



Accessing NJCU Email

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Abstract: This comprehensive guide answers one of the most common questions that the department is asked by the University community, "How do I access my Email?". This simple question leads to several alternatives, depending on the user's activity and technical skills, and the hardware and software available to the user. It addresses, in detail, both on- and off-campus methods with specific configuration instructions for the various access scenarios.

Contents:

INTRODUCTION	1
LOCAL CLIENTS	2
LOCAL CLIENT CONFIGURATION.....	2
WEB CLIENTS	3
CONFIGURING A THIRD-PARTY WEB CLIENT	4
CHOOSING AN EMAIL ACCESS METHOD	4
ABOUT MESSAGE BACKUP UP	5
RECOMMENDATION.....	5
EMAIL ACCESS ISSUES	5
CONTACTING ITS.....	6

Introduction

Email is short for "Electronic Mail". It is by far the most common application that is used on a network and the Internet. New Jersey City University provides Email services to all members of the university community.

All students, staff and faculty have an account on this system. Students are provided an account at NJCU automatically upon first registration. This account is generally carried through 6 months after graduation or deleted immediately upon leaving the University. Staff & faculty accounts are assigned manually by request and are generally deleted upon leaving the University.

NJCU's email services are currently being provided on the University's VMS Cluster, managed by the Department of Information Technology Services (ITS). VMS is an operating system that runs a set –or

cluster– of mini computers that share common resources such as disk storage and printers.¹ The email *server* is a set of programs running on the VMS cluster that is responsible for sending and receiving email on behalf of the user. When receiving email, the messages are held until the user requests to read them through software generically known as an email *client*. There are many email clients available, which fall into three categories: terminal-, local-, and web-based.² Terminal email clients, though still available, are rarely used. They have been superseded by local and web clients that offer greater ease of use through a graphical user interface (GUI). This document provides information on the use of GUI-based clients, with examples.

Local Clients

A local email client is a program that resides and runs on a desktop or laptop personal computer (PC). Examples of a local client are Qualcomm Eudora, Microsoft Outlook, Netscape Messenger, and Mozilla Thunderbird, but there are many others. The local client talks to the remote email server in your behalf over the Internet or local area network (LAN). Messages are downloaded to the local PC and stored in a special container file or a series of hierarchical folders *prior* to reading the messages. Once on the local PC, access to these messages is through the client's message manager and restricted to the specific computer the message container resides on. Messages are read, replied to and created via the standard Graphic User Interface (GUI).

In addition to enhanced messaging and message management capabilities, Local Email clients have full function graphics-based editors with the ability to use extended character sets, a wide range of character attributes, the integration of graphics and pictures, and the capability of handling file attachments gracefully. Most email clients have evolved into a class of software called Personal Information Managers (PIMs), with build in address books, calendaring, notes storage and more! An example of this type software is Microsoft Outlook, the University's standard email client.

The downside to this form of email client is that it is used for single user on one and only one personal computer.³ If you are sharing a computer or roaming from computer to computer, this type of email client may not suitable. Microsoft Outlook is used as a basis for the following configuration example. The parameters discussed are the same for all local clients.

Local Client Configuration

PC Email Clients have several groups of configuration parameters to set up that, collectively, are associated with a specific service. Depending on the client software, you may be able to set up several of these services, enabling the consolidation of emails from different systems. In Microsoft Outlook, they are called "Accounts". Basic account settings are consistent among the various Email Clients available. They are as follows:

Table begins on next page

¹ Most of the university community knows this system as "The VAX", which is a holdover from when the cluster consisted of VAX computers manufactured by Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC)¹. Although the original computers have been replaced by the Alpha series, the VMS cluster is still commonly referred to as "The VAX".

² When referring to these clients, the "-based" extension and "email" are commonly dropped in conversation and documentation. This document adopts the common terminology, e.g., "web client" instead of "web-based email client".

³ Local clients can be configured for multiple users through the creation of "Profiles" and even be configured to share messages among several computers, but this is an advanced use of the application and not recommended for the typical user.

Group	Parameter	Comments
<i>General</i>	Name	Enter your name or handle. It is also a good idea to provide the system host in parenthesis after your name to give the recipient an idea where the email is coming from. For example, "John Doe (NJCU)" First and last name is typical. This information is displayed in the "From" field of emails that you send.
	Organization	Leave blank or enter "New Jersey City University".
	Email Address	Enter your NJCU email <i>address</i> , e.g. helpdesk@njcu.edu This information may also appear in the "From" field of your email messages.
	Reply to Address	<i>Leave this blank.</i>
<i>Servers</i>	Outgoing (SMTP)	Enter " mail.njcu.edu " (without the quotes) NOTE: If you are configuring the local client on a computer <i>outside</i> of the NJCU network, you must enter the SMTP address of your Internet Service Provider (ISP).
	Incoming (POP)	Enter " mail.njcu.edu " (without the quotes)
	Login Name	Enter your NJCU account name
	Password	Enter your NJCU password. NOTE: There is typically a "Remember Password" checkbox next to or below this entry. Use this with caution.
<i>Connection</i>	Type	Select "Modem" or "Dial-up Networking" depending on your access method.
<i>Advanced</i>	SMTP port	25 (default)
	POP port	110 (default)
	Delivery	Delete server copy after download. Your alternative here is to leave a copy on the server after download. You may want to do this if you have another PC already set to delete the server copy.

