Listserv Policy

Listserv description and definitions
This policy is subordinate to all other Union College Information Technology Services policies.

A listserv is an electronic mailing list that offers an efficient way to disseminate information to large numbers of people and hold long-distance discussions among many people. Mailing lists are an easy way to reach a large audience quickly, by automating the distribution of e-mail to all those who subscribe to the mailing list. Mailing lists have become a critical component of scholarly collaboration. Many colleges and universities are also using them to facilitate and enhance classroom education as well as conducting the day-to-day administration of the College.

An official listserv is a list that is established by academic and administrative offices to which members are pre-subscribed to by virtue of their positions and responsibilities at the institution, e.g. faculty@union.edu.

Unofficial listservs are subsets of the campus community which members of the list are not pre-subscribed and maintained by the requestor as outlined below.

Listserv owner – Lists are created and "owned" by an individual user who manages the list’s behavior.

Any faculty, staff, or student member of the Union College community is entitled to become a listserv owner (also known as a list owner). Campus-based organizations and departments are also entitled to own lists, but an individual within the group must be designated as the listserv owner. Students must be in good standing with the Dean of Students office and student organizations must be registered with the Office of Student Activities.

Listserv owners are responsible for properly managing their list. The responsibilities of the list owner include:

- Advising individuals who will be pre-subscribed to the list of the list's purpose and how to unsubscribe themselves.
- Responding to subscribers' requests for removal from the list.
- Assisting subscribers with subscribing or unsubscribing to the list.
- Correcting subscriptions that are made incorrectly or in error.
- Working with the listserv manager as needed to configure their lists to change list attributes such as ownership, open/closed list status, moderated/un-moderated status, etc.
- If needed, creating and managing moderators of their list.
• Working with the list moderator(s) in managing activity on the list.
• Working with the listserv manager in creating and maintaining current and relevant files such as the subscribers, aliases, news, peers, ignored, info, or welcome files.
• Responding to errors related to their list such as delivery and remove errors.
• Responding to requests made by the listserv manager.
• Staying informed about current listserv policy.
• Attending list owner training or otherwise staying informed about list management.

Membership to a list is not a right of the individual. List owners have the right and are responsible for unsubscribing list members who abuse a list by sending off-topic mail to the list, misuse or abuse the resource or are abusive of other list members. The list owner is responsible for determining what constitutes off-topic or abusive mailings. The listserv manager and ITS are responsible for determining if a mailing is abusive. Escalation procedures for disagreements regarding the interpretation and application of this policy should be escalated through appropriate College channels, i.e., Student Affairs or department manager. Abuse of a list should be brought to the attention of the listserv manager and/or other College authorities.

**Listserv Moderator** – The listserv moderator is a designated by the listserv owner. A listserv can have multiple moderators. The listserv moderator is responsible for reviewing posts and editing if necessary before releasing the post to the list. The listserv moderator also has the ability to reject a post and return it to the sender.

**Listserv Manager** – The listserv manager is a member of ITS who is responsible for maintaining the listserv software, creation and deletion of listservs, and other tasks related to the running of the infrastructure of the listserv.

**Purpose**
The purpose of listservs at Union College is to facilitate and disseminate information to eligible members and affiliates of the College. Listserv services are available to current faculty, administrators, staff and student organizations. The person responsible for managing a list is known as the "list owner." If the list owner leaves the College, then the current list owner must find a new list owner and identify that new person to the listserv manager. If no new list owner can be identified, Information Technology Services reserves the right to disable the list or to request that the list be moved to a non-Union College server.

Requests for listservs that include non-Union College participants will be considered as long as the list owner is a member of Union College and has adequate justification for hosting the
listserv at Union College. These types of listservs must be moderated and will be limited to 900 subscribers. The list owner is expected to review and maintain the subscriptions to the list.

**Requesting a List**

To request a list, complete the List Request form which may be found online at: [http://www.union.edu/Resources/Technology/ITS/policies/lserv.php](http://www.union.edu/Resources/Technology/ITS/policies/lserv.php)

Applicants with questions about the form can request assistance by contacting the listserv manager at listservmanager@union.edu.

**Note:** Not all requests will be honored with a list. The listserv manager may ask for additional documentation regarding the granting of a list. The listserv manager may recommend other electronic conferencing technology that would better serve the purpose of the request. Other considerations that will determine the status of a list request include the relevance of the list to the education, research, or the administration of the College and the capacity of available resources within ITS; including how the size of the proposed list will affect College electronic mail systems.

**Policies**

If there is reason to believe that the list will be used for illegal purposes, that list will not be established. If it is operational, it will be disabled after consultation with College administrators.

Lists are subject to all College e-mail policies. Other than certain predefined Union College lists (e.g. Faculty, Administrators, Student class lists, etc.) list members should not be pre-subscribed to a list without their knowledge or permission. Subscribers who request to be unsubscribed from a list should be removed.

List members who are affiliated with Union College (i.e. students, faculty members, administrators, staff members, emerti) **must** use their Union College email addresses and usernames when subscribing to a listserv that is hosted at Union College.

List members must adhere to Union College’s Acceptable Use Policy.

In general, the list owner(s) or group members are responsible for subscribing or unsubscribing members to the list. Written requests for special lists to be created from College databases will be handled on a case-by-case basis with priority given to course-related lists.
Based on the information provided within the listserv application and Union College naming conventions and in discussion with the listserv manager, ITS will develop a list name.

Sending attachments via listserv is discouraged. It is strongly recommended that list members post links to items that they might have considered sending as an attachment.

Lists will be periodically reviewed for activity and continued conformance to the current listserv policies. Lists that are inactive or fail to conform to policy will be removed. Lists will be reviewed for activity on an annual basis. Lists with no activity for an extended period of time will be removed. Lists associated with courses will be removed at the end of each quarter, or at the conclusion of the course. List owners will be contacted by the listserv manager prior to removing the list. If an owner is unable to be contacted, the list will be removed.

To assist the list owner in performing these tasks, the listserv manager will maintain on-line documentation for these and other functions.