



Monday, October 13, 2003

Student broadcast e-mail procedure policy adopted

Oakland University has adopted a **policy to send official university business communication**, such as tuition and fee bills, financial aid information, schedule of classes and more, to students through their OU e-mail accounts. To save money and increase efficiency in communication, OU will ease out of sending this information via U.S. Mail starting this semester.

"By shifting all student business communication from paper to e-mail, we expect to save more than \$100,000 per year," said Steve Roberts, associate vice president for finance and administration and a member of the administrative team that developed the use policy.

Students received information about this through announcements at orientation and convocation, fliers, postcards, ads and articles in "The Oakland Post," banners in high-traffic areas on campus, and an e-mail activation table in the Oakland Center manned by OU staff volunteers during Welcome Week. Faculty also announced the change in student classes. OU faculty, staff and students can refer to a special **OU've Got Mail** Web page for more information and answers to specific questions.

"We certainly appreciate everyone's help getting the word out to students about the new policy," said Mary Beth Snyder, vice president of student affairs. "Since OU will not be sending critical information – like the winter schedule of classes – through the mail, it's vital students know how important it is for them to check their Oakland e-mail account several times a week."

The new student e-mail use policy combined with the quest to lower the cost of doing business is likely to result in a dramatic increase in e-mail communication to students. To help the university administration coordinate communication and avoid inadvertently spamming students, the university developed an official procedure called the Student Broadcast Policy Procedure, recently reviewed by Administrative Council and Cabinet.

"The university plans to send a lot of valuable information to students, information they need to maintain their relationship with Oakland," said Snyder. "The procedure policy will help balance student need for information with the university's desire to send information out."

University Communications and Marketing (UC&M) and Enrollment Management (EM) are co-leading the communication coordination efforts. The policy itself details the process, authorization and steps to take to issue a broadcast e-mail to students. Highlights include:

- A unit, department, office or individual that wants to send information to more than 500 students who are not in their school first must obtain agreement from their vice president.
- Once VP approval is received, the unit must receive permission from UC&M and/or EM.
- With the two approvals set, UC&M and/or EM will work with the requesting party to coordinate the message with any like messages or similar student targets and help identify the appropriate authorized e-mail account from which to send the message. For a list of authorized accounts, please review the policy.

Staff who have questions about the policy or want to send information to a student group larger than 500 students should contact Mary Alore at parco@oakland.edu or Claudette Zolkowski at zolkowsk@oakland.edu. The policy restricts the use of student broadcast e-mail to official university business (such as grades, billing, schedule of classes, financial aid notifications, and similar information), university information where timing is a concern (such as storm closings and similar events) and a weekly e-mail newsletter sent from UC&M.

To provide regular information about student activities, events and accomplishments, UC&M has created a section of The News @ OU dedicated to **student news**. Students will receive a weekly broadcast e-mail from The News @ OU highlighting articles and announcements targeted to their interests. This news section is in coordination with the **Division of Student Affairs**.

As both the use and procedure policy are implemented, the Banner view for Banner Student Labels has been changed to exclude student e-mail address fields. A new view for Banner Student E-mails has been created. To gain access to the new

view, staff members who are authorized to send student e-mails must attend the new **University Human Resources training class** when classes are available and must obtain access to the new Banner view through approval from Enrollment Management.

SUMMARY

Oakland University has adopted a policy to send official university business communication, such as tuition and fee bills, financial aid information, schedule of classes and more, to students through their OU e-mail accounts. To save money and increase efficiency in communication, OU will ease out of sending this information via U.S. Mail starting this semester.

Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, October 13, 2003

Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, October 13, 2003

Article Start Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2003