UMS Listserv Policy and User Guide

List Ownership

Hosting: Listserv® by Lsoft is administered and supported by University of Maine System IT for the benefit of the UMS community. UMS US:IT provides hardware and software enabling members of the UMS community to provide mailing lists. Lists must be sponsored by a University of Maine System employee. Non-UMS users can be co-owners.

Lists are "owned" by the staff member(s) who requested the list. Owner(s) must remain involved in the list's day to day operation. If there are more than one owner, one owner must serve as the list sponsor. Sponsors are liaisons between the list and the Listserv admins.

Members of the UMS community may request the creation and/or own a Listserv list, provided they comply with the following:

1. The list must serve an academic, administrative or social function that relates to some aspect of the University community.
2. Lists must be sponsored by a UMS Employee.
3. List use is governed by the UMS Acceptable Use of Information Resources policy.
4. The person requesting the list must provide adequate information about the purpose of the list, identifying clearly the group of people intended to be served by the list and the role the list will play in supporting the group.
5. Lists that are intended for commercial purposes, such as profiting from a membership fee or for selling commercial goods and/or services, are prohibited within the University of Maine System.
6. If the list is being requested by a student, the list must be sponsored by a UMS staff or faculty member. The contact should be someone familiar enough with the student group to advise the Listserv Administrator in the event that the owner leaves the University, is no longer reachable, and has not named a successor. The contact should be able to identify a new owner if the list is to be continued. Otherwise, the list will be deleted.

There is no charge for Listserv services. UMS will not host external lists for a fee. UMS IT is responsible for supporting list owners and owners should contact IT support to request assistance.

Requesting a Listserv List

List requests can be made via this Google form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1rXdQxm4PNwvbHxJ03a-eMUJrLJ6K7PSmyNaatDa8FE/edit

This request page provides explanations for all list setting choice points. All settings, except the listname, can be changed. List names should be descriptive and contain a campus prefix such as UMF, UMA, etc. Names must be a single text string, 3-16 characters in length.

List Settings

Normally, IT Listserv administrators control lists settings. Owners need to request changes from the admins. Owners can request control for their lists' settings on a case-by-case basis by submitting a request through IT Support Services.

List Owner Responsibilities

1. Manage daily activities of their lists
   • Owners are expected to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills in using Listserv commands.
   • Owners should be familiar with basic list maintenance functions, such as adding and deleting subscriptions, changing subscription options, and changing the list parameters as needed to keep the list functioning properly.
   • Owners should be able to identify and solve simple subscriber problems, such as a discrepancy between a subscription address and a sending address.
   • Information about managing lists is sent to owners via e-mail when a new list is created, and is also available on the Web in Confluence.
   • List management functions may be performed by e-mail or through the Web interface. For most users the web interface is the preferred method.

2. Answer list member questions
   • When subscribers contact US:IT regarding a particular list, that inquiry is first referred to the list owner(s). If a list owner is not able to resolve the issue, then the owner, not the subscriber, should contact help@maine.edu for assistance.

3. Establish and maintain list policy
   • The list owner is responsible for setting individual list policies and communicating these to list subscribers. Owners are also responsible for enforcing the rules for list participation.

4. Delete unused lists
   • List owners are responsible for deleting lists that are no longer needed (see section on Deleting Lists below).
5. Maintain a valid, unblocked e-mail address

   • List owners shall maintain a valid, unblocked email address. If the owner's email address becomes non-functional and we can no longer contact the owner, we will remove the owner from the list. If there are no valid owners on a list, we may remove the list.

Note: If an email address requires some special activity for us to send to it, that address is deemed non-functional. For example, some anti-spam services require new senders to validate their address by going to a Web site or responding to a confirmation email. With approximately 1,000 hosted lists, we cannot efficiently interact with such addresses. If you have such a service, it is your responsibility to assure that communications from listmgr@lists.maine.edu and other support addresses are not blocked.

