

Washington Community and Technical Colleges (WCTC) Listserv Policy

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Purpose

Washington Community and Technical College listservs are provided in support of the community and technical college faculty, staff, and administration.

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Description of Listserv Service

A listserv is a traditional UNIX electronic mailing list distribution mechanism. People who want to participate in a discussion around a particular topic subscribe to a common list. All e-mail messages sent to the list are then re-mailed to each of the subscribers of the list.

The Center for Information Services manages two groups of UNIX listservers for the Washington community and technical colleges.

- One group, hosted on the Unix processor known as *ctc.ctc.edu*, is open to the whole Internet community.
- The other group of listservers, hosted on the Unix processor known as *interact.ctc.edu* processor, is accessible only from the Internet domains controlled by the community and technical colleges.

ListProc software is currently used.

Lists are either public or private. Private lists require approval of the list owner in order to subscribe. Public lists require no subscription approval. The default is public.

Lists are moderated or unmoderated. Moderated lists require that the list owner screen each posting prior to distribution to the list's subscribers. In an unmoderated list postings go directly to each subscriber. The default is unmoderated.

To reduce the number of SPAMs that are directed to the list, all new lists are created with the "only subscribers can post" option set to true.

Lists, by default, are not archived. In requesting archiving, the list owner must also decide on the archive retention period and whether or not the archive is password protected.

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Requesting a New Listserv

To request a new list, college Internet Coordinators submit written requests to the CIS Internet Administrator (e-mail ctcadmin@ctc.edu). The following information must be included in the written request:

- A statement of the proposed list's name, domain (local or Internet), purpose, and charter
- The expected target subscription base including both a description and expected number of subscribers (for example, 125 Math Professors in the Washington community and technical college system)
- The name, phone number, and e-mail address of the list owner
- Public or Private (If it is a private list, the list owner must provide a list owner password.)
- Archived or Not Archived (If archiving is required, the archive retention period and a password, if any, must be provided.)

Lists are created on a first come-first served basis. New lists will be limited to the current resources of the server. When resources of the server no longer permit new lists, the Information Technology Planning Group (ITPG) will review the need for additional resources. If additional resources are not available, the ITPG may prioritize both requested and existing lists.

Only one list will be created in a given week in order to allow time to work with new listserv owners. CIS staff also have the option of a one month hiatus on list creation to provide time to measure the impact of the new lists on available resources.

Routine requests are handled by CIS staff. Exceptions and appeals are presented to the ITPG.

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List Management

List activity is reviewed regularly. Inactive lists are referred to the ITPG with a recommendation for removal. New lists are allowed a three-month grace period to become active.

The CIS staff will monitor bounced mail for each list. Users may be set to DIGEST mode or removed, as appropriate, to resolve the error conditions (see Bounced Mail procedure below).

Listserv messages are archived (if requested) for a maximum one year.

The CIS staff has the authority to take action as necessary to ensure the overall stability of the service (for example, mail loop management).

The ITPG will monitor, at its discretion, the content of each list. The ITPG may

request the removal of an existing list which its finds no longer meets the purpose of the service or does not provide sufficient value to the community and technical colleges to warrant the use of limited state resources.

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Bounced Mail

Bounced mail is mail that is returned to the sender due to a delivery problem. Bounced mail may occur for many reasons. Most often it is caused by a change to a subscriber's e-mail address or termination of his/her account. Since the mailing list is the sender, the bounce is redirected to the list owner, the listserver manager (CIS staff), or both. Who it is bounced to is a function of the e-mail software (post office not client) used by the receiving site.

- If the user account is known to have been deleted with no known forwarding mechanism in place, the subscription is deleted.
- If the subscriber is bouncing a significant number of messages, the subscription is set to DIGEST mode (the subscriber receives a single consolidated message of all the days postings) and the situation is monitored.
- If a subscriber in DIGEST mode continues to bounce messages over a period of time, the subscription is deleted.

Some e-mail software will bounce the message back to the list subscribers, either through the list or to the original sender. If these types of bounces are detected, the "offending" subscriber will have his/her subscription set to DIGEST mode immediately. If need be, the subscription will be deleted.

Subscriptions which have been deleted or set to DIGEST mode may re-established with normal service once the mail problem is resolved.

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