

UMMS Community Guidelines for OMSE Listserv Communication

Applies to: All students, faculty, staff, and affiliates who use student email listservs maintained by the Office of Medical School Education (OMSE)

Guiding Principles:

1. The University of Michigan Medical School (UMMS) strives to foster a learning environment that respects diverse perspectives, engages in lifelong learning, demonstrates compassion for patients and colleagues, and fosters the development of each individual to reach their full potential as a leader in medicine. “As its central purpose, this community promotes intellectual inquiry through vigorous discourse.”¹
2. We value civic engagement with critical issues that impact the health of patients - locally, nationally, and globally. We encourage members of our community to exchange ideas and engage in dialogue across differences, including those we find difficult or uncomfortable. We recognize the educational value in considering conflicting perspectives on important topics for our profession and for the communities we serve.
3. We strive to communicate in ways that promote inclusivity, safety, mutual respect, and understanding. We recognize that at times members of our community may find particular issues too painful or challenging due to life circumstances. Each of us is free to express their perspectives and to listen to others’. The corollary is that each of us is free to disengage as needed and to not be held as a captive audience to messages we find offensive.

Policy:

In general, email communication should comply with policies outlined in the [Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), [Freedom of Speech and Artistic Expression](#) (SPG 601.01), [Responsible Use of Information Resources](#) (SPG 601.07), [Sexual and Gender Based Misconduct Policy](#) (SPG 601.89), [UMMS Bulletin](#), and applicable state and federal laws. In particular, email on the OMSE listservs should not be used for:

- Campaigning for or against a ballot initiative or candidate running for office. This includes institutional, local, state, and national elections.
- Direct threat of harm, sexual misconduct, hazing, stalking, harassment, bullying, distributing alcohol or drugs, nudity, profanity, explicit images, or ad hominem attacks. Definitions of these terms can be found [here](#).
- Creating the appearance that UM is endorsing, affiliated with, or otherwise supporting any organization, product, service, or position. Of note, messages sent on the OMSE listserv do not necessarily reflect the views of and do not constitute an endorsement by OMSE, UMMS, or UM.

Use of OMSE listservs requires a University of Michigan (UM) email address. External or anonymous posting is prohibited.

¹ University of Michigan Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities, <https://oscr.umich.edu/statement>

If you have questions about posting on the listserv, you are always welcome to reach out to the Associate Dean of Medical Student Education or the Senior Director of the Office of Medical Student Education.

Best Practices:

In order to protect one another's email inboxes and time, and to help ensure alignment with OMSE listserv policy, email communications sent should adhere to the following:

- Include listserv recipients (such as medstudents@umich.edu) in **BCC** to reduce potential for reply-all.
- Use **brackets** in the subject line to specify the content included and to allow recipients to appropriately filter messages. For example, emails for personal commercial use (e.g., selling football tickets or seeking pet-sitter) should include the [SPAM] bracket in the subject line. For another example, messages recruiting students to fill out a survey should include the [SURVEY] bracket in the subject line. In general, student organizations should include their name in brackets, such as [StuCo] for messages from Student Council or [SDC] for messages from Student Diversity Council. Messages from the Office of Medical School Education may include the [OMSE] and [IMPORTANT] tags.
- Limit reminder messages to **1 reminder** per event, survey, or request.
- If possible, consider distributing emails to **organization-specific channels** for targeted outreach. Student organizations are encouraged to create their own listservs to reduce messages to the entire medical school community. Each student can see which listservs they are a part of and can remove themselves. This process is maintained by [MCommunity](#).
- There are many email tools available to **reduce unwanted messages**, including using filters, blocking senders, muting conversations, and deleting. Step-by-step instructions are provided for [Gmail](#) and [Outlook](#). If you would like 1-1 assistance with setting this up, please contact the [HITS Service Desk](#).
- If you are concerned your message may be interpreted to reflect an endorsement by UM, to be safe you can include the statement "This email is being sent via the OMSE listserv but is neither endorsed by nor affiliated with any opinion or service of OMSE."

Handling Concerns:

We recognize our interconnectedness as a community. To the extent possible, we encourage approaches that repair harm and restore relationships. If you feel concern about an email you have received, there are multiple paths you might consider.

Within the medical school:

- We first encourage students to engage in an individual discussion with the sender of the email to discuss the content of the message and how it impacted you. Academic Counselors and Advisors, Honor Council representatives, Peer Support Advocates, and the university offices below can provide additional support.
- For messages from students, you can reach out to a member of the Honor Council.
- For messages from faculty and staff, you can submit concerns to the Learning Environment Task

Force through [online form](#).

- If you would no longer like to receive emails on a specific topic or from specific organizations or individuals, we encourage creating email filters to remove these messages from your inbox.

Within the University of Michigan:

- Formal complaints regarding discrimination and harassment, including sexual misconduct, can be submitted with the Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office [through online form](#).
- The [Office of Student Conflict Resolution](#) offers a spectrum of pathways for conflict resolution that are student-driven, community owned, and restorative in nature. This includes 1-1 coaching and support, facilitated dialogue, mediation in which you have agency in shaping process and outcomes. Services can be accessed through [online form](#).
- The [Office of Student Ombuds](#) offers “a place where all students are welcome to come and talk in confidence about any campus issue, concern, problem, or dispute.” Services can be accessed by emailing umstudentombuds@umich.edu or calling 734-763-3545.
- The [UM Campus Climate Support](#) focuses “on addressing concerns that may create harm to members of the University community based on their identity.” You can submit concerns through [online form](#).

Process of Updating Guidelines:

We recognize the needs and perspectives of our community regarding email communication may evolve over time. Use of the listserv, as a limited public forum, and these guidelines are subject to changes by the Office of Medical Student Education. Except in rare circumstances, revisions to the listserv community guidelines will include collaboration with students.