

What are the consequences of canceling the university email account of professors upon retirement?

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Canceling the university email account of professors upon retirement can have several consequences, impacting both the retired professors and the university community. These consequences can be categorized into professional, logistical, and emotional/relational impacts:

Professional Consequences

Loss of Professional Identity:

Professors often use their university email for professional communications, and losing this email can sever their professional identity and affiliation with the institution.

Disruption of Ongoing Research:

Many retired professors continue their research, supervise students, or collaborate on academic projects. Losing their email can disrupt ongoing research and collaborations.

Access to Academic Resources:

University email accounts often provide access to academic journals, databases, and other resources that retired professors may need for their continued scholarly activities.

Logistical Consequences

Communication Breakdown:

Colleagues, students, and professional contacts may lose a primary means of communication, leading to missed opportunities and important messages going unanswered.

Administrative Challenges:

Retired professors often engage in mentoring, consulting, or part-time teaching. Canceling their email can complicate administrative processes related to these activities.

Transition Period:

Immediate cancellation does not provide a transition period for professors to update their contacts and redirect their communications, causing potential chaos and disorganization.

Emotional and Relational Consequences

Sense of Disconnection:

Retired professors may feel a sense of disconnection or marginalization from the academic community they have been part of for many years.

Devaluation of Contribution:

Canceling the email can be perceived as a lack of appreciation or recognition for the professor's contributions to the university.

Impact on Mentoring Relationships:

Many retired professors maintain mentoring relationships with students and junior faculty. Canceling their email can disrupt these important relationships.

Mitigation Strategies

Grace Period:

Providing a grace period before canceling the email account can help professors transition and update their contacts.

Permanent Forwarding:

Setting up permanent email forwarding from the university email to a personal email address can mitigate communication issues.

Retiree Email Accounts:

Offering a simplified retiree email account can maintain a connection to the university while limiting access to certain internal resources.

Communication and Support:

Clear communication about the timeline and process for email cancellation, along with support for transitioning contacts and data, can help ease the process.

In conclusion, while canceling the university email account of retired professors might be necessary for various administrative reasons, it is essential to manage the process thoughtfully to minimize negative consequences and respect the professors' ongoing contributions to the academic community.

Links to universities where retired professors maintain their email account upon retirement are posted on the [website Letter to Professors Emeriti to Support the Retention of the University Email Accounts of All Professors Upon Retirement](#).

It is practical and fair for universities to publish on their website what happens to a university email account upon retirement.

We express our gratitude to the universities that do not cancel the email account of their colleagues upon retirement. They are shown as examples to universities that are not (yet) so friendly. We want to encourage retired professors who have lost their email account to work to get it back.