

Professors Emeriti Network

[Professors Emeriti Network](#). We walk what we talk.

How are Retired (Emeriti) Professors Organized Within Their University?

Dr. Jože Gričar, Professor Emeritus, Joze.Gricar@UM.si

14/08/2024

In the period May-August 2024, we studied the websites of universities that have a formal association of retired (emeriti) professors. Alternative names are college, society, emeriti group, center, club. In the following, we use the term association. The associations offer opportunities for continued academic engagement, networking, and social activities. We start from the lessons learned that many retired professors are poorly connected within their own university, which is not good either for individuals or for the university.

Retired professors (emeriti faculty) are typically organized within universities in a manner that recognizes their contributions and allows them to continue to engage with the academic community. The organization and engagement of professors emeriti can vary from one institution to another, but here are some common ways they are organized based on websites posted.

We studied websites from the point of view of the role of associations in supporting the use of a university email account upon retirement. Some universities allow all retired professors to use the university email account upon retirement in an unchanged way, regardless of title. Retired professors with the title emerita/emeritus can use the university email account at all universities without changes upon retirement.

Many universities grant emeritus status to retired professors who have made significant contributions to their field and the institution. This status is usually given as an honorific title after the retirement of the faculty member. There are considerable differences in the awarding of this title. From the fact that anyone can apply for the title of emerita/emeritus before retirement, to having a person nominated for such a title by the head of a department or school, to the complex process of proposing, considering and confirming the award of this title at the highest level of the university administration.

There are many universities that do not publish anything on the website about what will happen regarding the use of the university email account upon retirement, which causes problems.

Based on the collected data, we come to some conclusions that can be partially generalized. The goal is to learn about the experiences of others and apply them in our own environment.

As a rule, the association is organized within the university for all retired professors and often also for all retired employees in the administration. It is associated with the Office of

the Provost. The organizational structure of the association is influenced by the size of the university and the associated number of retired professors. Usually, the number of members is several hundred, there are examples of societies with 1000 to 2000 members.

The association is led by a committee, which typically has the following structure:

- President (Chair)
- Vice President (President-elect)
- Secretary
- Other committee members

A committee member is sometimes a representative from the Provost's office to ensure connectivity. Some associations have thematic groups. Only some associations provide information about the editor of the website.

On their website, the associations provide data about their leadership, and some provide data about all members. They usually provide email addresses because email communication is the main way to keep members informed. In the case of one of the large associations, they cite a problem in collecting and reporting data on deceased members.

The association collects money for its operation through membership fees. In some cases, they name an organization (sponsor) that covers the costs of the association's operation, so they do not have a membership fee.

It is not possible to find links to the websites of other associations on the website. A specialty is the websites of university association councils in some US states. For example, two councils in California:

[Council of University of California Emeriti Associations \(CUCEA\).](#)

[Council of University of California Retiree Associations \(CUCRA\), Retiree Associations.](#)

Some suggestions:

- Publication of data on the organization and operation of the association from the point of view of the information needs of website visitors within the university and the view of website visitors at other universities.
- [Websites interlinking.](#)
- Post on the website about what will happen regarding the use of the university email account upon retirement.
- Exchange of best practices.

We invite you to share your experiences about the organization and operation of the association. By generalizing good experiences, the work of associations will be facilitated, especially at those universities where retired (emeriti) professors are just thinking about their association.

In the interests of those retired professors whose university email accounts are terminated upon retirement, we ask associations to help stop this practice, as it is incompatible with the conditions of the 21st century and does not support active aging in a long-lived and increasingly digitized society.

Link: Retired (Emeriti) Professors Associations. [Letter to Professors Emeriti to Support the Retention of the University Email Accounts of All Professors Upon Retirement.](#)