

# DRAFT

## Guidelines for Email Lists, Discussion Forums, and Voicemail Lists

### 1. Introduction

### 2. Faculty & Staff Email Lists

TC Community; TC Faculty; TC Instructors and Adjuncts; Other TC Employee Groups

### 3. Student Email Lists

TC Students; Selected Lists of Students; Class Email Lists via ClassWeb

### 4. Other Email Lists

Alumni; Newly-Admitted Students; Email Lists Created by Request

### 5. Discussion Forums

Class Forums via ClassWeb; Forums Created by Request

### 6. TCWeb Calendar of Events

Public schedule of events on TC homepage

### 7. Voicemail Lists

All Administrative Voicemail Boxes; Campus Residents' Voicemail Boxes

### Appendix I. Summary Table of Lists & Forums

### Appendix II. Best Practices When Sending Email to a List

## 1. Introduction

Electronic mailing lists, discussion forums, and voicemail lists are maintained to facilitate communication at the College. This document describes the lists and forums at the College with instructions and guidelines for their use. The guidelines will be reviewed periodically by various constituencies so that they can be changed to better serve faculty, staff, students, and alumni needs.

To avoid having people ignore TC email because there is too much of it, senders are urged to pinpoint the audience for each message as much as possible. For example, messages about a new course should go to the students in programs most likely to be interested and the faculty who advise these students.

A table summarizing College lists and forums is included as Appendix I; more detail and guidelines for usage are provided below. The lists and forums are maintained by CIS unless otherwise noted.

## 2. Faculty & Staff Email Lists

For faculty and staff, automatically generated email lists use the preferred email address in the administrative records of the college (except for the "TC Community" list, which uses TC Exchange mail addresses.) Preferred email addresses can be changed online at [info.tc.columbia.edu](http://info.tc.columbia.edu).

# DRAFT

## TC Community

### *Who is on it*

This list includes all regular employees that have College email accounts. It includes some part-time staff. Students and part-time instructors/adjuncts are excluded with some exceptions.

### *Who can post*

Anyone can send email to this list, but in accordance with the guidelines below.

### *Guidelines*

Emails to this list should concern College-wide matters, and include a short subject entry that indicates the type of content.

Messages targeted to TC students should not be sent to TC Community, since students are generally not included in the TC Community list. (Students have their own lists, described below.)

It is appropriate to inform the community about:

- new hires and promotions
- grants and awards
- lectures, staff training opportunities, performances, special events, and celebrations that are open to all on the list
- life events of regular staff, death of former faculty or staff
- activities of neighborhood organizations related to TC which are of widespread interest and open to all
- College holidays (HR office only)
- campus closings (President's Office and Senior Staff only)
- official procedures and policies (Vice-Presidents' offices)
- safety issues on campus (VPFA or HR)
- network downtime or computer advisories (CIS)
- media events in which College faculty/staff are to appear (External Relations)

Examples of inappropriate uses of the TC Community list include but are not limited to:

- advertising outside commercial interests
- advertising personal property to be let or sold
- advertisements/announcements concerning specific religious or political groups
- particular complaints (e.g., maintenance needs) that can be sent to the appropriate department for response
- messages that violate the Policy on Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources at Teachers College ( [www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy)).

# DRAFT

## TC Faculty

### *Who is on it*

This list includes all full-time faculty on appointment, including research professors and professors of practice. Membership is managed by the Provost's office. (Note: all members of this list are included in the TC Community list.)

### *Who can post*

This is a closed list, with only members eligible to post. Non-faculty who wish to send a message to this list must go through the Provost's office; address the request to [provosts@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:provosts@tc.columbia.edu).

### *Guidelines*

Email to this list should concern academic matters of concern to the full faculty. It is appropriate, for example, to send messages about:

- faculty meetings and agenda items
- FEC and subcommittee announcements
- open discussions of faculty/college issues

Examples of inappropriate uses include but are not limited to the examples described above for the TC Community list.

