.) to conduct Colby College business.

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Spam and Phishing

All incoming e-mail is scanned for viruses, phishing attacks and spam by Google. Suspected messages are blocked from the user’s inbox. Due to the complex nature of e-mail, it is impossible to guarantee protection against all spam and virus infected messages. It is therefore incumbent on each individual to use proper care and consideration to prevent the spread of viruses. In many cases, viruses or phishing appear to be sent from a friend, coworker, or other legitimate source. Do not click links or open attachments unless the user is sure of the nature of the message. If any doubt exists, the user should contact the ITS Support Center at support@colby.edu, 207-859-4222, or by visiting Lovejoy 146.

Acceptable Use

With respect to Colby College E-mail Accounts, use of service is subject to this acceptable use policy. Users agree not to use E-mail services in a manner that:

- Violates or furthers any violation of Colby’s Student Handbook, Staff Handbook, Faculty Handbook, or other Colby policy, including Colby’s policy on free expression and free inquiry.
- Generates or facilitates unsolicited mass e-mail;
- Infringes on another person’s copyright, trade or service mark, patent, or other property right or is intended to assist others in defeating those protections;
- Violates, or encourages the violation of, the legal rights of others or federal and state laws;
- Is for any malicious, unlawful, defamatory, or fraudulent purpose;
- Intentionally distributes viruses, worms, Trojan horses, malware, corrupted files, hoaxes, or other items of a destructive or deceptive nature;
- Interferes with the use of the e-mail services, or the equipment used to provide the e-mail services, by customers, authorized resellers, or other authorized users;
- Alters, disables, interferes with or circumvents any aspect of the e-mail services;
- Tests or reverse-engineers the e-mail services in order to find limitations, vulnerabilities or evade filtering capabilities;
- Constitutes, fosters, or promotes obscenity;¹
- Contains harassing content;²
- Incites imminent lawless action or violence and is likely to produce such action or violence;
- Creates an imminent risk to a person’s safety or health, creates a risk to public safety or health, compromises national security, or interferes with an investigation by law enforcement;
- Improperly exposes trade secrets or other confidential or proprietary information of another person;
- Misrepresents the identity of the sender of an e-mail.

Other improper uses of the e-mail system include:

- Using or attempting to use the accounts of others without their permission.
- Collecting or using e-mail addresses, screen names information or other identifiers without the consent of the person identified (including without limitation, phishing, spidering, and harvesting);
- Use of the service to distribute software that covertly gathers or transmits information about an individual;
- Conducting business for profit under the sponsorship of the College.

This list is not considered to be a complete list of all offenses and should be viewed as examples of what the College considers to be serious breaches of acceptable conduct. Users receiving an e-mail which violates this

¹ Obscenity, as defined by federal standards, occurs if (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards would find that the work, as a whole, appeals to excessive sexual interest, (2) the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct defined by state law, and (3) the work, as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

² Harassment, as defined by College policy, includes conduct directed at an individual or a small group of individuals and expresses hatred or contempt on the basis of a protected class. Harassment includes any action or speech directed toward that reasonably can be determined to be threatening in content or suggests violence is imminent. Harassment occurs when conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent that it reasonably interferes with or limits a student’s or employee’s ability to participate in programs and services of the College.

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policy should immediately contact their immediate supervisor or class dean, who in certain cases may also inform ITS, Human Resources, the Dean of Students or the Office of General Counsel.

**Policy Violations**

Violations of this E-mail Policy are handled through standard disciplinary processes as outlined in the Student Handbook and the applicable faculty and staff handbooks. Information Technology Services may take immediate action to protect information security, system integrity, and operational continuity, pending disciplinary decisions and review of ITS’ actions by the appropriate disciplinary authority.

For violations involving cases where e-mails originating from an account cannot be confirmed to be authored by the account holder due to malware/virus infection or account hijacking, ITS will investigate to determine whether the account holder is responsible.

**Approval and Revisions**

Version - draft - Reviewed by ITS Committee April, 2018