

Listserv

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Overview and Getting Started

The questions in this section describe some basic concepts about the Listserv process and provide step-by-step instructions for getting started with WCTC lists.

1: What is Listserv?

Listserv refers to an Internet program (ListProcessor) that allows a group of list subscribers to send and receive e-mail among themselves. The Washington Association of Community and Technical Colleges maintains a number of these lists (also commonly referred to as "listservs") for faculty and staff across the state. Each WCTC list consists of subscribers who share common business functions or interests, for example, a listserv for Presidents (the PRES list), a listserv for Financial Aid Directors (the DIRFINAID list), a listserv for Business Affairs Commission (BAC), and so forth.

You use e-mail to communicate with the ListProcessor program and any WCTC lists to which you have subscribed. Using your e-mail application, you send keyword commands, known as "requests," to the ListProcessor program when you want to subscribe, unsubscribe, or find out other information about a WCTC list. The ListProcessor program can handle only certain keywords which must be typed and formatted precisely.

To become a member of a WCTC list, you add (or "subscribe") yourself to it. You can be a member of as many WCTC lists as you are interested in. Once you have subscribed to a specific WCTC list, you will receive a copy of any e-mail correspondence that is sent to that list.

Once you have subscribed to a specific WCTC list, you will receive a copy of any e-mail correspondence that is sent to that list. You open and read Listserv messages just as you do any other e-mail message. When you send (or "post") e-mail correspondence to the list, everyone who is subscribed to the list will receive your message.

You can also find out which WCTC lists are available, review the members of a list, and remove (or "unsubscribe") yourself from lists you no longer want to subscribe to.

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2: How do I subscribe to a WCTC list?

When you want to add yourself to a WCTC list, you subscribe to it. To subscribe to a list, you send a message to the ListProcessor program.

- To subscribe to a WCTC list that is open only to the community and technical colleges (for example, BAC, PERSONNEL, SMS, or DIRFINAID), you send a message to **listserv@interact.ctc.edu**
- To subscribe to a WCTC list that is open to the public domain (for example, ABEDIR, CLAMS-L, DBREPORT, ECEC, or TACTC-L), you send a message to **listserv@ctc.ctc.edu**

Use the following steps to practice by subscribing to a WCTC list called "ctcpractice." Read through these instructions, and then try them yourself.

To subscribe to a Listserv list:

1. On your e-mail screen, create a new message.
2. In the To: line of your message, type the address of the ListProcessor program:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu

3. Leave the Subject: line blank.
4. In the body of the message, type the keyword request:
subscribe list-name first-name last-name
Where "list-name" is the name of the WCTC list, "first-name" is your first name, and "last-name" is your last name. You must let the list know who you are. For example:
subscribe ctcpractice Jane Doe
Do not type anything else.
For example, to subscribe to the list named "ctcpractice," the message would look something like this:

To: listserv@interact.ctc.edu
From:
Subject:
subscribe ctcpractice Jane Doe

5. Send the message
Within a few minutes, you will receive an e-mail message welcoming you to the "ctcpractice" list.

If you have more than one e-mail account, you must be logged on to the e-mail account you want a list to be associated with before you subscribe to the list.

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3: How do I know which WCTC lists are available?

Usually the first thing that you will want to do is find out which WCTC lists are available to you. There are two ways to do this — by using e-mail or by using the CIS's Web site.

Using e-mail to identify WCTC lists that are available to you:

1. On your e-mail screen, create a new message.
2. In the To: line of your message, type:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
listserv@ctc.ctc.edu (for the names of public domain lists)
3. Leave the Subject: line blank.
4. In the body of the message, type:
lists
Do not type anything else.
5. Send the message.
Within a few minutes, you will receive an e-mail message showing the WCTC lists that are available to you.

Using the CIS's Web site to identify WCTC lists that are available to you:

- Click [WCTC Mailing Lists](#) to go directly the list of lists.

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4: How do I send a message to a list?

As a subscribing member of a list, you can send messages to everyone on that list. For example, when you send a message to "ctcpractice@interact.ctc.edu," it will be distributed to everyone on the "ctcpractice" list. Read through these instructions, and then try them yourself.