## TC Instructional Staff

### *Who is on it*

This list includes people teaching during the current academic year who are not on full-time faculty appointment. (Note: Members of this list are generally *not* included in the TC Community list.)

### *Who can post*

All messages to this list go through the Provost's office. Address the request to [provosts@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:provosts@tc.columbia.edu).

### *Guidelines*

Email to this list should concern matters relevant to instructional staff. It is appropriate, for example, to send messages about:

- technology training workshops
- payroll issues
- information related to registration and advising

Examples of inappropriate uses include but are not limited to the examples described above for the TC Community list.

# DRAFT

## Other TC Employee Groups

For information on addressing email to lists of TC professional staff or union employees, please contact Human Resources at x3175 or email to [hr@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:hr@tc.columbia.edu).

## 3. Student Email Lists

Email to students is addressed to their Columbia email address. Students are responsible for setting up forwarding if they wish to read the mail elsewhere, but they are responsible for official notices sent to their Columbia email addresses.

### TC Students

#### *Who is on it*

This list includes all currently registered students and those who were registered in either of the two previous semesters who did not complete their programs; students who are not currently registered may remove themselves from the list.

#### *Who can post*

Email to the TC Students list must be sent by an authorized administrator in the Provost's office (e.g., the Associate Dean for Enrollment and Student Services, Office of Student Activities and Programs, and the Vice Provost, etc.) or the Student Senate; send posting requests to [provosts@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:provosts@tc.columbia.edu) or [student-senate@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:student-senate@tc.columbia.edu).

#### *Guidelines*

This list is used for official notices and weekly mailings, as well as other informational messages sent by the Registrar and other offices.

To request that an event be included on the weekly list of events emailed to students, enter the information online at <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentevents>. This page has an option to post the event on the TCWeb Calendar of Events in addition.

Employment-related or career development events should be sent to Career Services (email to [careerservices@tc.edu](mailto:careerservices@tc.edu)) for their weekly mailing.

Other messages to this list should concern important matters relevant to large numbers of students who are not identifiable by program or other attributes on their Student Information System records. It is appropriate, for example, to send messages about:

- Major College-wide events
- College closings
- Health and safety concerns
- Academic issues of broad concern to the student body

## DRAFT

- Information about mailing lists to which those interested may subscribe

Messages from relevant commercial interests may be appropriate for this list.

Surveys for use by the institution for its management are treated as email, but if results are to be published, surveys are subject to the process for research on human subjects set by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Other online research instruments must always be approved by the IRB and will not be sent to students who have requested confidentiality of directory information under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.) Contact the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs for further information about IRB approval.

Examples of uses that may be appropriate, but which, whenever possible, should be targeted more precisely by using the segmented lists described below, include:

- announcement of schedule changes for individual classes
- announcement of non-credit workshops
- announcement of job opportunities

Examples of inappropriate uses include but are not limited to the examples described above for the TC Community list.

### Selected lists of students

#### *Who is on it*

These are standard and *ad hoc* lists of students selected by program, department, degree, or combinations of these and other attributes.

(Note: For class lists please see the following section, "Class lists via ClassWeb.")

**Standard lists** are refreshed weekly on an ongoing basis. Standard lists that are maintained include lists for programs and departments by degree, for all masters or all doctoral students, one for international students, etc. These lists include all currently registered students plus those registered in either of the two previous semesters who did not complete their programs; students who are not currently registered may remove themselves from the list. Requests for new standard lists should be made to the Registrar.

**Ad hoc lists** may be requested by administrators for one-time or short-term use, e.g., a list of students who have applied for May graduation, or students who are working for the College part-time. Requests for *ad hoc* lists must be made at least 10 days in advance to the Registrar.

## DRAFT

### *Who can post*

Email to these lists must be sent via the Program head, Department Chair, Director of Academic Administration, Program Secretary, Registrar or one of the administrators in the Office of the Provost (e.g., the Associate Dean for Enrollment and Student Services, Director of Student Life, Associate Vice-Provost, etc.) Instructors and students who want to send email to all students registered for a credit class should do so via ClassWeb class email lists (see separate entry below.)

