



AURORA UNIVERSITY

# **MAILROOM USERS' GUIDE**

Updated: September 2008



Mail is taken to the Aurora Post Office between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m. daily. Anything that needs that day's postmark, and is not picked up with the mail, should be brought to the main Mailroom on Calumet **before** 3:30 p.m. (note: please allow enough time for metering of large volume mailings). Anything to be sent UPS must reach the mailroom on Calumet before 2:00 p.m. The university now uses a presort service to realize discounts on postage. The presort service picks-up mail at approximately 3:30 daily. Mail not specifically requested to be sent another way will be sent presorted first class.

### **Bundling Mail**

1. Outgoing mail must be bundled (rubber-banded) into sections. Mail to be metered and sent off-campus should be bundled separately, **with the account number penciled on the upper right-hand corner (ex: 1-27202)**.
2. Please separate sealed mail from mail that needs to be sealed [mail not sealed should have the flaps down – envelopes larger than regular business size {i.e. #10 – or 6x9 with flaps parallel to the address} need to be sealed as our meter machine cannot seal these envelopes.
3. International mail should be **bundled separately** from domestic (U.S.) mail. Any mail that does not have the account number on it will be sent back to the department – or held until it can be determined which department sent it – for proper notation of the account number. Personal mail, with postage affixed, does not need to be bundled.
4. On-campus mail should be bundled separately from outgoing mail. Mail sent on-campus should have the full name of the receiver, along with the intended receiver's department name. ***Mail that is not properly addressed will be sent back to the department for proper addressing. All mail going to GWC must be addressed appropriately with the complete mailing address. We do NOT send mail to GWC inter-office.***

**ALL MAIL WILL BE SENT AT PRESORTED FIRST CLASS RATES UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.**

### **Addressing Mail**

**Aurora University's mailing address is: 347 S. Gladstone Avenue; Aurora, IL 60506-4892.** Please have senders put the intended recipient's name/department on the second address line (under Aurora University). Mailroom staff, to help determine its proper destination, will open mail not addressed in this manner.

All outgoing mail **must** have a return address in the upper left-hand corner indicating the department and sender. If you use envelopes other than the pre-printed Aurora University envelopes, you must include a return address on the mailpiece (personal mail can have your personal return address on them).

Addresses are read, at the post office, by an OCR (Optical Character Reader) machine. This machine reads addresses from the bottom line of the mailpiece and continues upward. The proper way to address mail is to have the city, state and zip code on the **last line** of the address (zip plus four helps to expedite delivery); the post office box/ mailing address on the next line; the street address (when applicable) on the next line with the apartment/suite number if there is room otherwise the apartment/suite number goes on the line above the street address; the addressee's name/attention on the next line; and finally the business name (if sending to a business and not a residence) {from the top it should be: business name; person's name [or attention line]; street address w/ apartment/suite number; post office box; city, state and zip code}.

It is best to use lower-case (except for the first letter of proper names) typed text, with no punctuation so as not to confuse the optical reader. The optical reader then bar codes the mailpiece with the address, as it has read it. If the optical reader misreads the address the mailpiece is misrouted, or set-aside for inspection and delivery is delayed.

### **Sealing Envelopes**

Envelopes that are #10 (regular business size), or 6 x 9 with top flap (flap runs parallel to address), can be sealed by our mailing machine. Please rubber band all mailing into groups, with the flaps down and the account number to be charged penciled on the upper right hand corner of the top envelope, for sealing and metering. Mailings of #10 (business) envelopes that are bulky should be sent to the Mailroom sealed, as the postage machine cannot properly seal bulky envelopes (we suggest you use a larger envelope – the flexibility of the mailpiece determines the postage rate - and will be much more presentable to the receiver). All other envelopes must be sealed before they are sent to the Mailroom (these cannot be sealed by our metering machine). If you choose to seal your envelopes before they

reach the Mailroom they must be bundled separately from envelopes that need to be sealed, as this could damage our machine.

Mail cannot be sent out first class if there is already bulk mail indicia on the envelope. If your department has material printed with bulk mail indicia (to send bulk mail) and you want to send some pieces via first class mail you must first affix a label covering the bulk mail indicia. The post office will not process mail with both first class postage and bulk mail indicia on them.

When designing mail please remember that the postage meter prints in red ink. To keep the postage meter markings visible you should not have mailpieces (that will not be inserted in another envelope) made in red or dark colors. The post office must be able to see the amount of postage, the date the piece was metered, the mail class [i.e. first class] and the meter number to process the mailpiece. At the bottom of the mailpiece, there must be a light, print free area for the postal barcode.

It is best to have the Mailroom preview new mailpieces, prior to printing; to be sure they meet the requirements of the post office. This process will save the university both time and money and keep us in good standing with the post office. Templates for designing mailpieces are available upon request.

