



Email

Policy IT012

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Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Information Technology and CIO

Responsible Office: Office of the Vice President for Information Technology and CIO

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Policy Statement

This policy establishes email as one of FIT's official means of communication and outlines the acceptable and unacceptable use of email by FIT Email Account Holders. It also defines the obligations of the Division of Information Technology to protect, support, and minimize disruption to Email Services. Guidelines adopted by a division or department to meet specific academic or administrative needs must comply with this policy and with policies on the use of FIT information technology resources established by the Division of Information Technology as specified below.

Reason for the Policy

FIT Email Accounts and Email Services are provided to members of the FIT community in support of the mission of the college, including learning, inclusiveness, and the administrative functions to carry out that mission. The purpose of this email policy is to outline the proper use of FIT Email Services and make FIT Email Account Holders aware of what FIT deems as acceptable and unacceptable use of its Email Services. This policy outlines the minimum requirements for the use of FIT Email Accounts.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Department/Division heads
- Division of Information Technology

Who is Affected by this Policy

- FIT Email Account Holders
- Any individual applying for an FIT Email Account

Definitions

- **Distribution List (or Listserv):** A group of email recipients addressed as a single recipient. Distribution lists are used to send emails to groups of people without having to enter each recipient's individual address.
- **Email Service Provider:** A third party that hosts, operates, and maintains Email Services.
- **Email Services:** Access, storage, and transmission of emails and associated services.

- **FIT Email Account (FIT Email):** An email account that is hosted, administered, or owned by the college, regardless of platform and hosting service.
- **FIT Email Account Holder:** Any constituent of FIT who has been granted an FIT Email Account.
- **FIT Official Email:** Any email sent or received in the execution of the duties of an individual or office when engaging in activities related to their official FIT role(s).
- **Generic Email Account:** A specific type of email account for a department or other organizational or administrative unit of FIT used for generic purposes. Unless specified, the policy terms that apply to FIT Email Accounts also apply to Generic Email Accounts.
- **Non-FIT Email Services:** Any Email Service responsible for access, storage, or transmission of email not hosted, administered, or owned by the college.
- **Personal Email:** Any email that is neither created nor received in the course and/or for purposes of official college business.
- **Alumni:** A student who has successfully graduated from one or more programs at the institution.

Principles

- **FIT Email Account Creation**
FIT Email accounts and associated levels of services are provided based on the role at the college and are expected to be used in accordance with this policy. Third parties are not given FIT email accounts by default. If a third party requires an FIT Email Account, proper approvals must be obtained from the Department/Division heads and the Office of Information Technology.
- **Expectations for Use of Email**
FIT Email is an official college resource intended to be used for purposes such as, but not limited to, instruction, instructional support, faculty advising, research, administration, and college-related correspondence in support of FIT's mission.

All FIT Official Emails must be sent from an FIT Email Account. FIT Email Account Holders are expected to check their FIT Email Account as appropriate to remain informed of FIT communications, as certain notifications may be time-sensitive.

Email communications (including attachments), whether FIT Official Emails, Personal Emails, or otherwise, must comply with federal, state, and local laws and applicable FIT policies, including but not limited to the FIT's Acceptable Use for FIT IT Systems and Information Security policies, and all other FIT policies governing employee and student conduct, as applicable. (See Related Policies.)

FIT Email Accounts are subject to the identification and authentication requirements set forth in FIT's Information Security policy. This includes but is not limited to multi-factor authentication (at least 2-step verification) for logging into FIT Email Accounts from on-campus and off-campus

locations, as well as from any device. Passwords used to access FIT Email must be kept confidential. FIT Email Account Holders are responsible for all uses of their account and may not alter their address to disguise or block their email identity¹.

FIT Email Account Holders must not attempt unauthorized access to someone else's email or must not attempt to breach any security measures. Furthermore, they are responsible for promptly reporting potential security issues with their FIT Email Accounts to the Division of Information Technology.

- **Retention of Email**

Email is not a record-keeping system and should not be used for record-keeping purposes. Records are retained according to the FIT [Records Retention and Disposition](#) policy (see Related Policies). Emails may be deleted automatically at schedules set by the college and/or Email Service Provider and in accordance with state retention laws and other legal obligations.

- **Forwarding, Redirecting, and Use of Non-FIT Email Service**

To protect the security of FIT information and ensure compliance with federal, state, and SUNY requirements, the use of non-FIT Email services for FIT business is prohibited.

FIT Email Account Holders must use only their assigned FIT Email Account for conducting official college business. Forwarding, redirecting, or copying FIT Email to any non-FIT account or service is not permitted.

FIT reserves the right, with advance notice when practical, to disable or restrict technical settings that attempt to move, forward, or copy FIT Email to non-FIT Email services.

- **Inspection, Monitoring, or Disclosure of Email**

FIT provides email accounts to employees for official college business. These accounts are the property of FIT and, as such, are not subject to a guarantee of privacy. However, FIT respects the privacy of workplace communications to the greatest extent consistent with operational needs, legal requirements, and the protection of the College's interests.

FIT does not monitor routine employee communications or access email content arbitrarily. The College does, however, reserve the right to access, review, and disclose the contents of any FIT Email Account - active or inactive - without notice to the impacted employee(s) as necessary.

