Technical Support Services
Office of Information Technology, West Virginia University

OIT Help Desk: (304) 293-4444, oithelp@mail.wvu.edu

http://oit.wvu.edu/listserv/
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Introduction

LISTSERV provides an effective way for WVU faculty and staff to communicate with large groups of people. There are potential advantages in using this technology over traditional e-mail address books for those wishing to expand communication capabilities and flexibility.

When to Choose LISTSERV

Some advantages that LISTSERV provides over traditional e-mail address books are:

- Messages can be sent in mass with less concern of being perceived as spam by receiving service providers
- Communications submitted to the list can be moderated if so desired
- List management roles can be shared and disseminated
- Addresses on the list can be centrally managed and kept current
- Individuals outside of the University can be authorized to post to the list
- Individuals interacting with the list can send / reply to a single address and have the message automatically distributed to all subscribers.
- List subscribers can specify options to receive posts individually, or periodically in a consolidated digest form.
- List subscribers can temporarily suspend subscriptions if they will be away

Understanding Roles Associated with Lists

LISTSERV lists are centrally managed and have roles associated with them which are assigned to individuals. The way in which a list is to be used and administered will dictate what roles will need to be assigned. This technology can be very flexible, and having an understanding of the associated roles and possible configuration scenarios can aid in making necessary decisions prior to requesting that a list be created.

Some roles are optional and some are required. An individual may have more than one role assigned to him or her for a given list. If after reviewing this description you find that you would like to discuss your particular scenario, please feel free to contact the OIT help desk: 304.293.4444 or oithelp@mail.edu

The following are descriptions of roles associated with lists:

Owners

Those designated in this role oversee regular operations of the list such as adding and removing users, pursuing resolution to message delivery errors, and possibly configuration changes.

It is possible to have more than one owner designated to a given list. Owners fall into the categories of either being “non-quiet” or “quiet”. Under the non-quiet designation, owners receive e-mail notifications of all delivery errors stemming from unreachable addresses. There must be at least one non-quiet owner.
Conversely, quiet owners have all the abilities of non-quiet owners, but do not receive e-mails from the system that report error message information.

An example where it might be desirable to designate a quiet owner would be where an individual needs the ability to do administrative tasks, such as adding and removing users from the list, but does not need to see routine delivery error messages as they are to be handled by another individual who is a non-quiet owner.

**Subscribers**

Anyone who is to receive messages sent to the list needs to be designated as a subscriber. This includes individuals who may already have other established roles pertaining to the list such as owners.

**Moderators** (Optional)

If the list is geared towards discussion among the subscribers, it may be desirable in some cases to have it moderated. Individuals in this role have all messages submitted to the list sent to them for approval prior to being distributed to all subscribers.

While this can potentially slow the time it takes for a message to be distributed by those who are posting, it can be useful to help ensure what goes out to the list is on topic and appropriate.

**Editors** (Optional)

If the list being created is intended for distribution of announcements only, individuals who may post can be designated by granting them the role of editor. When this is used, it is generally a small number of individuals who are set up to post. An example of this would be when a large group of students periodically needs to have information sent to them, but it would not be desirable to have a student send a reply, or create a new message that would be sent to all list subscribers. The established editors would be the only ones with the authority to send messages to the list.

**Requesting List Creation**

Requests for new lists are handled through the Office of Information Technology help desk. Faculty and staff interested in having a list created will need to provide specific information to facilitate proper configuration. Ideally this information should be sent to the OIT help desk in an e-mail message from your GroupWise account with “LISTSERV List Creation Request” in the subject line. The OIT help desk can be e-mailed at this address: oithelp@mail.wvu.edu

If you wish to speak to someone about this process, please call (304) 293-4444. Please note that it is important to address all needed aspects described below to avoid delays in processing and to help ensure correct configuration:

1. **Preferred name for the list**
   
   Name should address the following criteria:
   
   - Brief and descriptive of the organization or associated topic
• Provides enough detail to be easily discernable from other lists
• Abbreviations are suggested where possible
• Cannot contain spaces, but can contain underscores or dashes

Examples
Good: HRE_MA_STUDENTS
Bad: STUDENT_MAILING_LIST

2. Description of list and its intended purpose
This is expected to be one or two sentences that give basic background on the purpose of the list.

3. Role assignments
For everyone being assigned to a role, their e-mail addresses are needed as are their real-life names.
   a. Non-quiet Owner(s) – Must have at least 1
   b. Quiet Owner(s) - Optional
   c. Moderator(s) - Optional
   d. Editor(s) - Optional

4. Who can post to the list
Generally lists allow for subscribers to post messages. When a list is for announcement purposes only, editors are the only ones who can post.

