ReGroup "Shasta Connect" Communication Guidelines

What is ReGroup/"Shasta Connect"?

ReGroup, internally branded as "Shasta Connect" is a mass email/text/voice call communication tool used to reach target and automated groups based on major, campus, or other factors. Shasta Connect particularly addresses official, announcement-only email, text and voice communication to Shasta College students, faculty and staff. Shasta Connect is managed by Shasta College IT; however, tracking and permissions for mass (all-student) notifications are primarily filtered through the Office of Student Life so as not to inundate students with multiple requests in a short period of time. Department or program specific messages will be monitored and approved by each Director or Dean over that area and will be addressed on the following page.

How to Utilize Shasta Connect for Mass (All-Student) Communications

Please use the guidelines for email, text and voice call marketing below when completing the Shasta Connect Request Form through the IT Help Desk. This request form enables Shasta Connect users to apply for permission to have a single mass message sent to all currently enrolled students at Shasta College. Shasta College limits the amount of emails/texts sent to students to ensure users are able to manage their inboxes. Messages must be relevant, timely, and important.

To send an all-student email message, you must first get approval from your department dean. They (or a designee of their choice) will submit the request form through the IT Help Desk which will automatically be forwarded to the Director of Student Life for final review and consent. All mass (all-student) communications will be sent with a noreply@shastacollege.edu email address; however, the body may contain the department contact information if necessary.

NOTE: You must submit this request 10 days or more in advance of when you want your email, text or voice call sent to all students.

How to Utilize Shasta Connect for Department Specific Communications

- Department deans have final approval authority and will be the "group administrator". Deans may grant permission to department chairs to communicate information that pertains to their area of study.
- Student Services deans and directors also may use targeted student email for communications that relate to their area.
- All other (non-targeted) communications must obtain permission from the Director of Student Life.

Appropriate Forms of Communication

Please be advised that a request for a targeted electronic communication must comprise information deemed as official college business and meet one of the following criteria:

- Campus-wide *critical* notification

- Important campus deadline or other time-sensitive information for students
- Important changes in student services
- Announcement of official policies or changes in policies
- Announcement identifying student involvement opportunities/events (these may be limited dependent upon the number and frequency of requests).

Again, the Shasta Connect Request Form will be available through the IT Help Desk and automatically directed to the correct approver.

If you would like to view other methods for reaching out to the Shasta College community, please view the [Marketing and Public Relations](#) website.

Other Important Considerations:

Student survey requests must have prior approval from the Office of Research/Institutional Effectiveness and should be posted in an opt-in format through the MyShasta portal only. Student surveys will not be permissible through Shasta Connect. Please contact research@shastacollege.edu for survey approval.

If an administrator sends too many emails or doesn't adhere to best practices and tips provided in the Shasta Connect Communication Guidelines, they may be subject to having their access revoked.

Best Practices

- Students, faculty and staff should use professional standards when communicating via Shasta Connect. Don't send anything you wouldn't say publicly.
- Keep messages simple and direct.
- Text messages should be limited to 144 characters (including spaces) whenever possible.
- Use plain text – don't include HTML or formatted content. Note: Many email programs turn images off by default and not all users can see attachments.
- If your message isn't relevant for all students, make sure you identify a targeted group.
- Check your spelling and grammar.
- Make sure your information is accurate.
- Test any hotlinks you include.
- You will have the option to "preview" emails and text messages in Shasta Connect prior to sending. Please use this option every time. Some characters do not appear in text the way they are written on your computer screen.
- Think about your subject line. It must be relevant and directly identify what the end reader will be viewing within the body of the email.
- Do not use Shasta Connect for solicitation, promotion of political viewpoints, or to share information that is not directly related to Shasta College business.
- Referring students to a non-Shasta College website may be interpreted as SPAM and should be very limited.

- Your department dean can track your message's open rate and other metrics using Shasta Connect software.

Notes about SPAM

Spam is unsolicited email. By sending email to only those who have requested to receive it, you are following accepted permission-based email guidelines. There are exceptions, of course, including transactional emails (e.g. a sales receipt, shipping notice, etc.) and office email.

All legitimate email marketing providers follow the provisions of the federal CAN-SPAN Act. Many supplement the act with their own rules in their terms of service. The combination of law and terms of service place a high bar for what qualifies as SPAM. If you are not sure if your content qualifies as SPAM, error on the side of caution.

Reputable email marketing providers have strong anti-spam policies. For example, before uploading an email list on Constant Contract, the service makes you answer "yes" to each of the following statements:

- My list is consent based- All contacts have given me or my business their prior consent to receive email communications (listservs, RAVE, or other opt-in email notification services).
- My list is NOT a third party list – My list has not been purchased, rented, appended, or given to me from any third party source.
- My list does NOT contain role addresses or distribution lists – e.g. email addresses that may be received by more than one individual: sales@, support@, users@, list@, etc.
- My list does NOT contain email addresses captured in my address book without prior consent. Including but not limited to: user group addresses, transactional addresses or auto-response addresses.

Any addresses uploaded that do not follow these four statements may violate the CAN-SPAM Act and should not be sent.

Here are some additional guidelines to consider:

- Make sure that the people on your list have explicitly consented to receive emails from you for the purposes of marketing or communicating to them. Do not copy/paste addresses you find on the web.
- Make sure your lists are current. Incorrect email addresses cause a lot of undeliverable bounce-backs which influence your deliverable rates, etc.