
The University Senate

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2024-25 UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA Student Senate Minutes: No. 4

Thursday, February 22, 2024
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

The fourth meeting of the Student Senate for 2023-24 was convened on February 22, 2024, online via Zoom. At the time of this meeting, there were 54 voting members of the Student Senate.

1. Call to Order

Pavan Guttipatti, chair, Student Senate Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate

Pavan Guttipatti, chair, called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

2. Presentation on the Email for Life Transition

Kellie Greaves, business change management, Office of Information Technology

Adam Twedt, business change management, Office of Information Technology

Guttipatti introduced Kellie Greaves, enterprise change manager from the Office of Information Technology (OIT), who, along with colleagues Adam Twedt and Joshua Casper, presented the upcoming changes to the University of Minnesota's email access policy for alumni and retirees. The changes, driven by cybersecurity concerns, licensing costs, and the availability of free email options, include the discontinuation of lifelong email access.

Key points included:

- **Policy Change:** Starting June 1, 2024, alumni and retirees will no longer retain full email access indefinitely.
 - Alumni and retirees before May 31, 2024, will receive a limited alumni email account with 5 GB of storage, excluding Google Workspace apps.
 - Graduates after June 1, 2024, will have one year to transition their accounts and data.
- **Security and Licensing:** Rising cybersecurity threats and stricter licensing agreements necessitate these changes. Email is a primary target for phishing attacks, and new licensing models count all users.
- **Transition Support:**
 - Tools like Google's data transfer feature enable seamless migration of emails and files.

- Notifications and reminders will help students and employees prepare for the transition.
- Exceptions exist for faculty emeritus and certain international students due to legal and policy requirements.
- **Communication and Resources:** A dedicated website, notifications, webinars, and a self-help guide will assist affected individuals. Students in healthcare programs will have additional constraints due to HIPAA regulations.

Participants were directed to a resource page for further assistance and encouraged to attend monthly webinars for transition guidance. Greaves then responded as follows to comments and questions from senators:

- Pete Smith raised concerns about the planned changes, particularly how these changes would affect students and alumni. He emphasized that many individuals were unaware of the impending changes, which had led to significant frustration and confusion. He highlighted the potential loss of important organizational and financial documents managed by professional student government groups, as well as the challenges in transferring ownership of files previously owned by graduates. Smith expressed concern about the lack of clear communication and timely responses from OIT staff regarding these issues. Greaves responded by recommending the creation of Google Shared Drives to ensure organizational continuity. She advised that student groups work with University employees to establish these drives and transfer important files. She also clarified that emails and questions submitted regarding the specific change were being received but noted delays of up to three weeks in responses due to high volume and extended timelines before any impact would occur. She assured attendees that submissions were recorded and no immediate action was required. Joshua Casper explained the deprovisioning process for Google accounts, noting that users would receive multiple notifications over a 90-day period before any files were deleted. He outlined options for identifying and transferring ownership of files, including using tools like Rclone, but cautioned about adhering to HIPAA regulations when handling sensitive data.
- Smith also raised concerns about urgent issues affecting students transferring from the Duluth campus to the Twin Cities campus, citing errors in file ownership transfers between domains. He emphasized the pressing need to resolve these issues before transitions occur, and Greaves invited him to email her directly for follow-up. Casper noted that this issue pertained to a campus transfer form currently under repair by his team, which was separate from the changes being discussed.
- Jovany Betancourt expressed concerns about the 30-day limit for handling data for HCC (Health Care Component) accounts, particularly for MD/PhD students like himself who accumulate years of research and communication data. He emphasized the unfeasibility of transferring such a significant amount of information within 30 days without adequate tools and highlighted concerns about intellectual property being moved to unregulated private accounts. Greaves explained that the 30-day standard was a HIPAA requirement, not an OIT decision, and invited the HIPAA office to discuss this further. She also proposed engaging with Betancourt and health sciences IT to explore secure data management solutions. Adam Twedt clarified that HCC account restrictions are permanent once applied and provided additional context about the criteria for such designations.

