**Policy**

This policy establishes e-mail as the official channel of communication at Minnesota State University, Mankato for communications that do not require physical delivery of a document. Individuals wishing to send mass e-mails or messages to the <All> Staff, <All> Students, or <All> Current Students distribution groups must have authorization. Mass unsolicited e-mail sent to or from non-University entities or individuals must comply with the federal CAN-SPAM Act.

This policy applies to any person or entity sending mass e-mail through Minnesota State Mankato e-mail systems on behalf of the University. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to expand, diminish or alter academic freedom, articulated under Minnesota State Board Policy, Minnesota State Mankato Policy, collective bargaining agreements, or the terms of any charter establishing a system library as a community or public library.

**Procedures**

Minnesota State Mankato e-mail systems will only deliver official communications to @mnsu.edu e-mail addresses. Although @mnsu.edu e-mail addresses are able to be forwarded to other e-mail addresses, those messages will be handled on a best-effort basis and delivery to the forwarded email address cannot be guaranteed.

For best practices and recommendations on the use of mass e-mail, please see the IT Solutions Website.

**Authorization to send e-mail to <All> Staff and/or <All> Students**

Individuals within the Academic Affairs division wishing to send mass e-mails or messages to the <All> Staff, <All> Students, or <All> Current Students distribution groups must have the authorization of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee. Individuals within administrative divisions must have the authorization of their respective Vice President or designee.

**Campus-Related Emergencies**

Messages relating to a campus-related emergency must follow emergency communications protocols.

**Definitions**

<All> Staff, <All> Student and <All> Current Students distribution groups – These distribution groups are pre-established groups for communicating with campus faculty, staff and students.

CAN-SPAM Act – federal law enacted in 2003, regulates the use of electronic mail in which the primary purpose is commercial advertisement or promotion of a commercial product or service.
**Mass e-mail** – an e-mail sent to a group of more than 100 recipients.

**External mass e-mail service** – any mass e-mail system or service that is not provided by IT Solutions.

**Rationale**

E-mail must be used and managed responsibly in order to ensure faculty, staff and students are able to give appropriate attention to these essential communications. Use of University e-mail systems are governed by Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDPA), Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Minnesota State Policy 5.22 Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources.