POLICY NAME: College of Education ED-FAC-STAFF and ED-STAFF Listserv Policy

Authority Title and Review Information:	Name and Date
Approval Authority:	Office of the Dean (College of Education)
Responsible Executive:	Senior Director, Communications (College of Education)
Responsible Office:	Communications (College of Education)
Responsible Officer:	Communications Coordinator
Policy Category:	Unit-Level Policies
Effective Date:	September 15, 2025
Last Review Date:	September 3, 2025
Next Review Date:	July 1, 2027 (or after negative incidence(s) occur through listserv usage)

I.   POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes a framework for communicating with internal College of Education audiences via the ED-FAC-STAFF@list.msu.edu and ED-STAFF@list.msu.edu listservs.

This policy outlines the types of content and emails shared; review the Listserv Usage Guidelines (Attachment 1) for best practices regarding formatting content.

Though other listservs exist, they are not the focus of this strategy; see details within.

The policy will create a listserv process and limit the number of emails sent. This will help ensure that quality and timely communications are sent, thereby limiting concerns about inaccurate messaging. This is in alignment with the MSU Technology Office, which suggests Spartans "use bulk email infrequently" (among other best practices; see the end of this document).

This policy is due for review in July 2027 or after negative incidence(s) occur through listserv usage.

II.   SCOPE

ED-FAC-STAFF includes all faculty and staff, regardless of appointment type. It does not include students, alums or retirees. Individuals are added to and removed from the list at the discretion of the CED Human Resources team.

ED-STAFF includes all staff in the college. It does not include students, alums, retirees or faculty of any employment type. Individuals are added to and removed from the list at the discretion of the CED Human Resources team.

Generally, this policy does not include any lists specific to employment types, such as faculty, academic specialists, or retirees, nor does it apply to individual units (for example, a listserv solely for one department).

Student employees are not included on any listserv in the college.

III.   DEFINITIONS

- *Community Connections* – a regular email communication to the College of Education faculty and staff; a single repository for all events
- *ED-FAC-STAFF* – a College of Education-based listserv specifically for College of Education faculty and staff
- *ED-STAFF* – a College of Education-based listserv specifically for College of Education staff
- *Editor* – role type that is allowed to send to the listserv without *Moderator* approval; role type defined by MSU IT
- *Internal Insights* – a regular email communication to the College of Education faculty and staff; a general newsletter about college happenings, does not typically include events
- *Moderator* – role type that serves as the main overseer of the listserv; role type defined by MSU IT

IV. POLICY & POLICY PROCEDURES

Table of Contents

Submission Types & Processes
Upon receiving a request, the Communications team will review and, if applicable, upload it to a template. The Communications team will edit for grammar without the approval of the original author(s). **Requests or submissions that do not follow the policy will not be included, no exceptions.**

Use this Qualtrics form to submit content to be shared on the ED-FAC-STAFF and/or ED-STAFF listserv(s)

- **EVENTS** open to or of broad interest to the College of Education community. College events that are invite-only or only for committee members (i.e., FTAC, SSAC, etc.) will not be shared via this listserv. University events are not typically shared; some exceptions may apply, such as when a CED community member is honored. These exceptions will be made at the sole discretion of the Communications team.
  - Submissions must be made by 8:00 a.m. EST on the Friday prior for inclusion in the next week's issue. There are no exceptions for late submissions or submissions via email/Teams.
  - Submissions must include title, time, location, description, and (when applicable) links to registration information.
  - To meet accessibility best practices, flyers and graphics are not accepted or used.
  - The primary modality for sharing events is through the Monday CED Community Connections email. However, some college-wide events may also be shared through Internal Insights or as individual emails/reminders (particularly for college-wide events), at the sole discretion of the Communications team.
    - The *Moderator* cannot prohibit those with *Editor* access from sending emails. Editors are asked to refrain from sending event-specific emails as much as possible to limit listserv use.

- **GENERAL FYIs**, including notifications and reminders of food available in a location, resources, recruiting calls for labs/studies or committees, etc. Submissions will be reviewed and distributed to the college community as soon as the Communications team is able and/or via the CED Community Connections email. As much advanced notice as possible is appreciated.

Individuals/units with sending capacity may send these and other general FYIs as needed without the review or approval of the Communications team.

