

## 4.005 - Email Etiquette and Signature

### Scope

These guidelines apply to all Clerc Center employees.

### Guidelines

These guidelines provide standards for the use of electronic communications for Clerc Center business purposes. Standards are intended to result in a level of professionalism and standardization for business communications that reflect and enhance the reputation of the Clerc Center and Gallaudet University.

### Signature

An email signature is analogous to an electronic business card. It is important to have guidelines regarding the content, specifically about what should or should not be included in your email signature, for the following reasons:

- Your identification is easily accessible to your message recipients.
- A standard, consistent, and clean email signature will present a professional image for the Clerc Center.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of all Clerc Center employees to follow these guidelines for standardized email signatures in their email communications with all audiences.

### Logo

The Clerc Center logo is an encouraged part of your email signature. Instructions for setting up your email signature with the logo can be found at:

[http://www.gallaudet.edu/Documents/clerc/email\\_logo\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.gallaudet.edu/Documents/clerc/email_logo_instructions.pdf)

### Social Media Icons

Social media icons may be included in your email signature, but must be hyperlinked only to official Clerc Center pages. General instructions for setting up your email signature with images can be found at: [http://www.gallaudet.edu/Documents/clerc/email\\_logo\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.gallaudet.edu/Documents/clerc/email_logo_instructions.pdf)

### Content

In addition to the logo and/or social media icons, you may only include information that is typically displayed on a business card:

- Your name
- Your title

- Address of your school/building
- Contact phone and videophone numbers
- Email address
- Clerc Center and/or School websites
- Legal Disclaimer: “Note: This e-mail and all attachments are covered by the Electronic Communication Privacy Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2521, and are confidential. If you are not the intended recipient please notify the sender and delete the email and all attachments. Any unauthorized retention, dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited.”
- “Consider the environment before printing”

You may not include anything except what is listed above, including but not limited to:

- Quotes
- Other website or images
- Animated clipart or text, emoticons, or other images

When including the KDES, MSSD, or Clerc Center website address, format it follows:

- [clerccenter.gallaudet.edu](http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu)
- [mssd.gallaudet.edu](http://mssd.gallaudet.edu)
- [kdes.gallaudet.edu](http://kdes.gallaudet.edu)

### **Sample Signature – Teacher**

Jane Doe  
 Teacher, 4th Grade  
 Kendall Demonstration Elementary School  
 Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center  
 800 Florida Ave NE | Washington, DC 20002  
 Videophone: 202-555-5555  
[kdes.gallaudet.edu](http://kdes.gallaudet.edu)



### **Sample Signature – Staff**

John Smith  
 Manager, Outreach & Dissemination  
 Planning, Development & Dissemination  
 Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center  
 800 Florida Ave NE | Washington, DC 20002  
 Videophone: 202-555-5555  
[clerccenter.gallaudet.edu](http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu)

## **Settings and Etiquette**

In all accounts associated with your email address, Clerc Center employees are required to comply with the following accessibility best practices and standard Internet etiquette expectations:

### **Activity**

Your work email address may also function as account login on federated services (e.g. Gmail users can comment on or “Like” YouTube videos; Google owns both products), so any personal activity associated with your work email account will be considered as professional conduct. Take caution to log out.

### **Fonts**

Use either the default (usually Arial, Helvetica, Times New Roman, or Verdana) or the Gallaudet-preferred font of Garamond.

### **Copying and Blind-copying**

When cc’ing or bcc’ing another individual on an email message, you are responsible for ensuring that sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information is not shared with unauthorized individuals. Please use professional judgment and discretion when considering who to cc or bcc on an email.

### **Mass Distribution**

Clerc Center-wide or school-wide broadcast emails are only authorized to be sent by key administrators who have been granted access to such lists. Employees should not circumvent this by manually creating a personal distribution list for emails intended for all school employees or all Clerc Center employees. If you would like to have your message sent to all employees in either KDES or MSSD, or to all Clerc Center employees, the options available to you include, but are not limited to, the Clerc Center Daily (eNewsletter) or the principal’s communication.

### **Formatting**

Observe standard capitalization and punctuation. Do not type in all uppercase or use boldface, italics, color fonts, oversized fonts, underlining, or animation without a purpose. The Clerc Center does not recommend the excessive use of emoticons, animation, and graphics which may get filtered and directed to spam.

### **Forwarding**

When forwarding a work-related communication, you are responsible for ensuring that sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information is not shared with unauthorized individuals. In terms of sharing specific student information by email, remember FERPA and be judicious about what information you share. Extract relevant information to forward to others. Gallaudet email should not be used to forward non-work related content (e.g. jokes etc.)

## **Links**

Do not use your work email account to provide links to web material that is unacceptable, illegal. Consult the “2.22 Use of Information Technology Resources” policy in the Gallaudet University Administration and Operations Manual, online at [www.gallaudet.edu/af/aando\\_manual.html](http://www.gallaudet.edu/af/aando_manual.html).

## **Professionalism**

You should assume that anything you write in an email could be forwarded to almost any audience, end up on a blog, or shared in any other public way. Therefore, you should write your emails as if it will be “published” and viewed by others. Use appropriate professional language and standards that reflect well on the Clerc Center and Gallaudet.

In the situations of a professional or educational context or reason, Clerc Center employees should use their Gallaudet University email account or school videophone to communicate with students or parents. This provision regarding professional electronic communications is strictly limited to topics of a professional nature and should directly relate to the employee’s work.

## **Profiles**

Your work email address may contain a profile containing identifiable information such as photo and name. Provide only information that is also present in your signature. Profile photos should be a headshot or some other equally professional and appropriate image.

## **Reply**

Communications between co-workers or between teachers/staff and families, about work related activities, should be conducted through the use of your Gallaudet assigned email address. Communicating with co-workers from a personal email account may raise the following considerations:

- 1) They have no assurance of your present employment status,
- 2) They may not want to reply with—and assume liability for—sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information, and
- 3) They may have greater difficulty searching for particular communications when sorting through archived email messages. For these reasons, avoid using personal email accounts for work communication where possible.

## **Reply All**

In today’s work environment, employees receive a high volume of emails. When receiving a group email, please reply all only when the situation warrants it, or if directed by the sender.

## **Away Messages**

Use away messages when you will be away from your office and/or email for multiple, consecutive days. Your away message should include when you will be returning and a contact person who will be handling any urgent issues that may come up while you are away.

## **Status Messages**

Your email address/profile may allow for customized status messages. These messages should not contain phrases or quotes, only your actual status (e.g, In the Office, In a Meeting, etc.).

## **Related Policy, Guidelines, Procedure, and/or Form**

### **Policy**

A&O Manual: 1.14 - Solicitation

<i>Refer Questions To:</i>	<i>Director, Public Relations and Communications</i>
<i>Approved By:</i>	<i>Senior Leadership Team</i>
<i>Approved Date:</i>	<i>July 15, 2013</i>
<i>Effective Date:</i>	<i>August 12, 2013</i>
<i>Review Date:</i>	<i>May 2017</i>
<i>Change History Dates:</i>	<i>June 11, 2015-edits made; July 15, 2013-initial approved date</i>
<i>Document Address:</i>	<i><a href="http://www.gallaudet.edu/documents/clerc/handbook/4.005-emailtiquetteandsignature.pdf">www.gallaudet.edu/documents/clerc/handbook/4.005-emailtiquetteandsignature.pdf</a></i>