5. Will the list be moderated
While many lists are not moderated, if this functionality is desired, all messages will be queued up after being sent to the system until someone in a moderator role approves and releases it to the subscribers.

6. Where replies will be sent
This specifies when a subscriber replies to a message, whether the reply will be addressed to the entire list, or to the individual who posted the message.

7. Should an archive of the list be kept
While most lists are not archived, it is possible to have the system keep a copy of all list postings. This can sometimes be useful for reference, or if a newer subscriber wishes to look at postings that occurred prior to his or her joining.

8. List visibility
This option determines whether anyone browsing the LISTSERV system can see the name of the list. Most lists are set to not be visible.

9. Who can review the subscriber list
This option determines who has the ability to view the list of all subscribers. This is generally set to be owners, but can be set to include all subscribers too.
10. Subscribers

Optionally, the list can be pre-populated with an initial list of intended subscribers at the time it is requested. If you wish to have this done, please include a list of e-mail addresses and corresponding names in your e-mail request to have the list established. Place entries one to a line with the e-mail address, followed by a blank space and then the actual name.

*Example containing two entries:*

```
gpomegra@fruit.org Grover Pomegranate
sstudent@mix.wvu.edu Sally Student
```

List owners have the ability to change configurations of various attributes at any point after the list is created by OIT. If you feel that you may wish to change configuration settings on your new list, it may be best to wait to populate the list yourself as the changed attributes may not be inherited by the list members.
Information for List Owners

The information provided in this section is designed to give basic background information that is applicable to most list owners. If more in-depth information is desired, please visit the OIT LISTSERV page and review the L-Soft LISTSERV List Owner’s Manual at this URL: http://oit.wvu.edu/tss/listserv/

Once your list has been created, you will receive an e-mail notification from OIT Technical Support Services. At this point, you will be able to connect to the LISTSERV system with your web browser. The first you connect you will need to go through a verification process to establish a password and confirm your identity through your e-mail account.

Establishing a Password
To gain access to your areas of the LISTSERV system, you will need to create a password. Follow these steps to do so:

1. Open this URL with your web browser: http://listserv.wvu.edu
2. Click the Get Password link.
3. Enter the e-mail address that you supplied during the list request process in the “Email Address” box.
4. Enter your desired password in the “Password” box and retype it in the “Password (Again) box.
5. Click the **Register Password** button.

![Register Password button](image)

**Register LISTSERV Password**

- Please enter your email address and the desired password, then click on the 'Register Password' button. If you already had a LISTSERV password but cannot remember what it was, this procedure will automatically replace your existing password with the new one you will be entering below.

- **Email Address**: address@mail.wvu.edu
- **Password**: ********
- **Password (Again)**: ********

![Register Password button](image)

Note: A confirmation screen will be displayed that indicates a mail message has been sent to your registered e-mail account.

6. After completing the initial online phase of the registration process, check your registered e-mail account for a message similar to the one below and click the supplied link to authenticate your e-mail address:

```
From: "West Virginia University LISTSERV Server (15.0)"
Subject: Command confirmation request (8A767DA8)
Your command:
    PW REP ********
requires confirmation. To confirm the execution of your command, simply point your browser to the following URL:

http://listserv.systems.wvu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?OK=

Alternatively, if you have no WWW access, you can reply to the present message and type "OK" (without the quotes) as the text of your message. Just the word "OK" - do not retype the command. This procedure will work with any mail program that fully conforms to the Internet standards for electronic mail. If you receive an error message, try sending a new message to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.SYSTEMS.WVU.EDU (without using the "reply" function - this is very important) and type "ok 8A767DA8" as the text of your message.

Finally, your command will be cancelled automatically if LISTSERV does not receive your confirmation within 48h. After that time, you must start over and resend the command to get a new confirmation code. If you change your mind and decide that you do NOT want to confirm the command, then simply discard the present message and let the request expire on its own.
```
7. Once this process has been completed, a message indicating your new password was registered successfully will display:

Logging in to Manage Your List

Those who are in the role of list owner can perform tasks such as adding and removing individual subscribers, bulk adding multiple subscribers from text files, and setting subscription options for subscribers.

To gain access to these areas follow these steps:

1. Go to the following URL with your web browser: http://listserv.wvu.edu
2. Click the Log In link.
3. Enter your information in the “Email Address:” and “Password:” boxes, then click the Log In button.

