Procedure Summary

Enrollment Marketing and Communications (EMC) is responsible for coordinating a consistent brand identity and overall management of university marketing and communication. EMC maintains the university’s official social media accounts. As social media plays an increasingly larger role in the university’s image to the public, social media sites created in affiliation with the university shall adhere to the standards outlined in this procedure in order to protect the university’s reputation and brand.

Procedure

1. GENERAL

1.1 Social media is media based on the use of web and mobile technologies that allow for user-generated exchanges of information. With proper administration, social media can foster collaboration and communication as an interactive dialogue, enhancing the value of conversations across a global audience.

1.2 Social media includes but is not limited to social networking sites, collaborative projects such as wikis, blogs and micro-blogs, content communities and virtual communities. Some commonly used social media platforms include: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, Flickr, SnapChat, LinkedIn, WordPress, and Tumblr.

1.3 University social media accounts are separated into two (2) categories: official accounts (accounts for the university as a whole or an official division, department, departmental organization, or program) and affiliated accounts (accounts for student non-departmental organizations and university contracted vendors).

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 All units shall engage EMC when creating a new official social media account. Additionally, all official social media accounts must register with EMC and have a minimum of two site administrators appointed.

2.2 All official social media accounts should be monitored and updated on a weekly basis. Official social media accounts shall adhere to the best practices updated
annually by EMC. Official social media accounts that are not updated
regularly or do not adhere to best practices may be requested to be shut down.
Affiliated social media accounts also should be monitored regularly and adhere to
best practices.

2.3 Upon notification from EMC units must bring the official social media
account into compliance within five (5) days. Any expense shall be the
responsibility of the unit. Social media communications that remain non-compliant
may be suspended immediately. Affiliate social media accounts not designated as
official may not use the university’s official marks or logos on their accounts.

3. DESIGN AND STYLE GUIDELINES

3.1 Social media accounts must adhere to the university’s design and style guides.

3.2 Social media accounts must adhere to the copyright and intellectual property rights
of others and of the university.

3.3 Units must make reasonable efforts to ensure social media posts are accessible and
usable by people with the widest range of capabilities possible. While some social
media platforms have accommodations built in (e.g. closed captioning in YouTube;
alternative text for images in Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), others may require
alternative methods of accommodation (e.g. providing links to transcripts,
providing image descriptions within text). Guidelines and contact information on
who can assist in making social media posts accessible will be provided on the
Information Technology website.

4. CONDUCT AND ETHICS GUIDELINES

4.1 It is imperative that all social media accounts maintain the same standards of
conduct expected of all faculty and staff. Site content must be respectful, positive,
helpful, and informative. Conversations on social media should enhance civic
discussion. Profanity and language that is discriminatory must be removed from the
site immediately.

4.2 Units must protect confidential and proprietary information on their social media
accounts. Units must not post any private, restricted, or sensitive information about
the university and/or its students, staff, faculty, or alumni on their social media
accounts. Types of private information include FERPA-protected student
information, Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, and medical records.

4.3 Units must ensure the security of their social media accounts. A compromised
account can lead to malicious entities posting inappropriate or even illegal material
on the unit’s behalf. This could lead to reputational risk to the university.

4.4 Units must obey the terms of service of any social media platform employed.

4.5 Units must adhere to guidelines set out by the Texas Department of Information
Resources and the Texas A&M University System.
Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Department of Information Resources Social Media Resource Guide
University Rule 29.01.99.D1 Information Resources
University Procedure 09.02.99.D0.01 University Intellectual Property Use and Licensing
System Regulation 09.02.01 Official Messaging

Contact Information

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