### *Guidelines for sending email to segmented lists of students*

Email to these lists should concern official matters relevant to the group. Examples of communications to segmented lists of students that are encouraged are announcements regarding:

- program requirements, deadlines, meetings, etc.
- class schedule changes
- non-credit workshops
- colloquia, lectures, performances, special events and celebrations except for endowed lectures, and extraordinary events
- conferences and calls for papers
- job opportunities.

Researchers wishing to email these lists should refer to the “Guidelines for sending email to TC Students” above for important information.

Examples of inappropriate uses include but are not limited to the examples described above for the TC Community list.

### **Class Email Lists via ClassWeb**

#### *Who is on it*

All credit classes have student email lists built into TC ClassWeb, revised nightly from the beginning of registration throughout the semester.

#### *Who can post*

All instructors and students in the class can send email to their classes via ClassWeb. Departmental and program staff can also send email to classes within their areas. Email is automatically sent to all students registered in a class if the Registrar processes a change in schedule or instructor.

#### *Guidelines*

The Policy on Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources at Teachers College (link at [www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy)) applies.

# DRAFT

## 4. Other Email Lists

Some administrative departments maintain special email lists. Anyone wanting to send a message to one of these lists should contact the appropriate office. Examples include:

### **Alumni**

Various groupings of alumni, maintained by Alumni Relations (x3215 or email to [tcalumni@columbia.edu](mailto:tcalumni@columbia.edu).)

### **Newly-Admitted Students**

Maintained by the Office of Admission (x3710 or e-mail to [tcinfo@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:tcinfo@tc.columbia.edu).)

### **Email Lists Created by Request**

All TC departments, centers, institutes and recognized student groups are eligible to request that CIS create email lists that the requesting group will manage. List requestors will determine whether their lists are joined by auto-subscription or by managed enrollment, whether posting of messages is open, moderated, restricted to list members, etc. As resources allow, these lists can be for organizations that include people who are not affiliated with the College, provided that the list sponsors are TC faculty, staff or students and that the list is related to the College's mission. Call the CIS Help Desk at x3300 for assistance or email your request to [helpdesk@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tc.columbia.edu).

## 5. Discussion Forums

### **Class Forums via ClassWeb**

#### *Who is on it*

All credit classes have discussion forums built into TC ClassWeb, with enrolled student membership revised nightly from the beginning of registration throughout the semester. Instructors can manually add guest participants to their forums (guests must have a Columbia UNI which can be created for outside guests by contacting Academic Computing Services at [acs@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:acs@tc.columbia.edu) or x 3302.)

#### *Who can post*

All members of the ClassWeb class forums can participate.

#### *Guidelines*

The applicable guideline is the Policy on Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources at Teachers College ([www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/computing/aupolicy).)

### **Forums Created by Request**

Some groups maintain special discussion forums. All TC departments, centers, institutes and recognized student groups are eligible to request that CIS create web-based discussion forums that the requesting

## DRAFT

group will manage, either within MyTCPortal or outside of that environment. Call the CIS Help Desk at x3300 to discuss advantages of the different toolsets (i.e., different forum types and email lists) or email your request to [helpdesk@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tc.columbia.edu).

### 6. TCWeb Calendar of Events

There is an individual in most administrative and academic units at the college who has access to the online calendar of events through the Content Management System. More information and a form to get an account on this system are found at <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/calendar/add.htm>. Student groups wishing to add college wide events to the online calendars are encouraged to visit the Student Activities web site at <http://www.tc.edu/studentactivities> and follow the directions posted.

### 7. Voicemail Lists

#### All Administrative Voicemail Boxes

This group includes all full-time faculty, professional and clerical employees.

#### *Instructions for sending voicemail to all administrative voicemail boxes*

Messages for this group must be approved by one of the following, but not by anyone who is in a temporary acting capacity during that person's absence:

- President
- Provost
- Vice President for Finance and Administration
- Secretary of the College
- Vice President for Development and External Affairs

#### *Guidelines for sending voicemail to all administrative voicemail boxes*

Messages to this group should concern College-wide matters requiring immediate attention.

It is appropriate to inform the community about:

- campus closings or emergency situations
- endowed lectures and extraordinary events
- emergency network or email outages.

Examples of inappropriate uses include but are not limited to the examples described above for the TC Community email list, as well as research surveys.

# DRAFT

## **Campus Residents' Voicemail Boxes**

The Office of Residence Life has the ability to generate voicemail messages to the residents of Whittier, the New Residence Hall, Bancroft, Grant, Sarasota and Lowell separately, or in combination.

### *Instructions for sending voicemail to campus residents*

Voicemail for this group must be approved by one of the following:

- the Vice President for Finance and Administration
- the Director of Residential Services and Security
- the Chief of Campus Safety and Security
- the Director of Telecommunications, in the case of telecom service issues.

### *Guidelines for sending voicemail to campus residents*

Messages to these groups should concern official matters relevant to a substantial portion of the group. Broadcast voicemail is not to be used for messages that are also distributed in written mail or email.

# DRAFT

## Appendix I. Summary Table of Lists & Forums

Lists & Forums		Who is on it	Who can post
Faculty and Staff Email Lists	<b>TC Community</b>	All regular employees that have College email accounts. It includes some part-time staff. Students and instructors/adjuncts are excluded, with some exceptions.	Anyone can send email to this list, in accordance with guidelines.
	<b>TC Faculty</b>	All full-time faculty on appointment, including research professors and professors of practice. (Members of this list are included in the TC Community list.)	Members of the list. Others should send posting requests to <a href="mailto:provosts@tc.columbia.edu">provosts@tc.columbia.edu</a> .
	<b>TC Instructional Staff</b>	All people teaching during the current academic year who do not have full-time faculty appointments. (Members of this list are generally <i>not</i> included in the TC Community list.)	The Provost's Office. Send posting requests to <a href="mailto:provosts@tc.columbia.edu">provosts@tc.columbia.edu</a> .
	<b>Other TC Employee Groups</b>	Various selected lists of employees, including professional staff or union employees.	Send posting requests to <a href="mailto:hr@tc.columbia.edu">hr@tc.columbia.edu</a> .
Student Email Lists	<b>TC Students</b>	All currently registered students and those who were registered in either of the two previous semesters who did not complete their programs; students who are not currently registered may remove themselves from the list.	Authorized administrators in Provost's Office. Enter requests for distribution of messages to students online at <a href="http://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentevents">http://www.tc.columbia.edu/studentevents</a> or send email to Student Senate ( <a href="mailto:student-senate@tc.columbia.edu">student-senate@tc.columbia.edu</a> ). Send employment or career development announcements to <a href="mailto:careerservices@tc.edu">careerservices@tc.edu</a> .
	<b>Selected lists of students</b>	Students selected by program, department, degree, and various combinations of these and other attributes.	Program heads, Chairs, Directors of Academic Admin., Program Secretaries, Registrar, authorized administrators in Provost's office.

