

# Class Email Alias User Guide

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## What is this Service

### Introduction

A class alias is an electronic mailing list that contains the email addresses of all faculty and students associated with a particular class. The purpose of the class alias is to simplify the process of communicating with students via email.

### How the Auto Alias process works

ITS receives class information from the Student Information System (SIS) for each student and instructor per class section. We use this information to build an address list for each class. The resulting data files are stored in a system area on the UNIX mail server.

A second file for each class, called an **"include"** file, is created in a sub-directory of the departmental library account of the department responsible for that class. Faculty and departmental staff can add addresses to an alias (e.g., graders or grader accounts) by putting them into the **"include"** file. Every time an alias is used, those additional names will be included.

### How to use the service

Some of the more common questions a faculty member or support staff person may have about the automatically generated class aliases are:

## How will I know I have an alias available for my use?

As each new alias is created, an email message is sent to the faculty member who is listed for the class. An additional message is sent to the departmental library account to inform the department librarian that an **"include"** file for that alias has been placed in their department library account.

If no faculty member is listed for that class, no message will be sent to the faculty member. If no department library exists for the department responsible for the course, no message will be sent to the departmental library.

## How will an alias be named?

The format of the file names is:

aaaa-xnnn-ss-yyyq

where

aaaa	is the course abbreviation with all trailing spaces removed.
x	is either an <b>"e"</b> , <b>"x"</b> , <b>"p"</b> , or <b>"s"</b>
nnn	the three digit course number
ss	the two digit course section number
yyy	the year the course is offered in
q	the quarter number within the year the course is offered in (winter=2, spring=4, summer=6, fall=8)

Examples:

Section 01 of a csc 110 class taught fall of 2006 would be listed as: **csc-110-01-2068**

Section 02 of a me 120 class taught winter of 2007 would be listed as: **me-120-02-2072**

Section 03 of an engl X300 class taught winter of 2007 would be listed as: **engl-x300-03-2072**

## How is an alias used?

In your email client, type the alias name as follows:

**aliasname@calpoly.edu**

## What student email address will be used?

The AutoAlias program will use the student preferred address indicated by **username@calpoly.edu**. This is the student's Cal Poly email account.

## Who will be notified if mail is not delivered?

The faculty in charge of the class will receive "bounced" or undeliverable mail. A bounced message is an indication that the address is invalid.

## Adding users to the alias

### What files are created?

Two files are created for each class section. The first file contains names and addresses of students enrolled in the course. This file is stored on the Central UNIX system, it cannot be viewed or modified by any user.

The second file called an **"include"** file is for additional addresses that the faculty member wants to **"include"** in the alias (e.g., graders, etc.). This file is placed in the department library account. Only the **"include"** file can be edited by the faculty member or department librarian

## Where are the "include" files stored?

The "include" files are placed in the departmental library account and are stored in the following manner:

```
/ulib/csc/.aliases/include/2068/=====  
                                csc-100-01-2068  
                                csc-100-02-2068  
                                csc-100-03-2068  
                                ...  
                                csc-518-01-2068
```

The files will be created as group faculty and group writeable so faculty can edit the files to add the required addresses. All directories leading to the files and the files themselves will be public readable (this is a requirement of the UNIX mail system).

## What are the initial contents of the "include" files?

Each file will be created with a default address of "bit-bucket@polymail.cpunix.calpoly.edu" to prevent any errors that would be caused by an empty file.

The file will also contain comments describing how to edit the file and proper address formats as well as a URL for additional information on how the Automatic Class alias generation works.

## How do I know if my department has a department library account?

Log into your Central UNIX account. At the % prompt type: **ulib dir**

Press the spacebar to scroll through the list to find the library name for your department. The alphabetic list displays the Library Name, Department Name and the Contact or Department Librarian. Press **q** to **quit** and exit the directory display.

Lib Name	Department Name	Comments and Contacts
=====	=====	=====
actg	Accounting	Librarian: Jack Robinson in 03-403A.
ae	Ag. Engineering	Librarian: Rollin Strohman in 08-105.
aero	Aero. Engineering	Librarian: Jeff Nadel in 13-219.
aged	Ag Education	Librarian: Robert A. Flores in 10-242.
arce	Arch. Engineering	Librarian: Paul Fratessa in 21-110B.
arch	Architecture	Librarian: Roxana Lopez in 124-113.
artdesgn	Art and Design	Librarian: Chuck Jennings in 34-170.
asci	Animal Science	Librarian: Becky Holleran in 10-101.

## What is the proper email address format for a class alias?

The format of the addresses in the alias file are as follows:

### Format

userid@domain.suf

### Example

jdoe@calpoly.edu

### OR

"Descriptive Information"  
<userid@site.domain.suf>

"John Doe" <jdoe@calpoly.edu>

where "userid" is the login id or registered email name for the user; "domain" is the domain in which the machine exists (ours is "calpoly"); and "suf" is the suffix for the Internet address ("edu" for an Internet educational site such as Cal Poly).

Either form may be used within an alias "**include**" file. With the second form, the double quotes and the greater-than and less-than signs are required. "Descriptive Information" may be anything that allows you to document the user or the purpose for the line; it is not received by the users.

"Descriptive Information" is separated by a **single** mandatory space from the email address contained in angled braces.

## Adding email addresses to a class alias

A file called an "**include**" file has been created for every class alias that is automatically generated. You can only add email addresses to the "**include**" file.

To edit the file, log in to your Central UNIX account and use a text editor such as **pico** or **vi** (please refer to the appropriate sections for pico and vi in the "Introduction to UNIX" publication or on the web at: <http://www.calpoly.edu/~ias/userguides/CentralUNIX/>). For the purposes of this document, **pico** will be used in the examples.