Web Clients

Web-based email clients are the most recent addition to this type software. It is an email client application that runs on a remote server maintained by a third party and uses a standard Internet browser to present and manage your email messages. Examples of this service are Microsoft Hotmail, Yahoo!-Mail, and GoogleMail. Some of these services usually allow access to other email servers in addition to their own.

NJCU provides it's own web client, [GotMail?](https://gotmail.njcu.edu/). This client is pre-configured for access to the NJCU email server. To use this client, point your browser to <https://gotmail.njcu.edu/> and enter your username and password at the login prompt.

NOTE: You may be prompted to save this information. *Do so with caution!* Do not do so if you are on a public computer, or any computer that is shared with others – especially strangers – where privacy is an issue..

Configuring a Third-party Web Client

As noted above, third-party web clients may allow access to one or more external email servers. This allows an individual to consolidate receiving email from various services to one location. However, replying to a message may appear to the recipient as coming from the third-party client instead of where the original message was sent to. This may confuse the recipient. That noted, those wishing to try this should use the following parameters:

Parameter	Enter
POP Location (or host)	mail.njcu.edu
Username	Your NJCU account username
Password	Your NJCU account password

On some web clients all that is required is for you to enter your email address and password instead of entering a POP address and username separately.

Choosing an Email Access Method

The following table shows the advantages and disadvantages when using local verses web clients:

Client Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
Local Client	Message storage is virtually unlimited.	Read messages are generally only available from the computer where they were downloaded.
	Message backup and recovery is managed by the user.	Message backup and recovery is managed by the user.
	Allows multiple "Profiles" and accounts.	
	Additional PIM features may be desirable.	
Web Client (<i>GotMail?</i>)	Email is available from any PC connected to the Internet, anywhere.	Email storage is limited to 2GB per user.
	Email account is free	Single Account/Profile
	Message backup and recovery is managed by the email provider.	Message backup and recovery is managed by the email provider.
Web Client (third-party)	The email account is typically free.	Email storage is limited (allocation varies by provider).

Client Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
	Typically can add another account from another service.	Account activity may be tracked and profiled.
	Message backup and recovery is managed by the email provider.	Message backup and recovery is managed by the email provider.

About Message Backup Up

Note that the main difference in message backup between local and web clients is a question of responsibility. That is, who is responsible for backing up received messages that have been retained? When using a *local client*, the user is responsible for backing up the data. Conversely, the *web client* provider is responsible for message backup. Depending on the user's point of view, who does the backup could be an advantage or a disadvantage.

While having someone else be responsible for backup is convenient, all the commercial web client providers have a caveat in their respective end-user license agreements (EULAs) that stipulate they do *not* guarantee lost messages will be recovered. Conversely, as the user is responsible for backing up local client data, if this is not done on a regular basis or the process fails for some reason the user is again left with no data. What may be a disadvantage for one person may be considered an advantage to another. Each individual should weigh these factors carefully when choosing an email client.

Recommendation

Having a universal, *location-independent* email account is useful. If roaming from building to building and other locations is typical behavior, then using an email web client is the best choice. ITS recommends using the NJCU web client, [GotMail?](#), for students, faculty, and adjuncts; and for anyone who roams about, on- and/or off-campus regularly. In addition to the freedom of roaming access, [GotMail?](#) provides generous storage and attachment size quotas, and better backup recovery.

If PIM features are important, some third-party web clients may provide this or use a local email client.

Email Access Issues

Email access problems vary, but fall into four general categories:

1. Wrong or forgotten Account name
2. Wrong, forgotten, or expired password
3. Network access failure
4. Host access failure

Of these, password problems are the most common.

Network and host failures are rare, but they do happen. When they occur, ITS staff will make every effort to resolve the issue as soon as possible. In cases where resolution falls to a third party, ITS staff track the problem to ensure that the issue is resolved in a timely manner. In general, email services are available 24 hours, 7 days a week, and the system is backed up regularly.

Contacting ITS

If you have an access problem, stop by the Computer Center, Rossey Hall, Room 10. Ring the service bell and an attendant will help you. You must show your *validated* NJCU PhotoID card or proof that you are a current, registered student in good standing.

If you have additional questions, please send email to helpdesk@njcu.edu.