

Wells College
Information Technology Policies
Electronic Communication Policy*
(approved August 2, 2017)

Policy Statement

Wells College recognizes the power and importance of electronic communication; which encompasses email, texting, blogging, web pages and social media. These tools are invaluable for communication with the Wells College community, including prospective students, current students, parents, alumni, staff, and faculty.

Due to the nature of Social Media; a separate policy has been drafted to give guidance and to detail policy over the use of Social Media. Please reference the Wells College Social Media Policy. This policy, therefore, references electronic communication generically as a whole, but specifically, focuses on email.

All employees and students shall be issued an official College e-mail address (@wells.edu). Use of email is required, and many official announcements or other communications may occur exclusively through email.

Therefore, individuals using the tools of the College or acting on behalf of the College to post content or distribute messages must follow specific standards and take specific actions.

Purpose

With the implementation of this policy, Wells College understands that it has a responsibility to provide the tools for highly effective electronic communication for the Wells College community. It is important to recognize that all official communication done in the name of the College or appearing to represent the College, must adhere to the same laws, policies, rules of conduct and etiquette that apply to all other activities at Wells College.

Access to the email system is a privilege, and failure to comply with this policy and other College policies may result in disciplinary action.

Scope

The Wells College Electronic Communication Policy applies to all users of the College email system, as well as users that post online content through the Wells College computer systems or that post information representing the college or appearing to do so.

Student email is contracted through Google, so students, staff, and faculty using Googles services must also adhere to the user agreement with Google.

Expectations

a) Data stored on College Systems may be accessed by the College.

All messages, data, files, programs, Internet Web sites, and other material or information stored in or transmitted via the College's computer system are considered College records. Accordingly, the College reserves the right to access and disclose the content of electronic communications stored in or transmitted via its computer system:

- 1) as it deems appropriate for the administration and maintenance of the computer system.
- 2) when the College determines that such access or disclosure is necessary to investigate a possible breach of security, misuse of College resources, violation of law, or violation of College rules.
- 3) when the College determines that such access and disclosure is necessary in connection with an academic, disciplinary, or administrative inquiry, or legal proceeding.
- 4) for all other purposes permitted by law. The College may routinely monitor and log usage data such as network session connection times and end-points, computer and disk utilization for each user, security audit trails, network loading, etc.

b) Students, staff, and faculty are expected to check their email frequently.

In order to stay current with College communications, it is important for students, staff, and faculty to check their inbox frequently and on a consistent basis. Students, faculty, and staff have the responsibility to recognize that certain communications may be time-critical. It is expected that the official Wells College email address will be the primary method of emailing all students, staff, and faculty.

c) All College business must use the college's email systems and branding.

Any College business conducted by any member of the College community through the use of electronic mail messages("email") must be conducted on the email system provided by the College's IT Department, using the "wells.edu" email address. The College must be able to access and disclose when necessary, the content of electronic communications stored in or transmitted via its computer system. Therefore, email must not be forwarded outside of the College's computer system and all electronic communications sent on behalf of the College, including, but not limited to, email to students, staff and/or faculty must be sent from the College's computer system.

d) Do not post or send inappropriate content.

Posting or transmitting any material that is threatening, abusive, profane, defamatory, obscene, offensive, or pornographic, or that is discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, or demeaning to any individual or group based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, familial status, age, national origin, ethnicity, or other prohibited

basis.

e) Email distribution lists.

The email distribution lists that send out messages to all users, such as staff@wells.edu, faculty@wells.edu or students@wells.edu, are for official college communications only. Distribution lists may not be used for unofficial business.

Examples of official business would be:

- Announcements to the campus community from the President or Cabinet.
- Announcements from the bookstore or dining hall.
- Announcements of College-sponsored campus-wide events.
- HR announcements on employee benefits, comings and goings of personnel, training, etc..
- Announcements from Student Collegiate and club meetings and events.
- Alerts from Security, IT or Buildings and Grounds

Examples of unofficial business would be:

- Announcements regarding personal items for sale or fundraising.
- Chain letters, jokes or other entertainment-related emails.
- Sending messages expressing personal opinions or political viewpoints.
- Announcements about events that are not sponsored by the college or that do not benefit the college.

All employees can reach out to all staff and all faculty distribution lists as long as they do so for official college business. Only those authorized may send to the all student list. The Dean of Students approval must be obtained to access the Student list serve.

f) Use of the College Name and Logo

Use of the College's name and logo on email, postings on websites or social media is restricted to official communications and is not authorized or intended to be used for any other purpose.

g) Do not post or send confidential data.

Users cannot access, transmit, or release information or data of a confidential or proprietary nature obtained by virtue of the user's position with the college to unauthorized persons.

h) Learn and understand the dangers of phishing and other email fraud.

All users should take steps to avoid phishing scams, and other attempts by hackers to steal passwords and other sensitive information. All employees will receive yearly training on how to recognize these attacks and will be tested periodically with internal phishing attack tests. Those failing these tests will be subject to more education on the dangers of clicking on links or sharing personal information.

*This policy replaces in part the previous Computer Internet and Electronic Communications Policy.