

Auburn University Faculty E-Mail Tips & Guidelines

It's Official

Auburn University provides all faculty, staff, and students with an official university e-mail account. Your e-mail address is:
 userID@auburn.edu

- Official AU correspondence is delivered to this address.
- This e-mail address is published in our online directory and campus phone book.
- Technical support and assistance with this e-mail address is available through the Office of Information Technology (OIT) Helpdesk (4-4944 or helpdesk@auburn.edu).

Getting Started

To get your user ID, establish access and/or request a particular e-mail package, contact your Administrative Computing Coordinator (ACC). A list of ACCs by department is provided online at www.auburn.edu/client/cc.html. Tips on "Choosing an Employee E-mail Package" are available online at www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/email/empchoice.html

E-mail training opportunities www.auburn.edu/its/training/
 E-mail online help documents www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/email/adm.html

Technical support - OIT Helpdesk ... 4-4944, or helpdesk@auburn.edu, or visit our office in 26 L Building

What is Available

For communicating with **individuals**, your Administrative Computing Coordinator (ACC) can help you choose an e-mail package.

For communicating with your **classes**, Auburn University provides some effective tools – **AU Study** and **WebCT**. Your ACC can assist you in establishing access to both.

Help Where to go for e-mail help:

- **Survival Guide** Contact OIT for copies, 4-4512
- **OIT Helpdesk** 4-4944, helpdesk@auburn.edu
- **Online Help** www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/startup/
- **GroupWise Tip Sheet** www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/email/gw_tips/ or, contact OIT for copies, 4-4512

Other E-mail

Some colleges or departments – like Engineering or the Vet School – may also provide you with e-mail accounts on their systems. You may also have a personal account, like AOL. We recommend that you **forward other e-mail** to your **@auburn.edu** address to assure that messages aren't missed. In addition, you will only need to check your e-mail in one place. Students are encouraged to do the same. For "how-to" information, contact the Helpdesk at 4-4944 or helpdesk@auburn.edu.

E-mail from Home or Abroad

Not on campus? You can still keep in touch with Internet access at home.

- **AU Dial** provides access to e-mail and the Internet from off-campus via modem. Available to AU departments only. Request through your ACC. Details online at www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/connect/audial.html.
- **GroupWise, WebMail, WebCT and AU Study** can be used from home (or out of town). Go to the AU home page (www.auburn.edu), click on **Employees**. Click on the desired application and login.

Attachments

Sending files attached to your e-mail message can be tricky because not everyone has the same programs or versions of programs that you do.

- Consider pasting the information into the **body of the e-mail message** rather than attaching as a file.
- Consider putting the information in those attachments on a **Web page** and providing the **URL** address in the e-mail message.
- Place the information in **WebCT (posted to a discussion board)** to share with your students instead of attaching it to an e-mail message.
- Consider sending text attachments in **two versions** – one in the program used to create the file (i.e., Word) and another in **Rich Text** format (rtf) or **text** format (.txt).
- Indicate the format of the attachment in the body of the e-mail. e.g., "Attached: document1.doc (Word 2001)."

Forgot Your Password?

If you forget your AU Study, WebCT, or e-mail password, you may be able to reset your password online at www.auburn.edu/password. Contact the Helpdesk at 4-4944 for assistance. For security reasons, Help Desk consultants will ask several questions to verify your identity before resetting the password.

CHOOSING A CLASS COMMUNICATION TOOL

FEATURES:

	AU Study	WebCT
AUTOMATICALLY UPDATES CLASS E-MAIL LIST – NO NEED TO UPDATE CHANGING STUDENT E-MAIL ADDRESSES OR REFLECT CLASS DROPS/ADDS	YES	YES
CAN SEND THE SAME E-MAIL MESSAGE TO MORE THAN ONE CLASS SECTION AT ONCE	YES	NO
REPLIES ARE RETURNED TO INSTRUCTOR ONLY – NOT TO ENTIRE CLASS	YES	YES
CAN SEND E-MAIL TO ANY AU CLASS	YES	NO <small>access your class only</small>
CAN SEND MESSAGES TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS OR GROUPS OF STUDENTS WITHIN A CLASS	NO <small>messages sent to entire class list</small>	YES
CLASS COMMUNICATION IS SEPARATE FROM REGULAR E-MAIL	NO <small>delivered to @auburn.edu address</small>	YES <small>internal to WebCT</small>
ALLOWS ATTACHMENTS OF FILES TO THE E-MAIL MESSAGE	NO <small>must be placed in body of message</small>	YES
IN ADDITION TO E-MAIL, PROVIDES THREADED DISCUSSION BOARDS AND REAL-TIME CHAT	NO	YES

Students with Disabilities

Auburn University instructors have a legal obligation to ensure effective communication with all students. Students with **visual impairment** may be unable to read e-mail attachments containing graphical information or other formatted materials. Students with **hearing impairment** may be unable to hear music or spoken information in e-mail attachments. The instructor should provide a descriptive text alternative for both. Contact Tracy Donald, Assistive Technology Specialist, 4-2096, to determine the best way to accommodate the student.