Examples of such circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- Compliance with federal, state, or local laws or regulations;
- Response to subpoenas, court orders, warrants, or other lawful demands for information;
- Internal or external investigations relating to potential violations of law or College policy (e.g., fraud, harassment, discrimination, theft, or other misconduct);
- Protection of the College's legal rights, interests, or property, including in anticipation of or during litigation, arbitration, or government inquiries;

¹ This restriction is not intended to limit the use of a Chosen Name. Account display names may be updated through the process outlined in FIT's [Chosen Name and Pronouns](#) Policy.

- Compliance with contractual, ethical, or professional obligations that carry legal consequences; and
- Performance of routine business processes such as system administration, troubleshooting, or addressing security risks to safeguard the IT environment.

Any review of Email content outside of routine business processes is conducted in coordination with the Office of the General Counsel, Human Resources, and/or, when appropriate, the President's Office to ensure oversight and proper authorization.

- **Email Settings and Support**

Maximum message size, timeout settings, storage limits, maintenance times, and other email settings will be set as appropriate for the anticipated needs of FIT and in conjunction with the Email Service Provider. The need to revise or change settings and/or Email Service Providers will be monitored and implemented as appropriate by the Division of Information Technology. FIT reserves the right to perform maintenance that may temporarily restrict access to FIT Email and will provide reasonably advanced notice when practicable.

- **Dormant FIT Email Accounts**

FIT reserves the right to disable and remove Email Accounts not accessed for a continuous period of 24 months or longer, and, all content will be deleted in accordance with the college's Records Retention and Disposition policy.

FIT passwords expire periodically; failure to update your password could result in being locked out of your FIT Email Account—potentially leading to deactivation after 24 months of inactivity. Failure to receive notice(s) of account deactivation due to dormancy is the responsibility of the account holder.

- **Email Account for Alumni**

Alumni, as a courtesy, are permitted to maintain an FIT Email Account. FIT may modify or discontinue this service - its features and storage capacities - at its discretion. Prolonged storage overages may result in account suspension and/or termination. As a general guideline, exceeding allocated storage for several months without correction may be considered prolonged. Email Accounts for Alumni are subject to the Dormant Account principle above.

Alumni are reminded that FIT Email Accounts are the property of FIT and are subject to the terms of this policy. Even when used for personal purposes, these Accounts remain subject to review, disclosure, and monitoring as outlined in this policy. Alumni should not assume privacy or ownership of any content transmitted or stored through their FIT Email Account.

- **Cybersecurity Training**

In accordance with SUNY policy, all individuals who have access to State Entity [SE] information are required to complete security awareness training. This training ensures that individuals understand their security responsibilities, proper use of information systems, and how to

protect SE information. At FIT, this means all employees who are actively working at the college—faculty and staff—must complete Cybersecurity training annually².

Responsibilities

The Office of Information Technology:

- Oversees the creation of FIT Email Accounts;
- Disables dormant accounts and deletes content in accordance with records management principles;
- Monitors FIT Email settings, such as message size limits, storage limits, etc., and makes adjustments as deemed appropriate;
- Performs system maintenance that may temporarily restrict access to FIT Email;
- Manages and maintains FIT’s Email Hosting Services;
- Scans FIT Email for malicious content and monitors FIT Email usage to ensure compliance with FIT policies, federal, state, and local laws;
- Reserves the right to inspect and disclose emails when required by law, or to investigate potential violations of policy or law;
- Provides support for proper configuration, security, and maintenance of FIT Email Accounts, and offers assistance to users; and
- Ensures mass emails are compliant with FIT policies, restricting their use to official college business, and preventing misuse for commercial, political or external fundraising purposes.

Procedures

As necessary, email practices and procedures will be developed in accordance or modified with this policy, and communicated to the FIT community accordingly.

Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the restriction or suspension of access to FIT Email Accounts or related services. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, additional action may be taken in accordance with other applicable FIT policies and procedures.

Unintentional or minor violations may be addressed through guidance, training, or reminders. Repeated or more serious violations may require a review by the appropriate department to determine the appropriate response, which could include temporary access limitations or other corrective measures.

Employees covered by the Collective Bargaining Unit will be disciplined according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, as well as relevant law and college policy. For non-bargaining employees, the Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor Relations, or their designee(s), will review the violation and make a recommendation for appropriate disciplinary action based upon relevant law and college policy.

² Adjunct faculty and part-time classroom assistants are entitled to payment equivalent to ½ their hourly rate for the completion of each mandatory training, in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Non-Credit faculty are also compensated at the same rate for the completion of each mandatory training.

Related Policies

- [Acceptable Use for FIT IT Systems](#)
- [Chosen Name and Pronouns](#)
- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Emeritus Status](#)
- [Employee Code of Ethical Conduct](#)
- [FERPA](#)
- [Information Security](#)
- [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Records Retention and Disposition](#)

Related Documents

- [Frequently Asked Questions about Email and G Suite](#)
- [Generic Email Accounts](#)
- [Password Help Center](#)

Contacts

- **Vice President for Information Technology/CIO**
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