I. POLICY STATEMENT

UMass Lowell’s Email services support the educational and administrative activities of UMass Lowell and serve as a means of official communication between users and the University. This policy statement sets forth the University’s policy with regard to use of, access to, and disclosure of Electronic Mail (Email) to assist in ensuring that the University’s resources serve those purposes.

II. PURPOSE

The University must be able to communicate quickly and efficiently with employees and students in order to conduct official University business. Email is an appropriate medium for such communication and also supports University goals regarding cost efficiency, expediency, and sustainability.

III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all university employees, retirees, and contractors who have been assigned an email account to support the educational and administrative activities of UMass Lowell.

IV. DEFINITIONS

N/A

V. PROCEDURES

A. Privacy and Confidentiality Considerations

The University does not routinely monitor the content of computer systems/resources including files, programs, and electronic communications and Emails. UMass Lowell will make reasonable efforts to maintain the integrity and effective operation of its Email systems, but users are advised that those systems should in no way be regarded as a secure medium for the communication of sensitive or confidential information. Because of the nature and technology of electronic communication, the University can assure neither the privacy of an
individual user's use of Email resources nor the confidentiality of particular messages that may be created, transmitted, received, or stored.

B. Permissible Uses of Email

Authorized Users:

Only University faculty, staff, and students and other persons who have received permission under the appropriate University authority are authorized users of UMass Lowell's Email systems and resources.

Purpose of Use:

The use of any University resources for Email must be related to University business, including academic pursuits. Incidental and occasional social/personal use of Email may occur when such use does not interfere with an employee’s job duties or University business or operations. Any such incidental and occasional use of University Email resources for personal purposes is subject to the provisions of this policy.

C. Prohibited Uses of Email

1. Prohibited Purposes
   a. Personal use that creates a direct cost for UMass Lowell is prohibited.
   b. UMass Lowell's Email resources shall not be used for personal monetary gain or commercial purposes that are not directly related to University business.

2. Other prohibited uses of Email include, but are not limited to:
   a. Sending copies of documents in violation of copyright laws
   b. Inclusion of the work of others into Email communications in violation of copyright laws.
   c. Capture and "opening" of Email except as required in order for authorized employees to diagnose and correct delivery problems.
   d. Use of Email to harass or intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct University business.
   e. Use of Email systems for any purpose restricted or prohibited by laws or regulations.
   f. "Spoofing," i.e., constructing an Email communication so it appears to be from someone else.
   g. "Snooping," i.e., obtaining access to the files or Email of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial University business purpose.
   h. Attempting unauthorized access to Email or attempting to breach any security measures on any Email system, or attempting to intercept any Email transmissions without proper authorization.
   i. Use of Email systems in violation of existing Collective Bargaining Agreements.
D. University Access and Disclosure


   a. To the extent permitted by law, the UMass Lowell reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of faculty, staff, students', and other users' Email without the consent of the user. UMass Lowell will do so when it believes it has a legitimate business need including, but not limited to, those listed in paragraph 3 (below), and only after explicit authorization is obtained from the appropriate University authority.

   b. Faculty, staff, and other non-student users are advised that UMass Lowell's Email systems should be treated like a shared filing system, i.e., with the expectation that communications sent or received on University business or with the use of University resources may be made available for review by any authorized University official for purposes related to University business.

   c. Email of students may constitute "education records" subject to the provisions of the federal statute known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). UMass Lowell may access, inspect, and disclose such records under conditions that are set forth in the statute.

   d. Any user of UMass Lowell's Email resources who makes use of an encryption device to restrict or inhibit access to his or her Email must provide access to such encrypted communications when requested to do so under appropriate University authority.

2. Monitoring of Communications

   UMass Lowell will not monitor Email as a routine matter, but it may do so to the extent permitted by law as UMass Lowell deems necessary for purposes of maintaining the integrity and effective operation of UMass Lowell's Email systems.

3. Inspection and Disclosure of Communications

   a. UMass Lowell reserves the right to inspect and disclose the contents of Email:
      i. in the course of an investigation triggered by indications of misconduct or misuse,
      ii. as needed to protect health and safety,
      iii. as needed to prevent interference with the academic mission, or
      iv. as needed to locate substantive information required for University business that is not more readily available by some other means.

   UMass Lowell will inspect and disclose the contents of Email when such action is necessary to respond to legal processes and to fulfill UMass Lowell's obligations to third parties.

4. Limitations on Disclosure and Use of Information Obtained by Means of Access or Monitoring

   The contents of Email communications, properly obtained for University purposes, may be disclosed without permission of the user. UMass Lowell will attempt to refrain from disclosure of particular communications if disclosure appears likely to create personal
embarrassment, unless such disclosure is required to serve a business purpose or satisfy a legal obligation.

5. Procedures to Approve Access to, Disclosure of, or Use of Email Communications

Individuals needing to access the Email communications of others, to use information gained from such access, and/or to disclose information from such access and who do not have the prior consent of the user must obtain approval in advance of such activity from the appropriate University authority. That procedure shall take into consideration ways to minimize the time and effort required to submit and respond to requests, the need to minimize interference with University business, and protection of the rights of individuals.

E. Disciplinary Action

Violations of law or University policies in the use of University Email Services may result in restriction of access to University Information Technology resources. Additionally, disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, may be applicable under University policies, guidelines, procedures, or respective collective bargaining agreements.

F. Retention and Archival of Email

The University does not maintain a central or distributed Email archive of ALL Email sent or received. However, Email is normally archived or “backed-up” daily only for system restoration and disaster recovery purposes, and are not designed to facilitate retrieval of deleted messages. Backup copies of email will be kept for no more than six weeks. Information Technology cannot recover individual messages or mailboxes unless there is a university critical reason, or as described in Section D above.

Email users should be aware that generally it is not possible to ensure the longevity of Email records for record-keeping purposes, in part because of the difficulty of guaranteeing the Email can continue to be read in the face of changing formats and technologies and in part because of the changing nature of Electronic Mail Systems. This becomes increasingly difficult as Email encompasses more digital forms, such as digital voice, music, image, video and text. Additionally, in the absence of the use of authentication systems, it is difficult to guarantee that Email documents have not been altered, intentionally or inadvertently.

Email users and those in possession of University Records in the form of Electronic Mail are cautioned, therefore, to be prudent in their reliance of Email for purposes of maintaining a lasting record. Where long-term accessibility is an issue, sound business practices suggest that consideration be given to transferring Email to a more lasting format.

VI. RESPONSIBILITY

Information Technology is the responsible organization for implementing the provisions of this policy. The University’s Chief Information Officer and the Information Security Officer are the designated point of contacts.

VII. ATTACHMENTS
VIII. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

IT-5-111    UMass Lowell Information Security Policy
IT-5-101    UMass Lowell Acceptable Use Policy

IX. APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE

Approved:

_________________________________________  Date: ______________________
James Packard, ISO

_________________________________________  Date: ______________________
Michael Cipriano, CIO