

The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

Information Technology – Electronic Communication Policy

Updated: October 2008

SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Electronic mail (e-mail) is any message sent or received through or stored on UMHB's central IT e-mail servers. Such e-mail may include, but is not limited to, correspondence and attachments, calendar schedules, and forms and other documents transmitted electronically. Electronic communication also includes electronic documents.

STANDARDS

A. E-Mail:

The UMHB e-mail system is an official means of communication. The University views communication via e-mail to constitute being duly informed for faculty, staff and students. Reading e-mail and checking one's e-mail is an obligation for all faculty, staff and students. Having one's university e-mail forwarded to an off-campus account does not alter this obligation.

The UMHB e-mail system is a delivery system for communication and does not constitute a long-term storage system for documents delivered by e-mail. While the system is backed up each 24 hours, back-up tapes are only retained for one week. Backup tapes do not constitute archival storage, and are not searchable. They are used to restore mailboxes in the event of system failure. Thus, the e-mail system should not be relied upon for the long-term retention of official records of the university. The University provides storage systems outside of the e-mail system for such longer term retention (the H: and J: network drives). Storing such records may alternatively be accomplished by saving them to a CD, DVD, flash drive or printing them out in hard copy.

B. Electronic Documents:

Electronic documents created by any user for which one needs reliable storage should utilize the network-based storage system and not rely solely on a copy stored on the local hard drive. Alternatively, such documents may be printed and stored or one may request that the department purchase an external hard drive that connects directly to the user's university-issued computer system.

C. Privacy:

UMHB operates the e-mail system with full respect for privacy and confidentiality in accordance with relevant laws, regulations and university policy. While UMHB permits limited personal use of the e-mail infrastructure, those availing themselves of such privilege are subject to the same rules, regulations laws and policies as university business e-mail. The custodians of the e-mail system must not inappropriately access or disclose the content of mail on the University e-mail system unless required by law to disclose such contents or in certain circumstances only with the permission of the university President. For example: When the correspondent is unavailable and the information is necessary for the conduct of university business or in a health or safety emergency.