



MEMORANDUM

From Leon Skornicki, President SBA
To Mitchell C. Bailin, Dean of Students
CC Dana Onorato, Director of Student Affairs
Pablo Molina, Chief Information Officer
Subject Student Electronic Emailing Lists.
Date March 26, 2008

This is a respectful request by the Georgetown University Law Center (“GULC”) Student Bar Association (“SBA”) Executive Board to gain access to a student electronic mailing list (hereafter “emailing list”). An emailing list is a software tool that allows its administrator to simultaneously email many recipients by sending a message to a single email address. In the fall of 2006, the SBA passed a resolution requesting overbroad access to emailing lists. In response, the GULC Administration politely declined to grant SBA emailing list privileges. The present request is of a different, and more limited nature than the 2006 SBA resolution. This request is for the SBA Executive Board alone to gain access, through its current email account (sba@law.georgetown.edu), to an emailing list to send, at most, one weekly email. Currently, SBA messages are haphazardly conveyed to students through two means—an SBA-created list, and through Campus Broadcasts. Because it is compiled by hand, the SBA-created list does not guarantee all students are receiving SBA emails; and using the Campus Broadcast to send out SBA messages works to the detriment of students for various reasons outlined below. Granting the SBA Executive Board access to an emailing list will reduce the amount of emails students receive. More importantly, though, the SBA is fully prepared to be a model in on-campus communications by, for example, allowing students to opt-out of our emailing list.

The SBA respectfully requests that prior to beginning of each academic year it be granted year-long access to the student electronic mailing list. Presently, SBA members must painstakingly compile a makeshift list of students’ email addresses (“SBA-list”) to distribute messages that are of great interest to the entire GULC student population. Done at the beginning of each year, this tedious process takes more than ten hours to complete. And, for various reasons, it does not ensure that all GULC students receive SBA emails regarding school-wide curricular and extracurricular events.

In the fall of 2006, the SBA passed a resolution requesting overbroad access to student emailing lists. The GULC Administration rightfully denied that proposal. The denied proposal included such measures as: (1) granting *all* SBA delegates access to student emailing lists; (2) creating courseware sites by which SBA delegates could contact their constituents; and (3) burdening Information Systems Technology Department (“IST”) by having them design online message boards and write software to transfer information from the GULC facebook into the requested courseware sites.

The present request is of a different, and more limited nature. The emailing list will only be used by the SBA Executive Board. It will only be used through the SBA email account (sba@law.georgetown.edu). That account is exclusively controlled by the executive board. This

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guarantees only the SBA President, two Vice-Presidents, Treasurer and Attorney General will have access to that emailing list. More importantly, we would like to assure the GULC Administration that the SBA would quickly modify its messaging practices according to its constituents' preferences, suggestions and complaints. We would also offer to relinquish any emailing rights that the Administration grants the SBA Executive Board if, after a month's use, the SBA Executive Board along with the pertinent GULC administrators deems the SBA's access to emailing lists unworkable for the *student body*.

Currently, SBA messages are haphazardly conveyed through two means. The first mean is the painstakingly compiled SBA-list. SBA-planned social events are mainly announced through the SBA-list, but the SBA has no assurance that all students are receiving those emails. Due to LawMail's¹ limitations, every time the SBA wishes to send messages through this first means, it has to send out seven or more separate emails to convey a single message to all students in the SBA-list. The second means of conveying SBA messages is through the Campus Broadcast emails that Dana Onorato or other administrators kindly send on SBA's behalf. The SBA employs this second mean chiefly because it guarantees that all students will receive our messages. Thus, SBA messages of great importance are often sent out in stand-alone Campus Broadcasts. These messages include, requests for applications for membership on faculty-student committees, special SBA-hosted events (e.g. staff appreciation day, diverse ceremonies, Barrister's Ball, Fall Float), and SBA elections.

Granting the SBA Executive Board access to the emailing list will reduce the amount of emails students receive. By granting SBA Executive Board access to the emailing lists, the Administration will ensure SBA messages are being conveyed to all students. With this assurance, SBA will be able to streamline its messaging to the student body by employing a single easy-to-use, electronically compiled and limited-access emailing list—the student electronic mailing list. This single messaging system will prevent typing mistakes from denying students access to important information from their student government. At the same time, it will allow SBA to plan accordingly and condense the information it sends out to students in, at most, a single email per week. Therefore, granting the SBA Executive Board access to an emailing list would only reduce the amount of stand-alone emails that the SBA currently sends to the student body. This will ultimately reduce the amount of emails coming from GULC-sources, thereby decreasing the amount of emails that fill students' inboxes every day.

Using the Campus Broadcast to send out SBA messages works to the detriment of students. By sending out messages through the email accounts of third parties that do have access to emailing lists, SBA is denied the ability to appear as the sender of messages. Thereby, students cannot distinguish one Campus Broadcast from another. Many students have adopted the habit of deleting Campus Broadcast emails, a practice widely known by some Administrators. We respectfully propose that students, not the administration, be the guardians of their own email inboxes. By granting SBA access to emailing lists, the Administration will allow students to individually determine which emails to read based on or at least fully aware of the sender's identity. It is the belief of the SBA that students will choose to read emails coming from

¹ Otherwise known as Outlook Email Web Access, accessible through
<<https://mail.law.georgetown.edu/exchweb/bin/auth/owalogon.asp?url=https%3A//mail.law.georgetown.edu/exchange/&reason=0>>

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their elected representatives. Given that we *only* advertise for Bar Reviews through the SBA-list, and the fact that Bar Reviews have been very well attended in the past two years, students read emails coming from the SBA. Because using third parties to distribute messages does not allow students to know the identity of messages' true sender, and in order to allow students to decide which emails to read based on a message's true sender, students would benefit from having the SBA use an emailing list instead of the Campus Broadcast.

The SBA is fully prepared to be a model in on-campus communications. The SBA is fully aware that even by reducing the amount of emails students receive from GULC sources, it will still have to compete to get students' attention. Thus, the SBA will implement policies that will help students gain information in faster, more efficient and reader-friendly ways. We will employ html-based messages that will include links to pertinent websites, including Georgetown web pages. ***Technology permitting, the SBA Executive Board would like to allow students to opt-out of our emailing list.*** Thus, as we currently do with communications sent through the SBA-list, we will allow students to remove their email addresses from our emailing list. This will ensure that students not wishing to be abreast of SBA-organized or hosted events or initiatives do not receive our emails.

If you or any of your staff members have any additional questions regarding the subject matter of this memorandum, please feel free to contact Leon Skornicki, SBA President for 2008-2009, by email or phone. Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.