### **Forwarding/Receiving Mail for Former Employees**

***The Mailroom is not responsible for forwarding former employees mail.*** Mail received at the University is viewed as departmental (business related). It is up to the department to forward mail to the former employee, if viewed as personal by the department (see AU's *Personnel Policy Manual* 213:1). Otherwise, mail should be given to the employee's successor.

## **UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICES**

The US Post Office offers several types of services. Their services, with the exception of Express Mail, do **not** have delivery date guarantees. Delivery times vary depending on the size of the mailpiece and its intended destination. Tracking and other information can be found on the USPS website at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).

### **First Class Mail**

First class mail costs vary depending on the weight, size and flexibility of the mailpiece (whether or not it's "machinable" according to USPS standards). First class mail offers no special guarantees or services except forwarding (there is a fee for bulk/standard mail for forwarding/returning) and return services at no additional fee.

### **Priority Mail**

Priority mail costs more than regular first class (call Mailroom for current costs) and is supposed to be a bit faster than regular first class. In our experience this may be true for packages sent via priority rates but letters are probably no quicker than if sent regular first class.

Priority mail offers no delivery guarantees. *Delivery Confirmation* is available with Priority Mail; the mailroom uses a program (downloaded from the USPS website) that will print/process these mailpieces at no additional cost, if the service is specifically asked for (or, if your department desires this program downloaded please speak with the Mailroom Manager). Delivery confirmation is an option offered to track your priority packages. This service does not record the signature of the receiver but does track your mailpiece to its destination. There is a separate *Signature Confirmation* service offered at an additional fee, to receive the signature of the recipient.

### **Express Mail**

Express mail is an overnight service offered by the US Post Office. This is a guaranteed service that will reach the addressee by either noon or 3 p.m. the following day [depending on address location – it may be second day delivery

for remote locations], including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays (additional fee). The cost of this service is usually a little less than UPS Next Day Air (note that UPS Next Day Air requires an additional fee for Saturday delivery and does not deliver on Sunday or holidays).

### **Certified Mail**

Certified mail is mail that is trackable. There is an additional fee, for this service, and it can take longer for delivery because of the special handling involved. You can also send certified mail with return receipt service (also an additional fee). Sending certified mail with return receipt guarantees the mailpiece will be signed for when received, and a receipt is returned to the sender with the receiver's name, signature and date of delivery. This service is most often used for important correspondence that requires a written confirmation of delivery.

Restricted delivery is an option with certified mail. Restricted delivery means that only the person who the piece is addressed to can sign for it. This may be difficult when sending to a business, as special arrangements must be made for the person to be present when the mailpiece is delivered. There is also an additional fee for this service. All forms must be completed by the department and accompany the mailpiece. Contact the mailroom for the forms or assistance in completing them.

### **Registered Mail**

Registered mail is for valuable articles (i.e. jewelry, coins, etc) that require insurance and tracking. There is an additional fee for using this service and for insurance (which depends on the amount of coverage). All forms must be completed by the department and accompany the mailpiece. Contact the mailroom for the forms or assistance in completing them.

### **Certificate of Mailing**

A certificate of mailing is simply first class mail with a date stamped receipt from the post office. There is an additional fee for this service. A receipt is returned to the department showing who the sender and addressee are and the date stamp shows when it was brought to the post office. It offers no guarantees of receipt, only proof that it was sent.

All forms must be completed by the department and accompany the mailpiece. Contact the mailroom for the forms or assistance in completing them.

### **Business Reply**

Often departments send out letters asking for a return reply in the envelope provided. The reply envelope should be a pre-printed business reply envelope with a special permit number, bar-coding and plus four zip code (these are available through the copy center). There is a first class mailing fee, and additional service charge, attached to this service. This fee is charged back to the department monthly (if you have not notified the mailroom regarding the departmental account number to charge for business reply mail [for departments who have more than one cost center] then the mailroom will choose one).

If your department name is not pre-printed on your business reply envelopes then you must do one of the following: a) type your department name on the front of the return envelope; b) make labels with your department name that can be affixed to the front of the return envelope; or c) hand write the department name on the front of the envelope. Several departments use business reply envelopes and this practice will aid the Mailroom in getting these letters to the correct departments in a timely manner.

If you are planning a large mailing and expect to receive several business reply envelopes in return, please notify the mailroom. We maintain a business reply deposit account at the Aurora Post Office for this service, and may need additional funds to process your replies. The post office will not process business reply mail unless there are sufficient funds in this account.

## Postage Due Account

The university has a “Postage Due Account” at the Aurora Post Office. Any mail that comes addressed to the university without sufficient postage affixed will be delivered, charging our postage due account. This is another charge that is passed on to the receiving department through weekly accounting and month end chargebacks.

## Bulk/Standard Mail

Bulk mail is a special service for mail that is not time sensitive. Bulk mail offers lower postage costs but comes with no standards, or guarantees, for delivery. There are requirements that must be met to send mail bulk (standard) rate. The mailing must consist of at least 200 pieces, be uniform in content (each mailpiece must be the same weight and size), and to be classified at a non-profit rate must not contain any advertising that is not vital to the university’s mission (i.e. educational programs).

