

Connected Beyond Retirement

How can associations of retired professors work with university administrations to ensure continued university email access for professors who remain academically and professionally active after retirement?

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Retirement from university employment does not necessarily mean the end of a professor's academic and professional life.

Many retired professors continue to teach, research, publish, participate in conferences, mentor younger colleagues, cooperate in international projects, contribute to professional networks, and share their knowledge and experience with society. For them, the university email address remains an important part of their academic identity and a practical means of maintaining established professional relationships.

Yet at many universities, university email accounts are automatically cancelled when a professor retires. This raises an important question: *Should retirement from employment automatically mean the loss of a university email identity for a professor who remains academically and professionally active?*

Associations of retired professors can play an important role in addressing this issue. Rather than approaching university administrations only when individual accounts are cancelled, associations could develop a common position and work constructively with universities to find appropriate solutions.

What could associations do?

Associations of retired professors could:

- *Document the problem* by collecting examples of university policies and their consequences for professionally active retired professors.
- *Engage university administrations* in dialogue about the academic, professional and practical importance of continued email access.
- *Propose reasonable conditions* for continued access, including security, authentication, responsible use and regular confirmation of academic or professional activity.
- *Develop model policies* that universities could adapt to their own institutional circumstances.
- *Cooperate with associations of active professors, university networks and rectors' associations* to broaden support for the issue.
- *Share good practices* from universities that already provide continued digital access to retired academic staff.
- Promote the principle that academic engagement can continue beyond formal employment.

A practical approach

The objective does not have to be that every retired professor automatically retains every university service.

The objective could be to establish a *clear, transparent and fair pathway for professors who wish to remain academically and professionally active* to retain an appropriate university email identity after retirement.

Such an approach could benefit both professors and universities. It can preserve professional networks, facilitate continued collaboration, strengthen intergenerational knowledge exchange, and make better use of the experience and expertise of senior academics.

An invitation to associations of retired professors

We invite associations of retired professors to discuss this question with their members and university administrations: *How can associations of retired professors work with university administrations to ensure continued university email access for professors who remain academically and professionally active after retirement?*

The issue is not simply about an email account. It is about *academic identity, continuity, collaboration and the recognition that retirement from employment does not necessarily mean retirement from academic life.*

CONNECTED BEYOND RETIREMENT

Keeping academic connections alive in the digital age.

