

Professors Emeriti Network

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[Professors Emeriti Network](#). We walk, what we talk.

Professors Emeriti Ethical and Legal Aspect Group

Retention of university email address of higher education teachers after retirement. Statement Paper.

December 27, 2023

The Role of Professors Emeriti

It is a general policy for universities around the world that Emeriti professors retain their rights to their university email accounts and IT technology after retirement. For this reason, some Emeriti professors are not aware that other retired academics without the title “Emeritus/a” sometimes lose these same rights.

In fact, there are two types of universities: the first cancel university email addresses when professors who are not Emeriti retire, those in the second category do not. In fact, universities are autonomous in this regard, independent of the size or prestige of the university. Termination of university email accounts is a problem, then, at all those universities in the first category.

Indeed, some of retired professors who served at universities in the first group discover only gradually that problems develop because they have lost their email accounts. Among these problems are the loss of accessibility to e-journals and databases and the inability to use a variety of university computer programs. Despite being discouraged, some resign themselves to this state of affairs, believing that nothing can be done. Others are too embarrassed to ask that this access be restored to them. Yet, the decision to grant access to email accounts and other IT services is simply a managerial decision. While some university administrations are age-friendly, others are not. Yet, denying this access runs counter to fundamental principles of human cooperation.

It is no surprise that the general level of IT use is declining over time among retired professors, like retirees in general. For example, the loss of advice from a university’s IT support staff is among the most critical problems caused by such policies, even though some IT support staff report bypassing university policies and helping retirees when they can. Nevertheless, as a result of this loss of professional support, affected retirees may not keep up with new technologies and software updates, and some simply stop using IT all together. Some even give up on continuing their research. In sum,

these retirees can no longer take advantage of the benefits that IT can provide to creative and active aging. For those who have spent their lives serving their institution of higher education, this seems unfair and unethical.

Simply put, the results of these kinds of policies include the loss of the intellectual capital of the affected retirees. After a certain time, this capital can no longer be retrieved. Since people are living longer today, the loss of this intellectual capital robs society of opportunities that retired professors could provide. They cannot make a contribution to the silver economy.

It is discouraging to note that the administrations of universities with such restrictive policies seem to be fine with the status quo, and have only limited continuing interaction with their retired professors.

Emeriti professors can play an important role in addressing this situation. They can pledge their voice and influence to retired colleagues who do not have Emeriti status. They would do this because, based on their own experience, they know very well how beneficial it is to maintain access to university IT and everything related to it.

They would take up this cause not for themselves, but for their former colleagues. Specifically, Emeriti professors can influence the policy of the university's management by proposing that, regarding the possibility of continuing use of university IT, the treatment of all retired professors should be equal to that of Emeriti.

By joining the campaign *Supporting the preservation of the university e-mail accounts of retired higher education teachers*, Emeriti Professors would be demonstrating the possibilities of cooperation among retired professors as well as the eCollaboration of members of the respective networks. For example:

- [Network of eCollaborating Retired eAcademics](#) (since November 16, 2022)
- [Global Network of Associations & Networks: Retirees Developing Silver Economy](#) (since April 25, 2022)
- [Professors Emeriti Network](#) (since October 5, 2020)
- [eSeniors 55+ Network](#) (since August 6, 2019)
- [Inter-Municipality Initiative: Cross-border eCollaboration in the eRegion, Members](#) (since February 10, 2011).

All retired academics are, then, kindly invited to join this campaign. The coordinates of those joining will be published in the group "Supporters" on this website.