During the first week of September, we received reports of some Wharton emails going to spam folders. We have identified a fix that appears to have resolved the issue.

People Who Were Affected

We were made aware that this problem primarily affected Undergraduate program staff and students and included mail sent to the class mailing lists.

Technical Details

Spam email is usually unsolicited emails that are sent in bulk. Each email provider (like Google or Microsoft) has built-in spam filtering to prevent abusive messages from being delivered to your inbox. In addition, Penn employs an additional layer of email security to help eliminate spam and phishing messages. While this greatly reduces the number of spam messages reaching your inbox, it can sometimes lead to false positives – legitimate messages that are marked as spam and don’t make it to your inbox.

At the beginning of September we started to receive reports that messages from Wharton senders were being filtered to SPAM in Google accounts. Although our configurations met the specifications provided by Google, we confirmed those settings with Google support and made additional updates based on their recommendations.

The issue was not affecting all messages, but rather just messages sent from people using (Microsoft-based) PennO365 email; most of the affected messages were sent to Wharton mailing lists. On Thursday, September 15th, we implemented a technical fix that seems to have resolved the issue for the time being. The catalyst for this behavior is currently unknown but we have reason to believe it was unpublished changes on the Google end. We are further investigating methods to monitor for this behavior in the future to allow for faster response times.

General Recommendations

Here are some recommendations (which you can also find in this spam and phishing support article) to make sure you don’t miss any important emails:

- **Add important addresses to your Allowlist.** If you get a lot of emails from a specific address or individual, here are instructions to help make sure those messages get delivered to your inbox.
- **Check your Spam or Junk folder.** It’s a good idea to regularly look in your spam folder (sometimes called Junk, depending on the mail platform) to ensure there aren’t any important messages that were improperly marked as spam.

If you see that many important messages are going to spam, please contact us. We do our best to ensure that spam filtering settings aren’t too strict or too lenient, but sometimes we need to make additional settings tweaks or talk to our vendor if email is not being delivered as expected.

Questions?

**Students:** Contact Wharton Student Computing.
Faculty and Staff: Contact your Wharton Computing representative.