

# Student Email Outsourcing

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## Summary

The University of Florida (UF) is considering outsourcing student email to Google. The impact and implications of such a decision on the Health Science Center are not clear, nor do we have a full understanding of the potential risks. Stakeholder discussions have been initiated to determine the implications of such outsourcing.

## Current State

UF currently operates an in-house Web-based email system; the GatorMail Webmail system. This service is primarily created for UF students, but faculty and staff also use this service. Any email addressed to [MyGatorLinkID@ufl.edu](mailto:MyGatorLinkID@ufl.edu) is delivered to this email system provided 1) no forwarded rule has been set by the user directing email to another mailbox, and 2) a GatorMail Webmail mailbox exists. Driven by feedback from the student body, UF is considering outsourcing the student email to Google mail and Google apps.

## Impact

- The GatorLink email address [MyGatorLinkID@ufl.edu](mailto:MyGatorLinkID@ufl.edu) will NOT go away.
  - When the decision is finalized to move to Google, email to the Google mailbox will be addressed using a schema such as [MyGatorLinkID@domain.ufl.edu](mailto:MyGatorLinkID@domain.ufl.edu), where **domain** is yet to be defined.
  - Migration would begin no later than September 1, 2008.
- The GatorMail Webmail system will be eliminated.
  - Most HSC students have their email delivered to their GatorLink mailbox and use Webmail to access their email. Impacted are about 6000 students.
  - Out of the entire HSC active faculty and staff population (~6100), about 2000 would have to find an alternative mailbox.
  - The GatorMail Webmail system is expected to be eliminated in February 2009.

## Objectives

- Inform HSC leadership of the proposed change and impact.
- Discuss in an open forum the potential implications, risk and impact for the HSC Colleges primarily for the students and secondary for faculty and staff.
- Develop a recommendation to HSC leadership. Options may include:
  - HSC will follow UF's timeline to migrate to Google
  - HSC will delay the migration to Google, allowing for further impact and risk analysis.
  - HSC will not migrate to Google, but recommend internal approaches.

## Issues

- Do we understand how email is used in support of the educational mission?
- Does it make financial sense to keep spending resources if 'free' alternatives are available?
- Does it make sense to offer a local service with less features compared to the outsourced alternative?
- Students in the HSC are using email to exchange Protected Health Information, what are the risks associated with outsourcing.
- Does the HSC have adequate policies and safeguards in place to address with privacy and security issues and requirements?
- How will we finance the local email environment if outsourcing is not a viable option?

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