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E-Communications Guidelines

Our University community of students, faculty and staff represents a vibrant, active environment. In this environment, demand for University-wide e-communications continues to increase. These guidelines address that demand and clarify how e-communications are managed by the Division of Communications.

Definition

"University-wide e-communications" refers to:

1. Messages distributed to the entire University and off-campus community: students, faculty, staff and those with active my.emich accounts. In some cases, messages will be distributed to the general public through the same channels.

2. Messages distributed using Eastern Michigan University electronic or online resources.

University-wide e-communications channels

The following channels are available for University-wide e-communication. Criteria for communications within each channel are listed below.

- Emergency text and email alerts (known as RAVE Alerts)
- All-campus e-mail
- Text message announcements
- Campus digital boards
- EMU website
- Online calendar
- Announcements on my.emich
- EMU Today

Criteria and priority

Emergency text and email alerts (known as RAVE Alerts) will be used **ONLY** in the event of a campus-wide emergency or campus closure (and for regular, pre-announced tests of the system). All members of the campus community are encouraged to sign up for this service at www.emich/publicsafety/emo/channels/text.php. This is the fastest and most direct way for the University to communicate with the campus community in the event of a major emergency.

All-University e-mail presents distinct challenges. While this is a quick and easy way to distribute messages to large numbers of people, it needs to be managed carefully. The Divisions of IT and Communications receive numerous complaints from users about the quantity of all-University email messages. In order to balance the sometimes-competing demands of all-University communications with the wishes of users not to be deluged with messages, the following principles will be applied by the Division of Communications in determining whether a message will be sent to the entire University via email.

All messages to be considered for all-University email must be sponsored by one of the following:

- The President or the Board of Regents
- One or more of EMU's five divisions
- One or more of EMU's colleges
- Intercollegiate Athletics

Additional criteria:

Messages that *will* be sent via all-University email

- Emergency announcements
- Matters of health and safety affecting the entire University community
- Campus closures
- Announcements of major, public University events or actions
- Major policy changes that affect the majority of the University community
- Messages requested and sponsored by the President or the Board of Regents

Note: In order to keep the University email system optimized, no attachments will be sent. All content will be contained in main body of email message.

Messages that *might* be sent via all-University email

- Announcements of events that impact a significant percentage of the University community
- Announcements of activities that are potentially beneficial to the majority of the University community
- Messages that are sufficiently aligned with the University's mission and appropriate for mass communication

Messages that *will not* be sent via all-University email

- Commercial products, service, or advertisements
- Messages sent on behalf of external entities
- Messages that affect a small percentage of, or a specific population within, the University community
- Messages that are redundant, repetitive and that have been communicated through multiple alternate channels

Text message announcements regarding campus life activities, deadlines, and student resources are sent by several designated departments to those who opt-in to the service.

Campus digital boards provide content on four large outdoor LCD screens on campus. Advertisements must promote an official EMU program, activity, or event and must be officially sponsored by an EMU unit. The subject of the advertisement must be of broad, public interest for an event or activity that is open to the general public, such as Explore Eastern open houses, home football games, theatre events, art gallery exhibits, concerts, guest speaker, etc. Requests may be submitted at www.emich.edu/digitalboards.

The **EMU website** is the University's primary outward-facing channel for connection and communication. Messages and announcements included on the home page and other locations are targeted for the broadest possible interest and relevance, particularly focused on University image and student recruitment. The Integrated Content team may be contacted at 734.487.5376 or at webcomm@emich.edu.

The **online calendar** is an electronic calendar on the EMU website used to promote events sponsored by University departments or student organizations. The calendar feed appears on the home page as well as on a variety of other University websites. Calendar items may be submitted by students, faculty and staff at www.emich.edu/calendar.

Announcements on my.emich are items of interest to students, faculty and staff. Numerous individuals on campus have access to the my.emich announcements function and are able to post announcements that affect the campus community. Requests may be sent to campus_announcements@emich.edu.

EMU Today provides information that is primarily of interest to faculty, staff and employees of the University. Requests may be sent to emu_today@emich.edu.

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Questions about these guidelines can be directed to the Vice President for Communications, 734.487.6895, or the Executive Director of Media Relations, 734.487.4400. Further information about the Division of Communications may be found at www.emich.edu/communications.