

## Managing the Digital University Desktop



Understanding and Empowering the Individual; Preserving the Public Record and Institutional History

### Should I handle my personal email differently than my work email at Duke?

Generally speaking, yes.

While there are no campus-wide policies prohibiting the use of Duke University systems to send and receive personal email, individual departments may enact such policies at their discretion. Those policies may allow for incidental personal use as long as system integrity is not compromised; existing policies, state, or federal laws are not violated; or contractual obligations are not ignored.

The Office of Information Technology (<http://www.oit.duke.edu>) has a long-standing policy concerning the security and privacy of electronic communications. The policy says, in part, that “the ultimate privacy of messages and files cannot be ensured.” Therefore, users should be aware that it may be necessary to access and disclose information from their accounts if University policies, contractual obligations, or applicable laws are being violated, or to diagnose and correct technical problems.

Finally, users should be judicious in their use of University systems to send and receive personal email. Personal email is not an official University record and should be deleted as soon as possible from the email system. Doing so will:

- Prevent the unnecessary use of storage space in the email system;
- Reduce or eliminate the need to manage personal messages along with work-related messages;
- Reduce the possibility that personal messages will be lost in the event of system failures; and,
- Reduce the potential for accidental disclosure in legal actions.