- Aidan Zeissler asked about shared drives for student organizations without faculty sponsors. Greaves explained that any faculty or employee could create a shared drive on behalf of a student organization. She confirmed that faculty could create multiple shared drives and highlighted the continuity ensured by shared drives as long as a current employee is a member.
- Taiwo Aremu began by expressing appreciation for the team's efforts in safeguarding the University of Minnesota's technology space and emphasized the importance of avoiding unintended consequences while addressing security issues. He noted that alumni, due to restricted email access, have sometimes withheld donations, which he had confirmed through personal consultations. Aremu asked whether there had been significant cybersecurity breaches originating from alumni or student email accounts. Greaves responded that the University does not disclose specific data breach numbers to minimize security risks. She highlighted that 90% of global cyberattacks originate from email and stressed that email access can serve as a gateway to broader system breaches. Aremu questioned whether continued alumni email access might breach privacy regulations or licensing agreements. Greaves clarified that alumni accounts increase the University's risk profile and could complicate compliance with software licensing agreements. She explained that vendors like Google charge fees based on the number of active accounts linked to current faculty, staff, and students, not alumni or retirees. With alumni accounts exceeding those of current users, extending email access would shift financial burdens onto current students.
- Natalie Bennett questioned whether student organization email accounts might also be impacted in the future. Greaves and Twedt clarified that student organization email accounts are not currently affected by ongoing changes. However, they emphasized that policies and resources available to student organizations are subject to change, urging organization leaders to stay informed.
- Matt Buechner expressed concerns about the messaging surrounding email policy changes, particularly for alumni and currently enrolled students, citing reliance and potential contractual issues. He also mentioned OIT's insufficient staffing and delayed response times (e.g., three weeks or more), which he believed could exacerbate issues during the transition.

Greaves and the others acknowledged these concerns and expressed a willingness to continue discussions via email while emphasizing their efforts to support a smoother transition.

3. Assembly/Association Updates (*Information*)

Guttipatti then asked representatives from the various student associations to provide updates. They were as follows:

- **Professional Student Governance (PSG) - Pete Smith**
 - Working on a resolution opposing the previously discussed changes to Google access.
- **Duluth Campus - Ethan Ion**
 - Completed student organization allocations and student services fee proposals.
 - Preparing for Bulldog Lobby Day and beginning spring elections.
- **Undergraduate Student Governance (USG) - Niel Drabek:**
 - Passed a letter of support for expanding PSEO in Minnesota.

- Launched a USG Canvas page outlining the structure and resources, aiming for permanent visibility on Twin Cities undergraduate Canvas.
- Reviewed a joint letter with COGS and PSG regarding the Presidential Search Committee.
- Updated grant distribution policies to ensure objectivity and address funding shortages.
- Provided feedback on an off-campus safety center in Dinkytown.
- Passed new bylaws, initially planned for September, overhauling USG's framework.
- **Council of Graduate Students - Natalie Bennett**
 - Addressed department inconsistencies with University policies on conference travel reimbursements.
 - Hosted Regent Mike Kenyanya at a recent General Assembly meeting.
- Rochester Campus: No representative was present.

4. Student Senate/Student Senate Consultative Committee Chair Report (Information)

Pavan Guttipatti, chair, Student Senate *Consultative Committee (SSCC) and Student Senate*

Guttipatti provided the following report:

- Encouraged feedback on presidential finalists before the Board of Regents' decision on Monday. Recordings and feedback links are available on the presidential search website.
- Shared updates from SSCC meetings:
 - Discussed resolutions on supervisor evaluations, mandatory student learning, and food insecurity data collection.
 - Instituted biweekly informal office hours starting March 1 to increase engagement.
- Mentioned SSCC's exploration of meeting more frequently than once a month.

5. Old Business

None.

6. New Business

None.

7. Adjournment