Administrative Regulation 10:4
Social Media Policies and Guidelines

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I. Introduction

Social media channels are powerful communications tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because the use of social media may blur the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, this *Administrative Regulation* clarifies how best to enhance and protect the University's brand, as well as personal and professional reputations, when participating in social media.

II. Entities Affected

This regulation applies to all University employees.

III. Definitions

A. Social Media

   "Social media" means online media channels designed to disseminate information through social interaction which is created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques online. Examples include, but are not limited to: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, iTunes U, Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat.

B. Lockup

"Lockup" means the official graphic identifier of the University of Kentucky, which includes the interlocking UK logo and wordmark of the University, department, unit, or center.

IV. Guidelines for Posting on University-related Social Media Sites

The following guidelines apply to employees posting on behalf of the University or an official University unit:

A. Employees should think twice before posting on social media. Privacy does not exist in social media. Employees should therefore consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the poster and the University. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. Content that would not be said to a member of the media should not be posted online. Employees who are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment should contact their supervisor for input or contact the University of Kentucky Public Relations and Marketing.

B. Employees posting on social media must strive for accuracy and check facts before posting them. Content posted must be reviewed for grammatical and spelling errors.

C. Employees posting on social media should be respectful of the views of others. Content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Any responses made by employees to social media posts should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster or the University and its institutional voice.

D. Employees posting on social media should keep their accounts up to date. Social media presences require diligent care and attention. An effective social media channel requires regular updates and fresh, engaging content.

E. Employees posting on social media should consider their audience and its potential reaction to content. A presence in the social media world is available to the public at large, including prospective students, current students, patients, current employers and colleagues, and peers. Employees should consider how widely their content can spread before publishing, and ensure posts will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

V. Policies for All University-related Social Media Sites

Employees must:

A. Protect institutional confidential and proprietary information

Employees must not post confidential or proprietary information about the University, its students, employees, patients, or alumni (see *Governing Regulation Part I, sections D.2(b,c)*). Employees must follow applicable federal requirements, including but not limited to:

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Employees who share confidential information may be subject to disciplinary action or termination.

B. Adhere to all applicable University regulations, policies, and procedures

Employees must use social media in a manner that complies with University regulations, policies, and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Governing Regulations

- Administrative Regulations

- Human Resource Policies and Procedures

- Business Procedures Manual

- UK HealthCare Code of Ethics

- Behavioral Standards in Patient Care

- UK Hospital Policy on Photography and video of patients and employees

C. Adhere to copyright and fair use laws

When posting on social media, employees must 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. Not use University lockups, logos or trademarks without permission

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

- UK Web Graphic Standards: webgov.uky.edu/standards/

- Official UK Graphic Standards Manual: https://www.uky.edu/prmarketing/brand-standards

Approved departmental lockups are available for download at: www.uky.edu/prmarketing/brand-standards. Examples of appropriate social media avatars are located in the graphic standards manual. Contact UK Public Relations and Marketing for assistance.

E. Not announce University news

Employees must not be the first to announce University or departmental news on a social media site unless pre-approved by UK Public Relations and Marketing. The Executive Director of Public Relations is the official spokesperson for the University (See *Administrative Regulation 1:1*, *University of Kentucky Administrative Organization*). Only WUKY is authorized to announce University news without prior approval from UK Public Relations and Marketing.

F. Respect University time and property

University computers and time on the job are reserved for University-related business as approved by supervisors and in accordance with *Governing Regulation XIV.B.12*, *University Resources* and *Administrative Regulation 10:1*, *Policy Governing Access to and Use of University Information Technology Resources*.

G. Be aware of terms of service

Employees must comply with the Terms of Service of any social media platform used.

VI. Creating and Maintaining an Institutional Social Media Presence

When posting on behalf of an official University unit, employees must:

A. Notify the University

University units that have a social media page or would like to start one should contact Public Relations and Marketing to ensure all institutional social media sites coordinate with other University sites and their content. All institutional pages must have a full-time appointed employee who is identified as being responsible for content. Ideally, this should be the unit head.

B. Acknowledge Their Identities

An individual representing the University on a social media channel should acknowledge their identity.

C. Use approved photos and University lockups

A University social media presence must use photos that accurately depict the unit and that unit's approved lockups. Public Relations and Marketing provides approved photos and lockups for various areas of the University. Approved lockups in a downloadable format are available at: Brand Downloads | Public Relations & Marketing. There are also University stock photos available on this site, which may be accessed using a linkblue ID and password.

D. Have a plan

Units should consider their messages, audiences, and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media channels up-to-date. Public Relations and Marketing can assist and advise a unit with its social media planning.

E. Link back to the University or make sure external links are reputable, safe sites

Whenever possible,employees should link back to an official University website. Ideally, posts should be very brief. When linking to a news article about the University, check to see whether it is possible to link to a release on UKNow, the official University news website, instead of to an external publication or other media outlet. (uknow.uky.edu/)

F. Protect the institutional voice

Posts on social media should protect the University's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. No individual unit should construe its social media channels as representing the University as a whole. This consideration must be taken into account when naming pages or accounts, selecting a profile picture or icon, and selecting content to posts. Names, profile images, and posts must all be clearly linked to the particular department or unit rather than to the institution as a whole. An institutional voice guide is available at: http://www.uky.edu/prmarketing/brand-standards. Employees should consider using "UKY" as part of their naming convention, to show a connection to the institution. Employees should avoid the use of "UK" in external social media channels, to avoid confusion with the United Kingdom.

VII. Guidelines for All Social Media

Employees posting on personal social media sites should identify their views as their own. If an employee identifies themselves as a UK faculty or staff employee online, it should be clear that the views expressed are not those of the institution. NOTE: Using personal social media sites for University-related business/activities or posting of University-related content will subject those sites to this policy.

VIII. Compliance

Both in professional and institutional roles, employees must adhere to appropriate behavioral standards. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines apply for interacting with the University community and the public on social media. Employees are accountable for institutionally related content they post to social media channels..

Non-compliance with this policy 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 *Human Resources Policy and Procedures*, *Governing Regulations*, *Administrative Regulations*, or *Code of Student Conduct*.

References

Governing Regulation Part I - The University of Kentucky (Definition)

Administrative Regulation 1:1 - University of Kentucky Administrative Organization

Administrative Regulation 10:1 - Policy Governing Access To and Use of University Information Technology Resources

Revision History

5/6/2011, 7/20/2018

For questions, contact: Office of Legal Counsel