## DRAFT

	<b>Class email lists via ClassWeb</b>	All credit classes have email lists built into ClassWeb; revised nightly from the beginning of registration throughout the semester.	Instructors and students in their classes. Dept. staff can email classes within their areas.
Other Email Lists	<b>Alumni</b>	Various groupings of alumni, maintained by Alumni Relations	Alumni Relations ( <a href="mailto:tcalumni@columbia.edu">tcalumni@columbia.edu</a> )
	<b>Newly-Admitted Students</b>	Newly-admitted students, maintained by Office of Admission	Office of Admission ( <a href="mailto:tcinfo@tc.columbia.edu">tcinfo@tc.columbia.edu</a> )
	<b>Email Lists created by request</b>	Various email lists are created by CIS for departments, centers, institutes and recognized student groups.	Various
Discussion Forums	<b>Class Forums via ClassWeb</b>	All credit classes have discussion forums built into TC ClassWeb, with membership revised nightly from the beginning of registration throughout the semester. Instructors can manually add participants with UNIs.	All members of forum.
	<b>Forums Created by Request</b>	Various forums are created by CIS for departments, centers, institutes and recognized student groups.	Various
Voicemail Lists	<b>All Admin. Voicemail Boxes</b>	All full-time faculty, professional and clerical employees.	Approval required from President, Provost, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Secretary of the College, or Vice President for Development and External Affairs.
	<b>Campus Residents' Voicemail Boxes</b>	Residents of Whittier, the New Residence Hall, Bancroft, Grant, Sarasota and Lowell separately, or in combination	Approval required from Vice President for Finance and Administration, Director of Residential Services and Security, Chief of Campus Safety and Security, or Director of Telecommunications, in the case of telecom service issues.

# DRAFT

## Appendix II. Best Practices When Sending Email to a List

- 1) Be brief and to the point. Do not send duplicate messages.
- 2) Use a subject line that is clear. If you use Reply but change the topic, change the subject line so that people know what's in their inbox.
- 3) People concerned about the amount of email they receive may call the Help Desk at x3300 to ask for information on automatically directing selected email to folders other than their Inbox.
- 4) To assist readers with filtering or scanning through messages, please use a standard PREFIX: (use upper case with colon) for these common announcement types:

NEW COURSE: CONFERENCE: FREE FOOD: FREE STUFF: LOST & FOUND:

- 5) Broadcast messages should generally be sent from the applicable "department" email address instead from a personal email account. As deemed appropriate by the sending department, such messages can still be "signed" by someone and/or a contact provided for more information.
- 6) Do not use Reply-All when replying to only the sender (Reply) is more appropriate. (Remember that the Reply-To address may be the list rather than the original sender. Check the To line before you send a reply.) Consider whether the people getting copied need the information.
- 7) Do not forward email to a list unless you are sure that the original sender doesn't consider it private.
- 8) Keep in mind that people on the list sometimes respond strongly if you don't follow 'best practices' or 'abuse' the list.
- 9) Do not attach a word processing document if its contents can be cut and pasted into the message itself. People who lack specific versions of software may be unable to open your attachments and the amount of disk storage and network bandwidth required for them is far greater. Consider sending only a brief summary in an email message which includes a link to a webpage with full information.
- 10) Keep your message accessible to individuals using adaptive technology such as screen readers as well as more readable for individuals without disabilities by avoiding text on a colored backdrop with insufficient contrast, text embedded in a graphic, animated graphics, relying on color alone to convey meaning, and highly stylized fonts. Get more information on requirements for accessibility for events from the Office of Access and Services for Individuals with Disabilities ([oasid@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:oasid@tc.columbia.edu), x3689, x3853 V/TTY.)
- 11) Do not include graphical elements such as photographs, logos, diagrams, oversized fonts, and colors unless they are important to the message, as some applications may not be able to view them or they may cause computer freezes; they also use significant disk space and take longer to download over a slow Internet connection.

## **DRAFT**

- 12) Be aware that complete privacy of email cannot be guaranteed for the sender or the recipient on any system. At the very least, when there are system problems, an administrator may see message headers or message texts. Many employers monitor email content, even though TC does not.
- 13) Be aware that your readers cannot use intonations, gestures, and facial expressions to derive your seriousness or jest, mood, etc. Learn to use emoticons such as :- ) ; -) and express yourself carefully in words. Avoid words or phrases in all capital letters, as people interpret them as shouting.
- 14) Give some thought to the best way to exchange information. If your message may evoke an emotional response, or is likely to be misunderstood, requiring discussion or clarification, consider using the telephone instead. Sometimes walking down the hall to see the person is more effective.