If a student with visual impairment in your class needs special software to read e-mail, the following resources are available:

Location	Software
Public Labs	Zoomtext Extra (enlarger & screen reader)
RBD Library	TextHelp Screen Reader (checkout laptops)
1 st Floor Circulation Desk	JAWS Screen Reader (on desktop PC)
PSD Assistive Technology Lab	Large monitor with Zoomtext Extra
1237 Haley Center	JAWS Screen Reader
8 am to 4:30 pm, Weekdays	TextHelp Screen Reader

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STEP-BY-STEP

How to send e-mail to your class using AU Study

- Go to the AU home page at www.auburn.edu
- Click on 
- Click on **AU Study**
- Login with your OIT user ID and password
- Click on **WebCT Toolkit**
- Directly under the WebCT Toolkit title, click on **Class Rolls**
- Specify the term and department of the class roll desired (Other fields optional).
- Click on Search.
- **To send e-mail to one class section**
Point and click to select the desired class from the search results provided. You can move down the list by moving the scroll bar on the right of the box. Once the class is selected, click on **View Class Roll**. Click on "E-mail entire section."
- **To send e-mail to several class sections**
From the list of sections displayed, highlight the desired sections by holding down the CTRL key and clicking on each one of them. Once the class(es) are selected, click on **Send E-mail to Selected Classes** button.

How to send e-mail to your class using WebCT

This assumes you have created your WebCT course. If not, "how to" instructions are available online at www.auburn.edu/helpdesk/webct/start.html

- Go to the AU home page at www.auburn.edu
- Click on 
- Click on **WebCT**
- Click on **Log on to myWebCT**
- Enter your AU Userid and WebCT password and click OK.
- Click on the desired course from your list of courses.
- Your WebCT course home page is displayed. Click on **Class Communication Tools**, then on Mail. Contact webct@auburn.edu for assistance in you don't see this option. The Compose Mail Message box appears.
- Click **Browse**. To select recipient, click their name. To select more than one recipient, hold SHIFT key while selecting the names. Click **Done**.
- Complete the subject line and type or paste your message in the text box. Blank subjects or messages are not allowed.
- If you would like to attach a file
 - a) Enter the filename of the attachment.
 - b) Click **Attach File**. The filename appears.
 - c) Select the check box next to the filename.
- Click **Send**.

GUIDELINES

...for All E-mail Communication

Use **explicit subject lines** - Be as specific as possible and include the course number (ex: "ENGL1100 — Weekly Assignment #6").

Know when not to use e-mail. E-mail is a supplement to and not a substitute for one-on-one interaction with students.

- Negative communications (like "Plagiarism suspected") should be handled face-to-face.
- If a student reveals a personal problem or makes a difficult request, set up an appointment to meet with him/her instead of using e-mail.
- E-mail to the entire class isn't private and shouldn't contain confidential information such as grades, social security numbers, etc.

Short, to the point, e-mail is more likely to be read than long messages.

Professionalism in e-mail is no different from other professional correspondence. You'll be glad that you've taken time to proofread, check spelling, follow grammar rules, and avoid shorthand.

You can create **standard headers and footers** for your messages (to avoid having to continually type the same thing over). A good **signature block** footer includes the following:

Sarah Smith (smithsa@auburn.edu)
Graduate Teaching Assistant, English
Auburn University
(888) 444-4444

If you're referring to a previous e-mail, either **explicitly quote that document** to provide context or, if replying to a message, **include the message** in your response.

Don't say anything via e-mail that you wouldn't say in person.

Remember, an e-mail message can be a permanent written record of your comments and can be forwarded far beyond your intended audience.

...for Communication with Your Class

Be sure your students know the rules:

- Specify on the syllabus that students are **required to check** their official AU e-mail on a regular basis - be specific.
- Let them know **where to go for help** using e-mail - like *Survival Guide* or Helpdesk at 4-4944 or helpdesk@auburn.edu.
- Request that students always include their **name** in the body of their e-mail. You may not recognize their return address.
- **Clarify time assignments are due.** Specify a **time** as well as a due-date for assignments accepted via e-mail (ex: "Essay #1 due in my in-box no later than May 11th at 6:00 p.m.").
- **Clarify wait time for instructor's response.** Make students aware of how long they should expect to wait for your reply - their message sent at 2 am may not get a reply by class time.

Once you've told students how often to check e-mail, you'll know how far in **advance** you need to send changes, requests, etc., and reasonably expect compliance. Keep in mind that students **without a home computer** may not be able to check e-mail after they leave campus at night or on the weekends.

Send a **test e-mail message** during the first week of class. Have students confirm receipt.

Include **your e-mail address** on the syllabus.

Save all e-mail to and from students. Keep electronic information for the same amount of time that you keep paper records. You can **organize** your e-mail by creating separate folders for different classes (WebCT does this for you), organizations, personal e-mail, etc. Keep related e-mail together (sent and received).

NOTE: AU Study and/or WebCT are recommended for class communication but if you choose to maintain your own class e-mail lists instead, there are some unique issues. WebCT e-mail is only available in WebCT. For more information, contact OIT Educational Services at 4-4512.