After entering the account name and password, press the enter key until the "**bash-2.05\$**" prompt is displayed.

**MAC USERS only:** At the "bash-2.05\$" prompt type: **export TERM=xterm**. If you see a **tcsh** prompt, type: **setenv TERM xterm**.

Change to the directory containing the alias "**include**" files of the department responsible for the course. The files are stored based on the year and academic quarter when they are generated. For example, the alias for Computer Science, Fall Quarter year 2006 is stored in the department library account under the subdirectory:

**/ulib/csc/.aliases/include/2068/**

Once you know the library name (see the above section: "How do I know if my department has a department library account?") you can navigate to the department account by typing the following at the **%** prompt (the library name is preceded by the **tilda ~ character**):

**cd ~library name/.aliases/include/yyyy**

Example: Computer Science Fall 2006

**cd ~csc/.aliases/include/2068**

To display a list of aliases stored in this directory, at the **%** prompt type **ls**

To edit the "**include**" file, type **pico aliasname**. For example to edit, section 01 of a csc 110 class taught fall of 2006, type:

**pico csc-110-01-2068**

The file will contain the following text:

```
#
# Alias data file for Central UNIX system alias
#
# Associated system alias: csc-110-01-2068
# Date and time created: Mon Aug 21 13:56:00 PDT 2006
#
# This file was created by the Automatic Class Email Alias
# Generation Utility version 1.00
#
# Please refer to the following web page for further information
# on this mechanism: http://www.calpoly.edu/~unixsys/autoalias/
#
# Add additional addresses below the row of hyphens and above
# bit-bucket address. Enter addresses in one of the following
# formats without the # sign. There should be no blank lines
# between the row of hyphens and the bit-bucket address.
#
# userid@site.domain.suf
# "Descriptive Information" <userid@site.domain.suf>
#
# Leave the bit-bucket address at the end of the file.
# -----row of hyphens-----
bit-bucket
```

Add email addresses between the **---row of hyphens---** and the line that contains **bit-bucket**. There must be no blank lines in the file. (See the section: "What is the proper email address format for a class aliases?")

After you have added the addresses, press **CTRL-O**, then press **Enter** to save the file. Finally, press **CTRL-X** to exit and close the file.

To exit UNIX, type **exit** at the % prompt.

## How do I know who is on the generated list?

Faculty members who are indicated as the instructor for the particular course, will be able to submit an electronic request for the list of the addresses. Use the form located at:  
<http://www.calpoly.edu/~unixsys/autoalias/AliasInfoRequest.html>.

Department librarians may also use this electronic request form. Department librarians will submit the request as by entering, in the box for "Your Email Address:", an address in the form of

**department\_account\_name@polymail.calpoly.edu**

For example, if your department is English and your department account name is "engl", enter

**engl@calpoly.edu**

Notice that your department address should include "polymail" to be recognized as a department request.

Department librarians may use this Web form to "Request detailed information about a single email alias". The option to "Request a list of email aliases" is not available to departments.

## How will FERPA be respected?

Any student who has their FERPA flag set in the Student Administration system shall have their address, but not their name, listed in the alias **"include"** file. For example

**jsmith@calpoly.edu**

would be an address for someone who has requested privacy.

"John Smith" <jsmith@calpoly.edu>

would be an address for someone who did not request privacy.

### **How do I prevent the creation of an alias?**

If you have no need for an alias for your class, or if the alias is of low importance and is being abused (SPAM), you may request that the creation of the alias be disabled by sending a mail message to [aliasmgr@polymail.calpoly.edu](mailto:aliasmgr@polymail.calpoly.edu).

In the message subject line include the following: **DISABLE classalias csc-101-01-2068**

In the message indicate the alias you wish to disable, your name and phone number. Your ownership of the alias will be confirmed and a phone call will be made to verify the request.

### **How do I change the name of the alias?**

If your class requires the alias but it is being abused (SPAM), you may request a name change for the alias by sending a mail message to [aliasmgr@polymail.calpoly.edu](mailto:aliasmgr@polymail.calpoly.edu).

In the message subject line include the following: **RENAME classalias csc-101-01-2068**

In the message indicate the alias you wish to change and your proposed new class alias name. Your ownership of the alias will be confirmed and a phone call will be made to verify the request.

### **Who can edit the "include" files?**

Faculty can edit any **"include"** file in any department library account. Department Librarians that are not faculty can only edit files in the department library account that they are the librarian for.

### **How often are the class aliases updated?**

The primary system file containing enrolled student email addresses will be updated daily.

The **"include"** file that contains additional addresses can be changed as often as you like.

### **How long will these files be on the system?**

We keep each file around for one full year. After that it is deleted. This means that there are four quarters worth of aliases available at any point in time.

If the "include" file is manually deleted during the current quarter for that class, it will be recreated during the nightly process. At the end of one year, the class email alias and its associated "include" file will be deleted automatically. No manual intervention is required.

### **When will the next quarter's aliases become available?**

New aliases for the upcoming quarter will be created as soon as the last changes for the current quarter are complete and students have started to register for the upcoming quarter. This should occur during the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> week of the current quarter.

### **Where do I go for help?**

For assistance in editing the alias **"include"** file, contact your Department Librarian. You can determine who your department librarian is by using the command: **"ulib dir"** and look for your department in the generated list. If your department does not appear, your department does not have a department library account and you may not edit the alias **"include"** files. If the name of the department librarian is listed incorrectly, please contact the Service Desk to correct the entry.

If you do not have a Central UNIX department library account for your department, your department chair may apply for one using forms from the ITS Service Desk or <http://servicedesk.calpoly.edu/>.