

Navigate/RU-N4Success Messaging Guidelines

Navigate/RU-N4Success (R4S) offers email and text messaging to communicate with students regarding advising and student success initiatives. All messages sent using Navigate/R4S should comply with the following guidelines. Contact Anne Van Der Karr (anne.vdk@rutgers.edu) or Olivia Polkuzio (olivia.polkuzio@rutgers.edu) if you have questions. Failure to adhere to this policy could result in revocation of access to send messages.

1. Authorization

Authorized users sending messages via Navigate/R4S are responsible to ensure the following:

- a. Content is accurate.
- b. Wording is appropriate.
- c. List of recipients is correct and targeted.
- d. Information within the message is directly related to the student, their studies and/or Rutgers University's mission.
- e. Must comply with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#) (FERPA).
- f. Message clearly states who the message is from and the action that the student is asked to take.
- g. Number of messages received by a student should be appropriate to ensure he/she/they will continue to regard messages from Navigate as important information.
- h. Messages are sent with adequate time for the action or activity.

2. Content and Tone

Messaging in Navigate/R4S is focused on academic success, broadly defined, including career exploration, accessing basic needs (pantry+), and high-level promotion of student affairs initiatives such as health and wellness programs and services. Navigate is not the place to promote individual student organizations and their activities.

In emails and texts be concise and emphasize the Call to Action (CTA), or what you are asking students to do, such as going to a website, registering for courses or programs, responding to a request, or making an appointment. Lead with the CTA, then elaborate on the why, how, when, and where.

Message tone should follow the guidelines below. See examples in the sections about emails and text messages.

- a. Written from an asset-based or strengths-based mindset. Focus on student strengths and potential rather than challenges or deficits.
- b. Language is user-friendly, framed by what successful students do.
- c. Personalized! Use merge tags to insert first names, and write "you" instead of "students" where possible.
- d. Use bold fonts and capital letters sparingly.

3. Audience

Navigate features the ability to filter lists of students, therefore messages should be sent to a targeted list of students, not blanketed to all. For example, you can *include or exclude* students by:

- Graduate or undergraduate students (select desired schools)
- School, major, or minor (minors are in Categories)
- Classification (first-year, sophomore, etc.)
- Enrolled term
- GPA
- Category (selected Holds, UG or GR degree conferred, on campus housing, minors, etc.)
- Tag (FYFT or TR, entering semester and year, applied for [graduation date], etc.)

4. Recommended tools in Navigate

It is recommended that staff members use **Reports** or **Messaging Campaigns** to identify groups of students and send messages (emails, texts, or both) since those features have additional options such as creating and scheduling the messages ahead of time, or sharing Report filters with colleagues. Staff members also can use Advanced Search to filter for groups of students and send messages.

Navigate has an **AI Assistant** that can be used to draft message content for emails and texts. This includes modifying the tone of the message, such as formal, casual, inclusive, or urgent. It is available in the platform wherever you can create a message. *Note: Always check the output of AI-generated suggestions!* Bots are not necessarily trained to use asset-based language, and they make things up. Check for accuracy as well as appropriate language.

5. Email communications

When staff members send an email (“Send a Message”) from Navigate/R4S, students see it in their Scarletmail account, not in the Navigate app. Documents that students see in the Navigate app are Progress Reports from Professors, Notes shared by advisors (when the ‘share’ box is clicked), and Hand Raises (when students request help; currently used for Academic Planner).

Emails are most effective when they are:

- a. **Brief** – what are you asking students to do? Focus on that, and send students to a web page for more information.
- b. **Personalized** – add first names by using merge tags. In Navigate these are available wherever ‘Send a Message’ is available.
- c. **Actionable** - put the Call To Action (CTA) in the subject line and at the start of the email. Use a verb to convey action, such as “Register now . . .”, “Check out this resource . . .”, “Come to [event] . . .”, “Bring a friend to [event] . . .”, etc.
- d. **Easy to read** -
 - a. Use bullet points.
 - b. Use jargon-free language.
 - c. **Include links in the text**, don’t paste the entire URL in the message. Use the [Rutgers URL shortener](#) to create abbreviated URLs.
 - d. Use images – remember “a picture is worth 1,000 words”!

Example of Enhanced email message using Navigate’s AI Assistant –

Draft without AI:

“Registration for next semester is open, so login to [WebReg](#) and sign up for courses now! Not sure which major is right for you? Check out the [Compare Majors page](#), with links to the curriculum for each major and links to each academic department.”

Suggested message after AI:

Enhanced Message

Attention, students!

Registration for next semester is NOW OPEN. It is crucial that you login to [WebReg](#) and secure your spot in the courses you need. Act swiftly to ensure you get the classes you want!

If you are uncertain about which major suits you best, don't worry. Visit our [Compare Majors page](#) for guidance. You'll find:

- Links to the curriculum for each major
- Connections to each academic department

Time is of the essence. Please take action now!

6. Text (SMS) communications

All text messages must begin with an appropriate identifier so recipients can recognize its origin. For example, open with, “From RU-N: . . .” or “From [school] advising office . . .”.

Text Messages should relay important and time sensitive information such as

- a. Emergency notifications
- b. Academic deadlines
- c. Notices critical to student academic success
- d. Reminders to check email for a longer set of directions for something urgent
- e. Academic advising, coaching, counseling information
- f. Appointment campaigns and notifications/reminders
- g. Registration and other enrollment-related messages such as financial aid and billing deadlines

Text messages must not be used as the sole means of communicating an essential message or general announcement. Informational messages must be supplemented by some other means of communication, such as the web, to ensure that all students receive the message.

Text messages must **NOT** be used for the following:

- a. Communicating personal or confidential information
- b. Personal matters (e.g. items for sale, farewell messages)
- c. Sending any messages containing social security numbers, passwords, credit card numbers or any FERPA-protected data. Messages containing these items are strictly prohibited.
- d. General information (e.g. “Fall classes start Monday!”)
- e. Repeat reminders of messages already circulated.

The current character limit for SMS messages in Navigate is 300. Text messages need to be concise, including essential information and pointing to further instruction (e.g., “Check your Scarletmail for details.”). Use the [Rutgers URL shortener](#) to create abbreviated URLs for texting purposes.

7. Content Templates

The following examples are saved as Content Templates in Navigate so you can use them as a starting point for your communication with students.

- a. From RU-N: Your advisor has tried to email you with an important message. Look in your Scarletmail inbox for a message from XX.
- b. From RU-N: The payment due date [for the spring/fall semester] is approaching. If you have an outstanding bill, your classes are in danger of being dropped.
- c. From RU-N: The last day to add is #/#. You're eligible to enroll so go here now to register! <https://sims.rutgers.edu/webreg>
- d. From RU-N: You're eligible to enroll next semester but you have a hold preventing you from doing so. Check <https://my.rutgers.edu> for details to resolve the hold.
- e. From RU-N: It's time to submit the FAFSA. Check out this easy-to-use guide to applying for financial aid!

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