To send a message to a list to which you are subscribed:

1. On your e-mail screen, create a new message.
2. In the To: line of your message, type:
list-name@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
list-name@ctc.ctc.edu (for public domain lists)
where "list-name" is the name of the list, for example:
ctcpractice@interact.ctc.edu
3. In the Subject line, type a topic or comment about your message.
Note: When you are sending a message to one of the WCTC lists, you *may* fill in the Subject line. It is only when you are communicating with the Listserv process (listserv@interact.ctc.edu or listserv@ctc.ctc.edu) that you must leave the Subject line blank.
4. In the body of the message, type the text of your message or attach a file containing the information you want to send.
5. Send the message.

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5: How can I find out who the members of a WCTC list are?

You can find out the names of all the subscribers to a WCTC list. Read through these instructions, and then try them yourself.

To obtain the names of the subscribers to a WCTC list:

1. On your e-mail screen, create a new message.
2. In the To: line of your message, type:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
listserv@ctc.ctc.edu (for public domain lists)
3. Leave the Subject: line blank.
4. In the body of the message, type:
review list-name
where "list-name" is the name of the WCTC list, for example:
review ctcpractice
Do not type anything else.
5. Send the message.
Within a few minutes, you will receive an e-mail message listing the current members of the "ctcpractice" list.

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6. How do I remove myself from a list?

When you no longer want to be a member of a list, you need to remove your name from it by unsubscribing. Read through these instructions, and then try them yourself.

To remove your name from a list:

1. On your e-mail screen, create a new message.
2. In the To: line of your message, type:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
listserv@ctc.ctc.edu (for public domain lists)
3. Leave the Subject: line blank.
4. In the body of the message, type:
unsubscribe list-name
where "list-name" is the name of the list from which you want your name removed, for example:
unsubscribe ctcpractice
Do not type anything else.
5. Send the message.
Within a few minutes, you will receive an e-mail message acknowledging that your request has been processed.

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Obtaining Help

This section describes how you can obtain help for Listserv problems.

7. Whom do I contact when I have questions or problems about using the lists?

For any questions or problems you are having with these lists, contact the Information Resource Coordinator (IRC) on your campus. If the IRC cannot resolve the problem, the IRC should call CIS Customer Support at (425) 803-9721.

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8. Can I get online help about the Listserv commands?

The commands for the ListProcessor program are known as *keyword requests*. Online help is available for the keyword requests recognized by the ListProcessor program.

To obtain help about a keyword request:

1. Send a message to:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
listserv@ctc.ctc.edu (for public domain lists)

2. In the body of the message, type **help** followed by the name of the keyword request you want help for. For example:
help review
3. Send the message.
Within a few minutes, you will receive an e-mail message containing a definition of the keyword "review" and how to use it.

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Handling Messages FROM Lists

This section contains questions about messages received from lists.

9. How can I tell if an e-mail message is from a list or an individual?

Look at the Subject: line in the header of an incoming message. If the message was sent to a list, the following information will be displayed in the Subject: line:

- The name of the list, for example, TSR, followed by a colon and a number. This coded information is enclosed in brackets, for example, [TSR:211] or [FMS:36]
- Following this coded information, the subject of the message will be displayed, for example, K-20 Educational Network Update

The entire Subject: line for this example might look something like this:

[TSR:57] K-20 Educational Network Update

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10. How do I "reply" to a message sent to a list?

The automatic "reply" function works differently in the various e-mail applications that the colleges are using. Depending on your e-mail application, a reply may go to all the subscribers on the list **or** only to the individual who sent the message.

To determine *where* your automatic reply is going:

1. Reply to a message.
2. Check the **To:** line of your reply message.

If the To: line contains the address of a list, then the reply message will be sent to **all** the subscribers of the list.

If the To: line contains the address of an individual, then the reply message will be sent only to that individual.

