

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR FACULTY COMMUNITY

Building trust, maintaining connection, and helping faculty feel part of something larger

At a Glance

Building Your List <i>Start early, always with permission</i>	Writing and Sending <i>Short, warm, and invitational</i>	Signs It's Working <i>Trust builds slowly, then suddenly</i>
☐ Start early; collect emails with permission ☐ BCC always. Never expose the full list ☐ Add contacts through trusted introductions ☐ Give periodic opt-out opportunities ☐ Once a year, share how many are receiving	☐ Choose a rhythm that works for your community. Send something at least once a month at a minimum, no more than 2 per month ☐ Keep it short: under 2 minutes to read ☐ Warm, inviting, pastoral, succinct ☐ Don't get preachy or go into great detail	☐ Faculty thank you for the emails ☐ Some faculty show up to events you invite them to ☐ Faculty ask to connect with you or respond when you reach out ☐ Faculty feel part of something bigger ☐ Some engage after years of quietly receiving

Building Your List

Start early. From your first days on campus, begin collecting email addresses intentionally and always with permission.

- ☐ Introduce yourself by email, explain what you're doing, and give people an option to opt in or out from the start
- ☐ As you begin to meet faculty you'd like to connect with, decide together with a trusted faculty contact who is best positioned to reach out first: you or them
- ☐ If a faculty member makes an introduction, ask them to either copy you on an intro email (with the new contact's permission) or pass along the address so you can follow up right away
- ☐ Always BCC your recipients. Never send an email with all addresses visible
- ☐ Once a year, let the group know how many people are receiving your emails. Many faculty are surprised and genuinely encouraged by the size of the community around them

"Once a year I let them know how many people are receiving the email. Many people then tell me, 'I had no idea there were so many people!'"

— Paula Puckett, InterVarsity Campus Minister to Faculty, William & Mary

What to Send and How Often

Aim for a rhythm that fits with your chapter life. Send no more than 1- 2 emails per month, and only when you have something worth their time: an invitation, a resource, or something meaningful to the community.

Emails work best when they:

- ☐ Extend invitations to upcoming events and gatherings
- ☐ Cast vision and make announcements on behalf of the broader community

- ☐ Pass along relevant outside resources from organizations like BSAP, WSAP, or the Trinity Forum
- ☐ Build a shared sense of identity and quiet excitement about what is happening on campus

Think of your emails as a “faculty gathering in writing.” They can make announcements, cast vision, and extend invitations all at once, reaching people who can’t always show up in person.

How to Write It

The tone to aim for: warm, inviting, pastoral, succinct, and trust-building.

- ☐ Keep it short enough to read in under two minutes
- ☐ Don’t go into great detail. Leave room for the conversation to continue in person
- ☐ Don’t get preachy. Assume people are glad to hear from you
- ☐ Communicate clearly what you understand about the value and dignity of their work, the pressures they’re under, and your genuine care for them
- ☐ Make clear that you’re available, you’re praying for them, and you delight in them

Signs It’s Working

You’ll know your communication is healthy when:

- ☐ Faculty thank you for the emails
- ☐ Some faculty show up to events you’ve invited them to
- ☐ Faculty ask to connect with you or respond when you reach out
- ☐ Faculty mention that the emails help them feel encouraged and part of something bigger, even when they can’t attend

“Some professors have mentioned that the emails make them feel encouraged ‘by all that is happening,’ and that they’re part of something bigger than themselves. They appreciate it even if they can’t come to much.”

— Paula Puckett, InterVarsity Campus Minister to Faculty, William & Mary

Note: Some faculty will receive your emails for months or even years before engaging. Don’t remove them from the list prematurely. Consistent, warm communication builds trust over a longer horizon than you might expect.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE | Sample Emails from the Field

Real examples of what effective faculty communication looks like in practice

The two examples below are from Paula Puckett at William & Mary — a fuller monthly newsletter and a shorter mid-month update. Read them alongside the guide to get a feel for tone, length, and what to include.

Monthly Newsletter

Paula's monthly newsletter covers upcoming events, community announcements, and personal invitations. Notice how it stays brief and easy to skim — even when several things need to be shared.

W&M Faculty Fellowship Newsletter: January 2026

Happy New Year everyone. I hope you had a wonderful winter break.

Annual Winter Faculty & Staff Open House

Next Saturday, January 17th from 9am to 11am

Cambridge House Christian Study Center

930 Jamestown Road

Please RSVP using the link in the original email.

Open to: W&M Faculty and Staff and their whole families. Drop in for all or part and enjoy coffee, tea and a light breakfast.

Parking: Please park at the Business School. If you need parking at the house for accessibility, simply reply to this email.

SAVE THE DATES:

Spring semester Faculty Dinners will take place at Cambridge House from 6-8pm:

Thursday, February 26

Thursday, April 9

Interested in a Dog Walk?

As always, if you'd like to take a 15-minute stroll around campus starting from your workplace, Mocha and I would love to do so. I'm also happy to treat to a hot or cold beverage. Just let me know!

Blessings,

Paula

Mid-Month Update

Not every email needs to be a full newsletter. Paula's short mid-month updates share recent news and a few upcoming dates in just a paragraph — low-lift for both sender and reader.

William & Mary Faculty Fellowship News: March 2026

We had 14 people at the Faculty Dinner at Cambridge House on Thursday night. Professor Abby Stocker (economics) did a brilliant job with our first "What Matters to Me and Why" talk. If you are interested, here are some additional events for faculty:

March 3: Morning Prayer in Wren, 8:20am to 8:50am

March 25: Cambridge House Public Lecture, details TBD

April 2: Spring Faculty Dinner, 6-8pm at Cambridge House

Have a great week!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR | Paula Puckett



Paula Puckett is an InterVarsity Campus Minister to Faculty at William & Mary, where she has spent years building a faculty community through consistent, trust-building communication. The principles and sample emails in this guide are drawn from her experience.