

Academic Affairs Communication Committee Report (Draft 1)

March 23, 2023

The communication committee has identified issues related to the following:

- Faculty-to-student communication
- Academic Affairs to student communication
- Academic Affairs to faculty and staff communication

Examples of issues include:

1. Students receive numerous emails daily and weekly, and finding critical emails among the clutter can be challenging. Our preliminary survey of 24 students, faculty and staff indicated that these groups receive an average of 15-23 ULM emails per day.
2. Emails sent through the Moodle system must often be sent to student emails promptly. Often these go out at the end of the day rather than at the time of the message sent by the instructor.
3. The information in some email communication is repetitive and sent by multiple people and departments.
4. Emails may have too much content and are skimmed over or deleted.

Distribution of surveys:

The communication committee has distributed short surveys about communication preferences, including one for students, one for faculty, and one for staff. The survey results have been compiled into an Excel workbook and are attached for review. In addition, faculty, staff, and students received surveys through the respective email groups.

Survey Results Snapshot:

A total of 304 faculty, staff and students responded to the survey.

Faculty and staff view communication differently than the students in several areas.

Students showed significant interest in the opt-out option in Athletics, Registered Student Organizations, and Dining Services.

All three groups prefer email and once-per-week summary options.

Key takeaways from comments:

- Provide an opt-out option for specific areas.
- Once-per-week summary from ONE area on everything going on. Comments were made on how often different areas send the same information in a day or week.
- Training on communicating through email, Moodle, social media, and websites.
- Get rid of the "clutter," as finding critical information among so many emails is challenging.
- Send information timely, not the week or day of regarding events.

Committee Recommendations:

- Communication training for faculty, staff, and students. This could include email etiquette, tips for drafting clear and concise emails, timeliness in responding, and how to communicate in our LMS systems and through websites and social media.
- Find ways to eliminate clutter in the in-boxes so that critical information such as academic, financial aid, and student account information can be prioritized. This can include compiling all non-essential campus email into a single weekly digest.
- Work with IT to determine if opt-out/in options are possible for non-academic mass emails.
- Set parameters for those sending out mass emails. Ensure that mass emails are reviewed for those parameters prior to being sent out campus-wide. A specific department may need to be designated to review the emails.
- A bi-weekly or monthly update from the Provost and Academic Affairs on what is happening in that area.
- Communication with faculty and staff regarding significant changes in curriculum, programming, and faculty and staff welfare.
- Communication with students that allows a forum for conversation with Academic Affairs about concerns.

Communication options used by other institutions include:

- Options for opting out of certain types of campus-wide emails, such as Athletics, Registered Student Organizations, and Dining Services.
- The use of social media and the ULM Calendar for announcements about events and other activities that do not fall under FERPA regulations.
- The use of texting if students, faculty, or staff members choose to receive messages that way.

Northwestern State University uses a Student Messenger system, like a daily digest of announcements. This could be an option instead of many separate emails.

The University of Louisiana Lafayette has a process for sending mass emails that includes a word limit and lead time for review. <https://ocm.louisiana.edu/web-communications/broadcast-email-guidelines>

Stockton University uses an opt-out feature in Outlook. <https://stockton.edu/information-technology/mass-email-guidelines.html>

President/ Provost Email examples from other institutions:

From: University President <president@nsula.edu>

Sent: Friday, March 17, 2023 12:00 PM

To: +All-Students <+All-Students@nsula.onmicrosoft.com>; +All-FS <+All-FS@nsula.onmicrosoft.com>

Subject: A Message From The President - March 17, 2023



A Message From The President

Dr. Marcus D. Jones



March 17, 2023

Northwestern State Breaks Ground On State-Of-The-Art Academic Building

Earlier this week, we [celebrated the start of a new chapter](#) in the life of our institution. Alost Hall will serve as the hub of innovation, collaboration and learning for generations of students, faculty, and staff to come. The groundbreaking of Alost Hall is a testament to the unwavering commitment of excellence in education, research, and service to our community.

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who were present at the groundbreaking ceremony, including Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, President and CEO of The University of Louisiana System Dr. Jim Henderson, ACSW Architects, Perkins & Will Architects, Donahue Favret Contractors,

various local and state legislatures, and the numerous university faculty, staff, and students.

Governor And First Lady Announce Linda B. Day Memorial Scholarship

Following the groundbreaking ceremony of Alost Hall, Governor John Bel Edwards, First Lady Donna Edwards and friends of the late Linda B. Day planted a tree in her memory on the campus of Northwestern State University Tuesday and announced the creation of the [Linda B. Day Memorial Scholarship](#) that will support students preparing for a career in education by pursuing a graduate degree in the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development. The tree and scholarship acknowledge Day's dedication to the teaching profession, her work to improve the education system for all students and her desire to encourage others to become educators.

Mrs. Day, a two-time graduate of NSU, exemplified the ideal alumna by leading a life dedicated to service. Her impact on the lives of many was profound, and it was an honor to have the governor and first lady join us to learn about her legacy.

