

Anti-spam Technology Now Available for "@odu.edu" E-mail Accounts

In an effort to address the ever-increasing problem of "spam" mail in University e-mail accounts, OCCS has established a spam control system on the University's mail servers. This is an "opt-in" system activated and managed online at www.spamtrap.odu.edu.

Prerequisites for Using the "Spam Trap"

Access to Old Dominion University's Spam Trap requires authentication with your **MIDAS user name and password**. MIDAS accounts may be activated on-line at <https://midas.odu.edu>. (You will need to know your University ID Number (UIN) and LEO Online PIN.)

On your MIDAS "My Services" page, locate **Spam Trap** on your list of available services and click the **Activate** command to integrate your MIDAS account information with Spam Trap.

Note that, currently, Spam Trap may only be used with University e-mail accounts where the address ends in the @odu.edu suffix. The software is not yet available for accounts on departmental e-mail servers.

Configuring Spam Trap

Note: (this is an "Opt-In" system, you must complete the steps below to finalize the Opt-In process)

- Access the Spam Trap website at www.spamtrap.odu.edu.
- Login with your **MIDAS username and password**.
- Select the level of spam filtering that you prefer.
 - **High**: discards **nearly all** spam and may occasionally discard some legitimate messages.
 - **Medium**: discards **most** spam and is not likely to interfere with legitimate messages.
 - **Low**: discards **obvious** spam - some spam messages are likely to get through and is highly unlikely to interfere with normal email.
 - **Tag Only**: adds the phrase "[SPAM: # #]" to the subject line – this setting **DOES NOT** filter out any spam. OCCS suggests starting with this setting so that you can see which e-mails the system would consider to be spam.
 - **Opt Out**: For users who have previously opted in, this setting will disable anti-spam processing.

The image displays two screenshots of the CanIt! Spam Trap web interface. The top screenshot shows the login page with a "Please Log In" button. The bottom screenshot shows the "Spam-Scanning Level" configuration page with radio buttons for High, Medium, Low, Tag Only (selected), and Opt Out. Callout boxes provide instructions for each step.

Step One: Login with your MIDAS username and password.

Step Two: Select the level of spam filtering you want and then click "Set Spam-Scanning Level"

Initially, OCCS recommends using the "Tag Only" setting.

Anti-spam System Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What happens to spam that the system catches?

A. Unless you select **Tag Only**, it is automatically discarded.

Q. Should I still forward spam to spamabuse@odu.edu?

A. You may still use spamabuse@odu.edu to report instances of abuse of the University e-mail system.

Q. Will I still see the spam I am receiving?

A. For the initial rollout, unless you select **Tag Only**, spam identified by the system will be discarded. Sometime during the Fall 2004 semester, additional capability will be added to the anti-spam system to allow users greater management of their spam trap. This will include the ability to place suspected spam in a holding area to be reviewed before it is discarded. All upgrades will be announced through the "University Announcements" daily e-mail.

Q. How should I start using the anti-spam system?

A. OCCS suggests that you start with the **Tag Only** setting and then proceed to the **Low** or **Medium** setting. This will allow you to see how the system processes a message that it thinks is spam.

Q. What about my "cs.odu.edu" or "physics.odu.edu" mail?

A. The software is currently not available for accounts on departmental mail servers, however it may become available sometime in the future.

Q. Is someone in OCCS reading all of this spam? Is my privacy protected?

A. On **very rare** occasions, the OCCS Security Group may look at the content of e-mail messages. When this happens, it is always in response to a security incident to support a customer who has requested assistance with their e-mail account.

Q. What other email protection measures are in place?

A. There are two additional measures in place for all "@odu.edu" e-mail accounts – the discarding of mail with attachment types that are known to **very frequently** carry viruses, and the use of anti-virus message processing. Attachment discarding has been in place since August of 2003. For messages with attachments that make it past this first layer of defense, an anti-virus scanner checks the message and removes viruses. In both cases, the sender is informed that the e-mail was not delivered to the designated recipient. For more info: http://www.odu.edu/af/occs/security/emailvirus_extensions.html

Q. Will outbound mail be scanned by the Spam Trap?

A. Not at this time.

Q. What are some of the advanced features of the software and when will they be available?

A. The software has numerous advanced features, including user-specific Bayesian filters (intelligent message processing), a daily digest, a spam holding area where you may discard or forward email, user-specific blacklists and white lists, and a "voting link" for email so that you can train the spam trap to handle your mail with user specific settings. These features will be rolled out during the Fall 2004 semester and will be announced through the "University Announcements" daily e-mail.