How do I access my email?

Concordia provides Google hosted email facilities for all faculty and staff, allowing them to access their email from campus, as well as from any location at which Internet access is available.

To access your email, open your preferred browser. In the address bar of your web browser, enter **onlineservices.concordia.ab.ca/faculty** and then navigate to **My Account**, and then choose **Email**. If you have forgotten (or have no password yet), follow the procedures for Resetting Your Password, otherwise, click on **Take me to the Google Mail login page**.

Alternatively, you can go directly to gmail.com from your preferred browser.

In the sign-in box, enter your Concordia email address (firstname.lastname@concordia.ab.ca) and your network password, and then click the **Sign-in** button.

Getting Access

All Concordia University of Edmonton faculty and staff have a mailbox on Google. To login to your email, go to http://mail.google.com/ and login to your Concordia University of Edmonton Google account.

Interface

Most people quite enjoy the standard web interface for Google Mail, particularly with the various customizations and themes that can be applied to it. We find, in general, that it works very well, particularly in the Google Chrome web browser. We do not, however, restrict what browser you may use, or even require the use of the web interface. If you would like to use another platform like Microsoft Outlook, Mozilla Thunderbird, etc. to connect to your Google mailbox you are welcome to do so. Due to the configuration it requires, please contact us if you would like to use Microsoft Outlook.

Key Features

Virtually all of the features you are familiar with in other email systems are also available on Google Mail. There are, however, a few features which may be a bit different than what you are used to. The most notable ones are Labelsand Conversation View. See the introductory videos below.

- Labels: Video introduction (from Google)
- Conversation View: Video introduction (from UPEI)

Mail Management

Here are a few recommendations on email management:

- Understand that email is an important communication tool. As you use it to perform your job, it can grow large very quickly and become difficult to control.
- It should be your goal to have nothing of vital importance stored in your mailbox. When a person leaves, it is desirable that their mailbox can be retained for a short time then discarded with no ill effects on their co-workers. A former employee's mailbox being continuously accessed and referenced is a misuse of the tool. Here are a few tips to help control what your mailbox contains:
    - Establish diligent habits for regularly organizing your mail (including deleting where appropriate).
    - Reference material should be saved elsewhere (outside of email) and information that is needed by the entire group/department should be made available through other means.
    - When available, make use of resources mailboxes for conducting communications with external groups.

Sharing & Collaboration

Mail sharing and collaboration can be achieved through a variety of methods and each of them is appropriate for different scenarios. IT Services provides recommendations when the different methods should be employed in order to maintain a robust and manageable mail system. The following is our general recommendations on mail sharing and collaboration.

Before we can describe the different methods of sharing, some definitions of terms is required:

- **Email Address**: An email address (such as bill.smith@concordia.ab.ca) that Concordia University of Edmonton receives mail for. These can be directly associated with a mailbox or with a mailing list. Email addresses must be unique across all of Concordia University of Edmonton.
- **Mailbox**: A final destination where mail will be delivered to. A mailbox includes inbox, sent mail, and other labels. A mailbox can be associated with multiple email addresses. Each staff and faculty member has an individual Concordia University of Edmonton mailbox, and may also have access to one or more shared mailboxes.
- **Shared Mailbox**: A mailbox which is either accessed by more than one individual, or for other reasons, is separate and distinct from an individual's own mailbox.

Here are some options that Google makes available for the sharing and collaboration of mail:

- **Email Aliasing**: This is the adding of an secondary email address (alias) to an existing mailbox. This isn't exactly a sharing and collaboration option, but it does provide a level of continuity and abstraction, because that alias is portable and can be moved to a different individual as required and nobody else needs to be informed or update their contact lists, promotional material, etc. This feature is recommended for use in scenarios where a generic address is specific to a single person's primary job role. For example, a *bill.smith@concordia.ab.ca* mailbox could be configured to additionally send and receive through *vp.widgets@concordia.ab.ca*. It maintains a level of simplicity by having all messages (regardless of whether they were sent to bill.smith or vp.widgets) appear together in a single Inbox. When Bill Smith moves on from that role, the vp.widgets address (but not the mail) can be moved to the new individual in that role.
- **Delegated Mailbox**: A delegated mailbox is a type of shared mailbox, where one person is given full access to another person's individual mailbox. They can open the delegated mailbox (entirely separate from their own) and send and receive mail through it. The most common use of this option is for an assistant to be given access to their manager's mailbox. If John Doe is the assistant to Bill Smith, as VP of Widgets, the bill.

smith mailbox can be delegated to john.doe, so the assistant (John) could have full access to his manager's (Bill's) mail. This also means that Bill Smith no longer has exclusive access to his individual mailbox for more sensitive communications. It is recommended that this option be used only in scenarios where the manager is in a position which has a direct assistant who requires full access to manage the manager's mail.

- **Resource Mailbox**: A resource mailbox is a type of shared mailbox, where one or more people are given full access to a standalone (non-individual) mailbox created specifically to be shared. Any of the individuals given access can open the resource mailbox (entirely separate from their own) and send, receive, or organize mail in it. This type of mailbox is suitable for a primary job role shared by a group of people where they interact with others outside their group (customers, vendors, etc). A second scenario where can be employed is when an individual is responsible for an area that is not actually their primary, individual job role, yet requires the ability to send and receive email uniquely in that role. The fact that this mail is kept in a standalone mailbox, as opposed to the previous sharing options, also provides a couple of advantages. First, it can keep the mail related to the interactions organized and available to the entire group. When a new individual joins the group, they obtain access to the historical record of all past interactions conducted through that mailbox. For example, *helpdesk@concordia.ab.ca* is used by IT Services to interact with students, staff, and faculty. Multiple individuals within IT Services use this mailbox. As another example, an individual may be made responsible for a particular yearly event that is very public-facing. Different people take over this role each year, but require historical record of communications. By nature, resource mailboxes are more effort to maintain than any of the other options, so they should be used sparingly and only when actually required.
- **Mailing List**: A mailing list is a tool for sending email to multiple individual mailboxes. This is ideal for internal group communications as well as communications with others where there is no need to collaborate or maintain a historical record. Mail is delivered to the individual mailboxes of all members of the mailing list.

To summarize the different mail sharing and collaboration scenarios and IT Services' recommendations:

- If one individual requires a generic email address, corresponding to their primary job role: *Use a Mail Alias.*
- If one individual requires another individual to send, receive, and manage mail for them: *Use a Delegated Mailbox.*
- If one individual is responsible for an area that is not their primary job role, yet requires to send and receive email uniquely in that role: *Use a Resource Mailbox.*
- If a group of individuals requires a method to collaboratively interact with others (customers, etc): *Use a Resource Mailbox.*
- If a group of individuals requires a method to communicate between themselves: *Use a Mailing List.*
- If a group of individuals requires a method of simple and basic interaction with others (customers, etc): *Use a Mailing List.*

Further Information

You can always contact IT Services for further information about accessing your mailbox, sharing and collaboration options or any other mail-related issues.

Additionally, here is a helpful resource from Google**:** Using Google Mail