Security Note

LISTSERV creates a browser cookie on machines that accounts are logged into with. This cookie allows for re-entering the LISTSERV without having to enter a password for future sessions. Those using computers that are shared, or located in public areas, are advised to click the logout at the end of each session to prevent unauthorized logins.

4. When you are ready to conclude your session, click the Log Out link in the upper-right corner of the screen.

Note: If the computer you use is in a secure location and you have exclusive use of it, you can choose to close the browser without logging out of the LISTSERV system. The next time you return to LISTSERV, you will not be prompted for a password.

Adding and Removing Users

The frequency in which changes to the list of subscribers needs to be made varies. For routine maintenance purposes, it is common to add and remove individual entries in the subscriber list.
To add an individual subscriber to the list, follow these steps:

1. Click the **List Management** link.

2. Select **Subscriber Management** from the resulting drop-down menu.

3. Type the e-mail address of the individual to add, followed by a blank space, and the real-life name.

4. If you do not wish for a notification message to be sent to the new subscriber, click to select the **Do Not Notify the User** option.

5. Click the **Add to list name** button.

6. The system will display a confirmation message.
To remove an individual subscriber from the list, follow these steps:

1. Enter the Subscriber Management area as described in the previous section.
2. Type the name or e-mail address of the subscriber to be removed in the "Name or Address:" box.
3. Click the **Search in list name** button.
4. Verify that the correct individual has been selected, and then click the **Delete** button at the bottom of the screen.
5. A confirmation message will display indicating the subscriber has been removed.

Note: A method for deleting multiple users at one time is described in the “Resolving Delivery Errors” section of this document.
Bulk Adding Users

Another method of adding subscribers is doing so in bulk. This method allows one to put e-mail addresses and real-life associated names of multiple people into a basic text file that LISTSERV can then import. This can be a great time saver over making individual entries when a number of new subscribers are ready to be added at the same time.

To add subscribers in bulk, follow these steps:

1. Open a text editor such as Notepad in Windows, TextEdit or SimpleText for Mac OS, or an equivalent in Linux/UNIX.
   
   In Windows, click **Start**, **Programs**, **Accessories**, and **Notepad**.
   
   In Mac OS, open the Applications folder and launch **TextEdit**. Alternatively, SimpleText can be used for versions prior to Mac OS X.

2. Enter one subscriber per line. Type the e-mail address, followed by a blank space, and then the first and last names.

3. Save the file with a name such as “subscribers.txt” and note the location of the file.

4. In LISTSERV, select the **List Management** link and choose **Subscriber Management** from the resulting drop-down menu.

5. Chose the **Bulk Operations** tab on the Subscriber Management screen.

6. Click the **Browse** button and locate the file you created that contains the e-mail addresses and names of the new subscribers.

7. Verify “Add” is selected in the Function area and click the **Import** button.
8. A confirmation message will be displayed that indicates the number of additions that were made:

```
Subscriber Management
ADD: no error, 5 recipients added, no entry changed, no duplicate, none forwarded.
```

**Resolving Delivery Error Messages**

Non-quiet owners may periodically receive delivery error messages pertaining to e-mail addresses of subscribers that were not reachable when a message was sent to the list. This can stem from addresses that were recently added and contain typos, ones that are no longer valid, or for a variety of other reasons.

List owners can seek to resolve errors by examining the contents of the messages and evaluating the configuration information of the subscriber in question to determine an appropriate course of action. To view and potentially modify the list of subscribers, follow these steps:

1. On the List Management menu, select **List Reports** and then **Subscriber Reports**.

2. The lower portion of the resulting screen displays a list of the subscribers.

3. To edit an e-mail address or name of a subscriber, click the link that displays the name as blue text.
4. If you wish to delete one or more subscribers from the list, carefully select the appropriate boxes to the left of the subscribers to be removed and then click the **Delete Selected Subscribers** button at the bottom of the screen.

### Setting Options for Subscribers

As initial options are set up for lists by OIT at the time of creation, it is not often necessary for these to be changed. The Requesting List Creation section of this document addresses the information needed to establish list options and subsequent users added to the list should inherit the specified attributes.

After the list had been created, if it becomes desirable to change subscriber attributes this may be accomplished in a number of ways:

1. Individual or multiple existing subscribers can be edited by the list owner at the listserv.wvu.edu web site.

2. Individual subscribers can edit some of their attributes on their own. This process is described in the Changing Your Subscription Options area of the Information for List Subscribers section of this document.