- **LEADERSHIP MESSAGING**

    - *Policy or Building(s) Status Updates:* No approval from Communications is required to send to the listserv(s). Examples include changes to college-level policies or status updates regarding power outages, heating/cooling/water in the building(s), weather, fire drills, etc.
    - *Any leadership messaging separate from a newsletter and not related to policy status or changes:* Needs approval from the Dean and/or the Senior Director of Communications. Please use the college's Crisis Communications policy if considering a message during a time of crisis or emergency.

Scheduled Communications

- **CED Community Connections (Mondays)**
    - Upcoming college events and/or miscellaneous needs/requests. Only sent to faculty/staff. Graduate students receive via GradLink; undergraduates are notified via email/blogs.
- **ADR Updates (Tuesdays)**
    - Research-specific updates, produced by the Office of Research Administration.
    - Added to a template by the Communications team.
- **CED Internal Insights (Thursdays, biweekly)**
    - Includes updates regarding the college (not the university).
    - Occasionally, the newsletter will include special information from units, such as wellness initiatives, human resource needs, technology updates, etc. The cadence of these special insights will be solely determined by the Communications team.
    - Items within Internal Insights may be repeats of standalone messages *(e.g., HR sends an email about a policy update; Internal Insights may remind the college of the policy update.)*
    - To demonstrate inclusivity, transparency, and appreciation, the college announces its hires, promotions, and transitions monthly.
    - Sent to ED-FAC-STAFF and to graduate students. At the request of the Student Affairs Office, undergraduate students are not on the list.
- **ORA Grant Announcements (Fridays)**
    - Research-specific funding updates. Produced by the Office of Research Administration.
    - Added to a template by the Communications team.
- **Monthly Observances (typically the first business day of the month)**
    - Recognizes events, religious and secular, that occur during that month for knowledge, awareness and consideration.
    - Produced by the Office of Access and Community Engagement.

- **FASA/FEA Roundup (typically once per month)**
  - Information relevant to faculty and academic staff across the college. Produced by the Associate Dean for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs.
  - Cadence of timing is at the discretion of the ADFASA.
- **Office of K-12 Outreach Newsletter (typically once per month)**
  - Information highlighting efforts and events within the Office of K-12 Outreach.

Limitations
Listservs are <u>not</u> to be used for:
- Confidential information, including any information that might violate FERPA laws.
- Questions, comments, or concerns about leadership, policies, practices or procedures of the unit, college, university or any external organization. Please speak with your supervisor or follow the recommended protocols per the college/university Human Resources.
- Personal opinions, viewpoints or recommendations on local, national or international politics, events or opportunities. Relatedly, the listserv should not be used for personal purposes, including advertising for personal means or solicitations. *NOTE: This is also part of the "Appropriate Use of MSU Email Services by Internal Users on MSUNet" (MSU Technology).*

Units/Individuals with Permission to Send
All units are specific to the MSU College of Education.

Moderator
The general Communications email, coemedia@msu.edu, is the main moderator email. The college's Communications Coordinator serves as the primary individual overseeing this policy and related emails.

Editors
The following units and personnel have access to send to the listserv without moderator approval:
- Communications
  - Communications Coordinator
  - Senior Director of Communications
- Human Resources (all)
- Facilities (all)
- Information Technology (all)
- Office of the Dean
  - Generic account: CED.OfficeoftheDean@list.msu.edu
  - Dean
  - Executive Staff Assistant to the Dean
  - Chief of Staff
  - Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Staff

- o Project Manager
- o Project/Event Coordinator

V.   VIOLATIONS

Requests or submissions that do not meet the approved types or procedures outlined above will not be included, no exceptions. Such submissions will be deleted from the coemedia@msu.edu inbox.

VI. RELATED INFORMATION AND ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1:
College of Education Listserv Usage Guidelines
Last revised: April 2025

PURPOSE
This document is intended to share best practices and usage recommendations regarding all listservs within the MSU College of Education. Some listservs are moderated by personnel within the college. It is incumbent upon moderators and editors to follow these best practices and guidelines.

While these best practices are curated for college- and unit-level listservs, many of the same ideas and suggestions can – and should – be used in external marketing communications. For example, if your unit creates an external newsletter utilizing a third-party email system (MailChimp, Constant Contact or similar), you may consider utilizing these guidelines.

This document is intended to be informative, but it should not be considered an exhaustive list of all best practices that might be considered or utilized in email communications.