Addressing must also be very specific on bulk mailings. The return address must be Aurora University; 347 S. Gladstone Avenue; Aurora, IL 60506. It is acceptable to insert your department name under Aurora University but no other address is acceptable (i.e. your building address).

Bulk mail also requires pre-printed indicia in the upper right hand corner of your mailpiece. The indicia should read as follows:

Non-Profit  
Postage Paid  
Aurora, IL  
Permit #50

Envelopes for bulk mailings must be sealed and sorted into ascending zip code order (lowest number to highest number), and be placed in USPS mail trays before calling the mailroom for pick-up. **Please notify the mailroom of any bulk mailing.** The mailroom requires a minimum of three (3) business days to process bulk mailings. Mailpieces sent to the Aurora area should take only 1-2 days to reach their destination. Mail going outside of Aurora will take longer because it must go from our post office to a bulk mail distribution center and then forwarded to area post offices. It can take up to four weeks for all bulk mailing pieces to be received.

Bulk mail offers a variety of return services. They are as follows:

***Return Service Requested*** means that the mailpiece will be returned to the sender with the new address information, or reason for non-delivery affixed. No forwarding service is provided. The fee for this service is the appropriate single-piece first class rate (i.e. if the mailpiece weighs up to one ounce a thirty-six cent charge [or the current First-class rate] will apply).

***Address Service Requested/Address Change Service*** means that forwarding service is provided along with new address notification. Months 1 through 12 the mailpiece is forwarded at no charge; separate notice of new address is provided; address correction fee charged. Months 13 through 18 the mailpiece is returned with new address attached and a weighted fee is charged. After 18 months or if undeliverable the mailpiece is returned with reason for nondelivery attached and a weighted fee is charged.

***Forwarding Service Requested*** provides forwarding and return service for the mailpiece but the new address notification is provided only for returned pieces. Months 1 through 12 the mailpiece is forwarded at no charge. Months 13 through 18 the mailpiece is returned with new address attached and a weighted fee is charged. After 18 months or if undeliverable the mailpiece is returned with reason for nondelivery attached and weighted fee is charged.

***Change Service Requested*** means no forwarding or return but new address is provided. A separate notice of new address or reason for non-delivery is provided and the mailpiece is disposed of by USPS. There is a per piece fee imposed. Please contact the mailroom for the current fee.

**No endorsement** means USPS disposes of the bulk mailpiece with no notification.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Information provided taken from USPS Quick Service Guide, Publication 95, dated January 1999

### **Pre-sorted First Class Mail**

The university now uses a presort service to realize savings on postage. Since an outside service is used no special preparation is required for departments. All mail that is in a #10 envelope, or larger, and does not exceed 13 ounces will be sent presorted first class, unless otherwise specified. There is an additional handling fee, over and above what is metered on the mailpiece, (please contact the Mailroom for current fee charged).

## **UNITED PARCEL SERVICE (UPS)**

UPS offers a variety of services. UPS ground service is a guaranteed service and the mailroom staff can quote estimated destination times/rates. Most packages going to Northern Illinois, Eastern Iowa, Western Indiana, Southern Wisconsin and Southern Michigan are delivered overnight (by end of business day). Published guarantees are for business deliveries and not residential addresses. Service guarantees can vary depending on their destination. UPS has a website at [www.ups.com](http://www.ups.com) where packages can be tracked, proof of deliveries can be obtained and estimated delivery times can be given. UPS drops-off and picks-up daily to the AU mailroom. Packages that are to go out the same day should be brought to the mailroom no later than 2 p.m.

UPS also offers a next day and second day air service. UPS does not deliver on Saturdays (except for Next Day Air packages at an additional fee), Sundays or holidays.

*There is a \$1.75 per package surcharge assessed for personal packages sent via UPS.*

UPS delivers to street addresses only. UPS will not deliver to a post office box number (that is the property of the U.S. Post Office and is used only by the post office).

## **OTHER DELIVERY SERVICES**

The university has contact with various vendors who provide a variety of delivery services. Federal Express now has a ground service along with the air service they have provided in the past. Federal Express tends to be more costly than UPS but they offer a good, reliable, comparable service to UPS. Federal Express does charge a pick-up fee, which will be passed on to the department, if they are called to pick-up a package at the university. There are drop boxes for FedEx at various locations but will only accommodate an envelope or small package. The mailroom is happy to deliver a FedEx envelope/small package to the post office, where a drop box is located, if the piece is brought to the mailroom before 4 p.m. (or 3:30 p.m. during summer hours).

There is also same day, or next day, courier service available through the mailroom. You must notify the mailroom of the size, weight, destination, time frame (for delivery) and release time (when the article will be ready for pick-up) to get a quote for this service.