3. The list header can be edited by the list owner or by request to OIT staff so that subsequent subscribers who are added will inherit the desired attributes. Please be advised that editing the list header is considered to be an advanced aspect and it is possible to cause problems for lists if this is not done correctly. More information is available on this topic in the L-Soft List Owners Guide document which can be viewed on the OIT LISTSERV web site at this URL: [http://oit.wvu.edu/tss/listserv](http://oit.wvu.edu/tss/listserv)

While some aspects of editing individual user attributes are discussed in the Resolving Delivery Error Messages section of this document, it is possible to enact changes on basic configurations of one or more user by following these steps:

1. On the List Management menu, select **List Reports** and then **Subscriber Reports**.

2. Select the users you wish to enact a change to by clicking the check boxes on the left side of the screen.
3. Select one or more of the drop-down menu areas individually to designate the attributes to change for the selected subscribers. Click **Submit** when you have completed your selections.

The following table provides explanations of these options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>Subscriber will receive posts when they are sent to the list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digest</td>
<td>Subscribers will periodically receive groups of consolidated posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Subscribers only receive a listing of information about new posts for lists that are archived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail / No Mail</td>
<td>When set to “Mail”, the subscriber will receive postings. When this setting is toggled to “No Mail”, posts will not be sent to the subscriber, but they will remain subscribed to the list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post / No Post</td>
<td>When set to “Post”, subscribers may post to the list. When set to “No Post”, subscribers may not post to the list, but can still receive postings sent to the list.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>When “Editor” is selected, the subscriber has the ability to post directly to the lists that are moderated without going through a moderator’s approval queue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review</td>
<td>When a subscriber is set to “Review”, their postings are sent to a list editor or owner for evaluation prior to being released to the list.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Information for List Subscribers**

Information in this section is geared towards list subscribers. Subscribers may benefit from being aware of list etiquette, knowing how to create posts, and having an understanding of the ability to change certain subscription options independently.

**Etiquette**

The following are suggested things to keep in mind when posting and replying to messages:

1. When responding to a post, if you only intend to reply to the individual who sent it, look carefully in the “To” field of your message to make sure it is only destined for them as opposed to the entire list.
2. Keep in mind that unlike messages sent to other users within the GroupWise system, messages posted to LISTSERV lists cannot be retracted after sending.
3. Try to keep messages being on topic.
4. Refrain from using inappropriate language.
5. Bear in mind that there may be cultural differences among those subscribing to the list.

**Posting to a List**

A new message sent to the list will need to be addressed appropriately. Depending on your account configuration options the following may apply:

1. You may or may not receive a copy of your post as the rest of the list does.
2. If the list is one that is moderated, your posting will not automatically be distributed, but rather will be reviewed by a human list moderator for possible distribution.
3. For security purposes, you may be sent an e-mail message that asks you confirm the posting prior to it being distributed to the list.
4. As some lists are set up for announcement type postings only, your account may not be enabled for posting to the list. In this case the post will be rejected.
5. If you are attempting to send from an account that is different in name than the address you were subscribed under, it may be rejected.
To create a new posting, simply send an e-mail message from the account you were subscribed to the list with and address it to the name of the list, followed by @listserv.wvu.edu

![Email Template]

Changing Your Subscription Options

Options exist that make it possible for list subscribers to change things such as how and when they wish to receive messages. Among these are the ability to have list postings delivered in a consolidated digest form, and being able to temporarily suspend delivery service.

Subscribers wishing to change options such as these need to establish a password on the LISTSERV system that will tie to the e-mail account they are subscribed under. The steps for this process are described in the “Establishing a Password” section of this document. Once a password has been created, subscribers can log into the LISTSERV system directly and manage their account options.

Follow these directions to modify your settings:

1. Login to your account at this URL: http://listserv.wvu.edu
2. Click the **Subscribers Corner** link
3. Select the **My Settings** tab in the lower portion of the resulting screen.

To cease delivery of postings until further notice follow these steps:
1. Click the drop-down menu under the Mail Status heading and select the **No Mail** option.

2. Click **Submit**.

3. At a later point when you wish to resume delivery, repeat the above steps and toggle from **No Mail** to **Mail**, then click **Submit**.

To toggle between Regular and Digest delivery methods follow these steps:

1. Click the drop-down menu under the Mail Style column and select the **Digest** option.

2. Click **Submit**.

3. If you wish to change back to Regular mode at a later point, repeat the above steps and toggle from **Digest** to **Regular**, then click **Submit**.

**Searching Archives**

Some lists are set to maintain archives of postings. This can allow for looking back through previous postings as reference, or to facilitate new subscribers getting up to speed on previous history. To search existing archives, follow these steps:

1. Click the **Search Archives** link on the LISTSERV Home page.
2. Key in appropriate search options on the resulting screen and click *Search*. 