A&S Communication Guidelines

Effective workplace communication is required if faculty, staff, and administrators are to interact both internally and externally in order to reach organizational goals. Its purpose is to convey information, improve organizational practices, and reduce misunderstandings and errors.

Below are some guidelines for communication:
1. Designate a single point of contact for each functional area of responsibility. Make sure to create an auto-reply or forwarding rule if you are out of the office, so people aren't left hanging in your absence.
2. Respond within one day, even if only to say that you received the message and will respond more thoroughly at a later time.
3. Communication should be professional and always polite, using <u>proper email etiquette</u> and <u>phone etiquette</u>.
4. Pay particular attention to how your email might be heard. If you are unsure how your communication might be received, ask a colleague to give you feedback *before* sending it.
5. Think carefully about who should be copied. Take special care when deciding whether or not to forward an email that was intended for your eyes only. Copy supervisors when they should be kept informed, but be careful not to create a passive-aggressive subtext by doing so unnecessarily.
6. Consider taking the time to format your emails and business letters for readability. Tips to improve readability:
   - Try to capture your readers' attention and articulate *why* you are writing in the first few sentences.
   - Use bullet points.
   - Try to focus on just one issue at a time.
   - Use a descriptive and specific subject line whenever possible.
   - Break up paragraphs.
   - If you are asking your reader to do something, make sure **your call to action stands out**.
   - <u>Create and utilize an email signature</u> that includes your title, office location, and phone number.
7. Please be considerate when emailing outside of office hours. It is important that we respect each other's need for work-life balance. If something is urgent, <u>mark your email</u> "**<u>High Importance</u>**" and/or alert the person by SMS or other messaging app. Again though, use discretion when texting. We all need time away from work.