UMS IT Listserv Administrator Services

UMS IT provides the following services:

   • Creates new lists for owners
   • Makes setting changes for owners
   • Deletes unneeded lists upon request from list owners
   • Notifies list owners about changes to Listserv
   • Provides introductory documentation for list owners
   • Consults with list owners on Listserv functions and problems
   • Decides on disposition of orphaned lists (owner address no longer valid) by contacting the owner or designated contact for the list for correction or list deletion
   • List owners may get support by emailing the IT Service Center help@maine.edu. The Listserv Administrator will provide backup support to the Service Center.
   • Questions from subscribers will be referred to the appropriate list owner.

List Removal

   • Lists are targeted for removal if there is no posting activity for two years. Listserv Administrators will review lists each summer to determine which lists are inactive and can be targeted for removal. List sponsors and owners will be informed of the pending removal of lists. A list owner may also request that a list be removed by creating a request through the IT Support Services (see Deleting a List, below)
   • If a list sponsor’s email address is no longer valid, or the sponsor is consistently unreachable or unresponsive, the list is considered "orphaned" and is subject to immediate removal. We will make a reasonable effort, time permitting, to determine if the sponsor has simply changed addresses or has left the University. If the sponsor cannot be contacted, list owners will be contacted to determine whether the list should be deleted or a new sponsor designated. If other owners cannot be located, the list will be removed.

Transfer of List Ownership

   • The current list owner may request the transfer of list ownership to someone else by making a request through the US:IT support center. The new owner must meet ownership requirements and assume the responsibilities for the list as outlined above. Requests should include the listname, the new owner's name, email address, and telephone number.
   • In the event that a list sponsor or owner has left the University is no longer available to make this request, another member of the list wishes to assume responsibility for managing the list, the request should come directly from a person of authority regarding the transfer, NOT from the new owner. For a student-owned list, that authority should be a faculty or staff member who serves as a sponsor or adviser to the group. For a staff-owned list, it should be the Manager or Director of the department or organization served by the list.
   • US:IT will verify that the transfer request is legitimate and notify the new owner when the change has been made.

Listserv Owner Inquiries

   • US: IT does not normally share the names of list owners. You can contact a list owner without knowing their name or email. Send an e-mail to <list name>-request@lists.maine.edu (e.g. to reach the owner of the "dabblers" list, send an e-mail to dabblers-request@lists.maine.edu). You will receive a confirmation email; click on the link in the confirmation, and your email will be sent to the list owner.

Deleting Lists

   • Current list owners who no longer have a need for a list should request that the list be deleted by submitting a request through US:IT help center, help@maine.edu. The list owner will receive notification when the list has been deleted.
   • Requests to delete lists that come from someone other than a current list owner will be referred to the current list owner.
   • If a list has multiple list owners, UMS IT will normally act on requests from "any" owner, but "may" act with discretion to ensure that all the list owners are in agreement with the request to delete the list.

List Backup

   • All lists are backed up daily. This includes the list headers (configuration profiles) and the subscriptions, as well as any associated files and archives. In the case of a catastrophic loss of list information, the List owner can request a best effort to restore information in the backup. The messages that are transacted on a non-archived list are not saved and therefore cannot be restored.
• Deleted lists are archived.

Modifying a List's Archives

• The messages of some lists are archived for reference purposes. Because modifying archives defeats that purpose (and is also very labor intensive), it is contrary to US IT policy. Requests to make an exception will be considered, but granted only for legal reasons or when it can be compellingly demonstrated that harm to the University or members thereof will be avoided by doing so. Embarrassment or information thought to be incorrect do not constitute reasons under this policy.

Violations of Computer Use

• In cases where lists are misused to harass or offend subscribers or otherwise violate acceptable computer use policies, and the owner fails to take effective action, US IT reserves the right to suspend list activity by appropriate means, up to and including list deletion.

Additional help: IT Support Services

• Web: http://www.maine.edu/its/university-services-technology-support-center/
• Email: help@maine.edu
• Telephone: 800-696-4357