Contact the following units for questions on:
- Email guidelines or content: coemedia@msu.edu (CED Communications)
- Listservs or listserv functionality: educit@msu.edu (CED Tech Services)

These guidelines are due for review in July 2027 or after negative incidence(s) occur through listserv usage.

Table of Contents
- Guidelines
- Accessibility
- Surveys

General Sending Guidelines
All users across Michigan State University must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy for MSU Information Technology Resources.
- Use succinct, informative subject lines.
  - Limit your subject lines to no more than nine (9) words or 60 characters. Examples: *"Registration Open: Support(ED)"* or *"Register: Support(ED)"* works, but *"Registration is now open for the annual College of Education Support(ED) All-College Assembly"* does not.
- Be brief in the body content of emails, where possible.
- Consider sending times.

- The College of Education generally operates under the 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. standard workday. Sending during non-business hours, especially to listservs, may indicate you require or wish for email consumption or reaction also during non-business hours. Be mindful of how your email send time might appear to others.
- Avoid using words like "Urgent," "Important," "Time-Sensitive," or sending as high priority unless the email truly is urgent.
  - Repeatedly sending emails with these types of indicators may dull users from recognizing your communications as essential. Use sparingly, and only when necessary. Terms such as "Action Needed" or "Review" may fall into a similar category, but as they are informative as to what you expect of your audience, it may also be beneficial.
  - Consider being clear in the first 1-2 sentences of any time sensitivities.
- Remember: Nothing is confidential.
  - What you write and share can and will be seen by others. Emails can be forwarded (or sent onward beyond listservs), screenshotted, digitally saved as PDFs, printed, etc. In addition, emails sent via listservs can be subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
- Consider if all recipients on the listserv need the email prior to sending. Relatedly, use CC (carbon copy) and Reply All functions sparingly.
- Avoid use of emojis (or emoticons) in emails.
  - These may be misinterpreted in professional settings. These include emojis available on mobile devices and ones typed out, such as ":)"
- Proofread your email before sending.

Prohibited Listserv Uses
Never use *any* listserv to share:
- Confidential information, including any information that might violate Family Educational Rights and Privacy (or FERPA) laws.
- Questions, comments, or concerns about leadership, policies, practices or procedures of the unit, college, university or any external organization. Please speak with your supervisor or follow recommended protocols per college/university Human Resources.
- Personal opinions, viewpoints or recommendations on local, national or international politics, events or opportunities.
- Personal purposes, including advertising for personal means or solicitations. Exemptions include promoting opportunities calling for participation in research.

NOTE: The latter two items are also part of the "Appropriate Use of MSU Email Services by Internal Users on MSUNet" (MSU Technology).

Accessibility
Accessibility practices help individuals using screen readers and other supportive applications to absorb the entirety of an email or digital message. A simple way to help ensure an email meets accessibility standards is by using plain text without any HTML. It is not recommended to embed images or flyers within the body of an email. If attaching a PDF, consider running it through an accessibility checker (click for links to Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Word and Canva as examples).

Units may choose to use a third-party emailing platform, such as MailChimp, Constant Contact, or the like. These options often provide opportunities to embed images, graphics and other elements to visually make the email more interesting. If incorporating these elements, consider areas such as alternative text on images, headers and sub-headers throughout the content, color choices for readability and more. The best method of learning about accessibility for third-party email clients is by consulting help-related articles published by that client.

Here are other sources to learn about accessibility including for emails sent natively through Outlook:

- Accessibility Basics Checklist (Source: MSU Digital Accessibility. Link gathered on 04/16/25)
- Information on "Image Only Emails" (Source: MSU Digital Accessibility. Link gathered on 04/16/25)
- Make Your Outlook Email Accessible and the complementary Accessibility Checker (Source: Microsoft Outlook. Link gathered on 04/16/25)
- A selection of sources created by other higher education institutions include: Harvard University's "Creating Accessible Emails," Ohio State University's "Email Accessibility Guide," and the University of Missouri's "Create Accessible Emails." All links gathered on 04/16/25, unless otherwise indicated.

Surveys
Before sharing any survey, read about MSU's survey creation and dissemination policy: https://ir.msu.edu/surveys

VIII. HISTORY

Action	Description
Issued:	1. Communications, College of Education [September 15, 2025]
Approved by:	1. Dean Jerlando F. L. Jackson [August 26, 2025]
Revised:	1. N/A – New Policy