July 27, 2022

Dear AHCCS&T members,

I wanted to reach out to share an update about Harvard's alumni email forwarding service. After several years of evaluating the service, the University has made the decision to retire central alumni email forwarding. Email forwarding addresses will be slowly deactivated over the next 18 months, and alumni will be given several months' notice before their addresses are turned off.

As background on the University’s decision, alumni email forwarding was introduced in the 1990s and is now becoming obsolete. Over the past five to 10 years, we have heard growing concerns from many alumni about the challenges of this aging technology. For instance, alumni frequently reach out to us frustrated about emails they never received, spam and phishing inquiries through their forwarding accounts, and more.

Due to the nature of email forwarding technology, in most instances we cannot resolve their complaints. New spam rules and policies at email providers (Gmail, Yahoo, etc.) make it very difficult to offer a reliable forwarding-only service at this point, and many institutions have migrated off email forwarding.

I know you may have questions about whether the University is replacing forwarding with alumni inboxes. Harvard leadership has spent the past several years exploring the possibility of offering an email inbox; however, doing so at scale for the entire alumni community of more than 400,000 is not without legal and security risks and requires significant customer service resources to maintain. For these reasons, the University decided not to pursue an inbox option.

We will begin communicating with alumni who have email forwarding addresses later this summer, and we thought it was important to share this update with your fellow AHCCS&T volunteers before this outreach begins. If alumni in your community reach out to you with questions, we’ve created an [email forwarding FAQ](https://click.hu.harvard.edu/?qs=b0fad2b71b8d73304350a099376430b888e45e51926bd04b80df01ba688446c84721b32e80bf268773841a716098e526d1cb28cccb30f62f) to assist you in responding to them.

As always, you’re welcome to reach out to me with any further questions.

All best,

Philip

Philip W. Lovejoy
Associate Vice President and Executive Director

Harvard Alumni Association