Public Servant, Federal Administrator Ted James Speaks To Students On Leadership

Ted James, a Louisiana politician who was appointed as the regional administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration by President Joe Biden last year, [delivered a lecture at the Lucile Hendrick Room](#) on the first floor of the Student Union. The talk, titled "Leadership for the Ages: Impacting Lives and Transforming Communities," was given to students from the Presidential Leadership Program and the School of Business.

Anonymous Donor Honors Towry Family With \$100,000 Gift To NSU Foundation

I was fortunate enough to meet the Towry Family yesterday and hear about the significant impact NSU had on their lives through their stories. We are grateful to the donor who generously provided this scholarship and that the Towry family was able to share their memories of Northwestern State University.

The [H.N. and Inez C. Towry Memorial Scholarship](#) will be awarded to a female undergraduate in the amount of \$5,000 per year for four years through graduation. The student must maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher and seek a degree in business or education.

NSU Will Receive 10 Trash Receptacles Through Keep Louisiana Beautiful Grant To Prevent Litter On Campus

NSU was chosen as one of the 98 awardees of the 2023 Keep Louisiana Beautiful [Trash Receptacle grant program](#), which was funded by the State of Louisiana and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. As part of this program, NSU will be placing 10 trash receptacles in high traffic and pedestrian areas around campus.

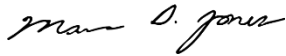
I would like to express my appreciation to Steve Gruesbeck, Director of Service-Learning at NSU, for his contribution to these efforts.

Flavor of Louisiana Tonight

I extend a personal invitation to you to join us tonight for the Flavor of Louisiana, a spring fundraiser and seafood extravaganza that celebrates our donors, supporters, alumni, and students at Northwestern State University. The event will feature specialty dishes from some of the finest restaurants across Louisiana, so make sure you don't miss out on this feast.

The festivities will commence at 6 p.m. with music, cocktails, and specialty dishes at Prather Coliseum on the Northwestern State University campus.

[Purchase your tickets here.](#)



Dr. Marcus D. Jones
President
Northwestern State University

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From: Provost and VP of Academic Affairs <vpaa@nsula.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 13, 2023 3:00 PM
To: +All-Students <+All-Students@nsula.onmicrosoft.com>
Subject: Registration: A Message From The Provost



A Message From The Provost

Dr. Greg A. Handel, D.M.A

Good afternoon, students. I am reaching out to remind you that registration for Summer and Fall 2023 opened today. Registration is by classification, and you can find that information either in the attached file or by using this link:

<https://documentproviderviewer.nsula.edu/?id=11587>

As a reminder, please reach out to your Academic Advisor to assist you in what classes you need for next semester, and to discuss/develop plans for your upcoming semesters in order to stay on track with your degree completion. Your Academic Advisor information can be found on myNSU as well as on Degree Works. If you are unable to locate your advisor's information, please reach out to the Department Head in your major. Most advisors offer both face-to-face appointments as well as virtual options.

In the event that you are unable to contact your Academic Advisor or Dept. Head, please reach out to me for assistance. I can be reached at:

vpaa@nsula.edu

Best wishes for a great week!

--GH



Dr. Greg A. Handel, D.M.A.

Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Dean of Graduate School

Professor of Music Education

Northwestern State University

vpaa@nsula.edu

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From: <guice@latech.edu>

Date: Thu, Jun 23, 2022, 7:46 AM

Subject: [LaTech Students] June 23 Campus Update -- Saturday Walks and Construction Disruptions

To: <facstaff-l@latech.edu>, <students-l@latech.edu>

Dear students, faculty, and staff,

Good Thursday morning.

Just a note that I plan to be at Aspire Plaza on Saturday morning at 8 AM if anyone wants to join in on a walk.

In the coming weeks, you will notice lots of construction beginning on our Enterprise Campus. Closure of some roads will continue throughout the summer and well into the 2023-24 academic year.

The road closure and construction is a city project designed to create a more walkable corridor between Louisiana Tech's campus and the City of Ruston's downtown area. The project will also improve drainage and create more green space on the east side of campus.

We have started preparation and ground work for the construction of Tech Pointe II at the corner of Dan Reneau Drive and South Homer Street, and our partners have already committed to 100 percent occupancy when the project is completed.

Tech Pointe II will take the place of the large gravel lot on the corner opposite Tech Pointe, and we have been working to find solutions to the parking challenges our campus will face as a result of this progress.

Beginning in the Fall Quarter, we will make available a **student shuttle service** running from the parking lot at the corner of Tech Drive and West Alabama Avenue. We'll share more information about the campus route, which will have a shuttle running each weekday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., when most of our commuter students are coming onto campus. Of course, **walking is a good option too!**

As our campus and city grow and prosper, we'll see more changes. We're working to ensure these changes remain positive for our students, faculty, and staff throughout the construction. These improvements will help position Louisiana Tech for growth and more efficient services in the future.

We will continue to update our campus community throughout the summer. Please continue to check your email regularly for information on these and other projects.

Les Guice

President

Visit events.latech.edu for Louisiana Tech event information. Find your organizational interests at orgsync.com/login.