

Marshall University Social Media Procedures and Guidelines Introduction

Social media are powerful communications tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because the use of social media may distort the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, Marshall University has established the following guidelines to clarify how best to enhance and protect the University, as well as personal and professional reputations, when participating in social media.

I. Definition

Social media are defined as media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques online. Examples include but are not limited to: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, iTunes U, Second Life, Snap Chat. Emails and online forums can also be included in these guidelines.

II. Best Practices

(These guidelines apply to all current Marshall University students)

- A. Think twice before posting. Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the individual posting, others involved, and the University. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. If you would not say it to a future employer or professor, think twice before you post.
- B. Strive for accuracy. Check your facts before posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors.
- C. Be respectful. Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the individual posting, others involved, and the University. Also remember how this can affect your current educational plans, future educational plans and career.
- D. Be active. Social media presences require diligent care and attention. An effective social media site requires regular updates and fresh or engaging content.
- E. Consider your audience and its potential reaction to your content. Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, professors, and future employers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

III. Procedures for All Social Media Sites

A. Adhere to all applicable University regulations, policies, and procedures and the Student Code of Conduct. Remember things you post online can be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

B. Use Social Media in a manner that complies with University regulations, policies, and procedures, including but not limited to:

- [Board of Governors Policies](#)
- [Administrative Procedures](#)
- Human Resource Policies and Procedures
- Ethical Principles
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- Policy Governing Access to and Use of University Information Technology Resources
- Policy on [Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual & Domestic Misconduct, Stalking, and Retaliation](#)

C. Adhere to copyright and fair use law

When posting, be aware of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the University. Questions about fair use or copyrighted material should be directed to the Office of Legal Counsel.

D. Do not use University logos or trademarks without permission

Any use of Marshall University logos, trademarks or other images must have prior approval. Do not use official logos, trademarks, or any other University images or iconography on personal social media sites. Do not use Marshall University's name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.

E. Do not announce University news

Do not be the first to announce University or departmental news on a social media site unless pre-approved by the Office of Public Relations. The Director of Public Relations is the official spokesperson for the University

F. Be aware of terms of service

Comply with the Terms of Service of any social media platform used.

Note: Posting of University-related content to personal accounts on social media sites may also be subject to this policy.

G. Respect others. Do not infringe on the privacy of your friends, peers or University faculty. Never post personal information of others that could be embarrassing to them or the University. If posting photos, ask the permission of those involved. If someone objects to photography, avoid using it. Also remember again, to think before you post. A disrespectful post through social media can affect your education and future, even if the post was meant in jest.

IV. Institutional Social Media Policies

If you post on behalf of an official University unit, the following policies apply, in addition to all policies and best practices listed above/

A. Notify the University

Departments or University units that have a social media page or would like to start one should contact the Office of University Communications and Legal Counsel to ensure all institutional social media sites coordinate with other Marshall University sites and their content.

B. Acknowledge who you are

If you are representing Marshall University when posting on a social media platform, acknowledge this.

C. Use approved photos and University logos

Your University social media presence must use photos that accurately depict your department or unit, and approved logos for your area of the University. University Communications provides approved photos and logos for various areas of the University. To receive logos in a downloadable format, contact Marshall University Communications.

D. Protect the institutional voice

Posts on social media sites should protect the University's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. No individual unit should construe its social media site as representing the University as a whole. Consider this when naming pages or accounts, selecting a profile picture or icon, and selecting content to post. Names, profile images, and posts should all be clearly linked to the particular department or unit rather than to the institution as a whole.

V. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with these procedures may result in any or all of the following:

- A. Limitation or revocation of individual or unit rights to use or participate in University-related social media;
- B. Removal of posts or social media accounts; or
- C. Corrective or disciplinary actions and sanctions, as defined in the University Code of Conduct.

For details on the Rights and Responsibilities of Marshall University Students and Disciplinary Procedures, visit <https://www.marshall.edu/student-conduct/>