If you want to reply **only** to the individual who sent the message, you can do either of the following:

- Create a new message and send it to that person's Internet address, for example, jdoe@ctc.edu
-OR-

- Reply to the message; then clear the To: line and add the person's Internet address, for example, jdoe@ctc.edu

Caution: When you "send" or "reply" to a list, you are communicating with **all** of the subscribers on that list. This can result in a lot of unnecessary and unwanted e-mail messages going to subscribers on a list. If you are responding to a question or survey, for example, it is probably a good idea to create a new message and send it only to the individual who sent out the original message.

Tip: To determine who sent a message, see [How can I tell if an e-mail message is from a list or an individual?](#)

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11. When someone asks a question (or sends a survey) using a list, why do I get everyone else's response to the question?

This indicates that individuals are using the automatic "reply" function. When you "reply" to a list, you are communicating with **all** of the subscribers on that list. This can result in a lot of unnecessary and unwanted e-mail messages going to subscribers on a list. If you are responding to a question or survey, it is probably a good idea to create a new message and send it only to the individual who sent out the original message.

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12. Why does the e-mail address for some individuals contain "*ctc.edu*" while others contain "*ctc.ctc.edu*"?

If your e-mail account is on the CIS Internet processor and you originally subscribed to a list using PINE, your e-mail address contains "*ctc.ctc.edu*". If you have a POPMail account on the CIS Internet processor, you can use either "*ctc.edu*" or "*ctc.ctc.edu*" in your e-mail address; however, you must consistently use one or the other.

If you are not sure about your e-mail address, check with your Internet Coordinator or your Information Resource Coordinator.

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13. If I receive an e-mail message that I think should have been sent (posted) to a list, what can I do?

You can either:

- Forward the message to the list yourself.
- OR-
- Contact the person who sent the message and tell that person to send the message to the appropriate list.

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14. Why am I getting the same message more than once?

One or both of the following could be occurring:

- If you are subscribed to more than one list and the same message is sent (posted) to multiple lists, you will receive a copy of the message for each list to which you are subscribed.
- OR-
- If the message came to the same list twice, you are either subscribed to the list twice, or the message was sent (posted) to the list twice by the sender.

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15. How do I know who sent a message to a list?

There are some guidelines for observing proper Listserv etiquette. Anyone sending (posting) a message to a list should include his or her name, college, and personal Internet address somewhere in the body of the message, for example,

John Doe, Happy College, jdoe@ctc.edu

Tip: Many e-mail applications allow you to create a "signature" file, which will automatically add the same information to all your e-mail messages. A signature file can include such information as your name, organization, and address. The signature file is usually added to the bottom of all your messages.

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Sending Messages TO Lists

This section contains questions about sending messages to a list.

16. When I send a message to a list, why don't I receive a copy of it since I am subscribed to the list?

If you want to receive a copy (or acknowledgment) of everything that you send to a list, use the following steps:

1. Send a message to:
listserv@interact.ctc.edu
-OR-
listserv@ctc.ctc.edu (for public domain lists)
2. In the body of the message, type:
set list-name mail ack
where "list-name" is the name of the list, for example:
set tsr mail ack
3. Send the message.

You will receive an e-mail message confirming your request. Subsequently, you will receive a copy of everything you send to that list.

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Closed WCTC Lists

This section contains questions about closed WCTC lists.

17. What is a "closed" list and why would our group want to close its list?

A WCTC list can be an open list, which means anyone may subscribe to it, or a closed list. A closed list is one that requires a list manager to approve each person's request to subscribe to the list. Closed lists allow groups to control who can correspond with the list. The following are other features of closed lists:

- Only members of a closed WCTC list are able to send e-mail to and receive e-mail from that list. Correspondence among the list members remains confidential and private to that group. If a group does not want to share its correspondence with anyone outside the group, it might want to consider having a private list.
- Since private lists allow communication among members only, they more closely resemble the former Public Distribution Lists (PDLs) for handling e-mail correspondence than do public WCTC lists.

A group wishing to close a list must designate a manager for the list. When the list has been "closed," the list manager is then responsible for approving subscription requests to the list.

If your group is interested in closing its list, send an e-mail message to: ctcadmin@ctc.edu.

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18. How do I get approval to sign up for a closed list?

Subscribe to the list as you would for any list. The Listserv process will automatically forward your request to the manager of the closed list for approval.

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