

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

SRSU Policy: Electronic Communications Policy

SRSU Policy ID: APM 7.18

Policy Reviewed by: Chief Information Officer

Approval Authority: Executive Cabinet

Approval Date: May 31, 2016

Next Review Date: May 31, 2021

PURPOSE:

SRSU electronic communications services support the educational and administrative activities of the university and serve as a means of official communication by and between users and SRSU. Electronic communications are defined as the transfer of text, html, images, or data through a computer, cell phone, tablet, PDA or any other communications device and includes email, instant messaging, texting, web pages, blogs and forums. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that these critical services remain available and reliable and are used for purposes appropriate to the university's mission through prudent and acceptable practices.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all members of the SRSU community who are authorized to use electronic communications provided by the university for the purpose of sending, receiving, or storing of electronic messages in the fulfillment of the user's employment and academic work.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Under the provisions of the Information Resources Management Act (Texas Government Code, Title 10, Subtitle B, chapter 2054) and Texas Administrative Code (TAC Title 1, Part 10, Chapter 2.02, Subchapter C), information technology resources are strategic assets of the State of Texas that must be managed as valuable state resources.

SRSU provides electronic communications services to faculty, staff and students, and other affiliated classes of individuals, including retirees, visiting faculty and other officials. Use of SRSU electronic communication services must be consistent with the university's educational goals and comply with local, state, federal laws and other university policies, specifically the Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources Policy (APM 7.04). All users of SRSU electronic communications services are advised that electronic data and communications mechanisms using the university information resources for transmission or storage are the property of the State of Texas and Sul Ross State University and may be reviewed and/or accessed in accordance with the Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources (APM 7.04, paragraph 4) by authorized university officials for purposes related to university business. All user activity on SRSU information technology resource assets is subject to logging, review and open records.

Electronic Communications Services are available for faculty, staff and students to support learning, conduct university business, and to support communications between the university and its members. Incidental personal use of these services is allowed with the understanding that the

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primary use of these services be job-related and occasional use does not adversely impact work responsibilities or the performance of the network.

The use of SRSU electronic communications services is a privilege granted to each person so long as they maintain a university defined affiliation to SRSU (see the User Account Eligibility Statement on the OIT website) and use the system in a manner that supports the goals and mission of the university. Once a user's electronic services are terminated, as specified in the User Account Eligibility Statement, students, faculty, staff and other affiliated classes of users should no longer expect nor should they attempt to access the contents of these systems, or export their electronic records to a personal account unless authorized by the university to do so. SRSU reserves the right to discontinue these services at any time it sees fit.

PRIVACY ISSUES:

SRSU reserves the right to moderate and access any and all electronic communications accounts, services and messages to:

- Ensure that these critical services remain available and reliable
- Ensure that the privileges of using these services is not abused and are used appropriately and support the goals and mission of SRSU
- Ensure that the content of messages is appropriate for the audience to which it is addresses
- Ensure that the appropriate communication mechanism is used
- For such other purposes as SRSU, in its sole discretion, may consider to be in its best interests.
- No person who uses SRSU's electronic communications services should have any expectation of privacy with respect to any data, including personal information, that may be entered, received or stored on an SRSU computer, personal cell phone, tablet, PDA or any other communications device. Use of a personal communications device to enter, receive or store public records or documents, as defined by the Texas Public Information Act, Government Code, Chapter 522, may be compelled to surrender the device so that the public records may be retrieved.

All data contained, sent or received within the scope of these services must be secured according to the classification of that data (see [Data Classification Guide](#)).

Users of SRSU electronic communications services are encouraged to delete any unneeded or unofficial communications to preclude the unnecessary consumption of server resources and to prevent the disclosure of sensitive or confidential information if a breach occurs.

Electronic records should only be retained if they qualify as an official business record of the university.