
BUSINESS POLICY

TO: All Members of the University Community 2013:02

DATE: January 2013

Ferris State University Social Media Policy

Section 1 – Policy Statement

This policy applies only to employees who officially represent the University on official University sites. Ferris State University recognizes the value of social media tools for promoting programs and campus activities, encouraging dialogue and brand building. Social media is a low-cost and effective way of communicating with constituencies such as community members, friends, prospective students, current students, faculty, staff and alumni. Although you are encouraged to investigate how these tools (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) may enhance your program, you are required do so in a manner that will hold the University harmless. The following policy (**Note:** not applicable to student-generated social media sites) is designed to protect both the University and employees officially engaged in social media.

Section 2 – Objective

The Ferris State University social media policy is designed to promote high-quality social media engagement that is consistent with all applicable University policies and adheres to institutional graphic standards. The social media policy offers guidelines for official social media management that best ensures brand and content security while it protects the University and employees.

Section 3 – Policy

- A. **Notify the University by contacting University Advancement & Marketing** if you intend to represent or are representing the institution in an official way, such as through a departmental or College page on Facebook or a Twitter account. All sites representing Ferris State University must meet graphic standards. Official social media guidelines and best practices have been established by University Advancement & Marketing and can be referenced at <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/advance/Social-Media/>
- B. **Proper supervision:** The personnel administrating your college, divisional or department page must take precautions regarding security of usernames and passwords for their social media accounts. A process should be established for content approval at an appropriate administrative level. Administrators are

encouraged to seek out additional information in the guidelines and best practices

here: *Guidelines:* <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/advance/Social-Media/guidelines.htm>

Best Practices: <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/advance/Social-Media/best-practices.htm>

- C. **Transparency and disclosure:** Employees who are officially representing Ferris State University on any social media platform are required to post identifying information, such as name, affiliation and contact information on that platform. Furthermore, employees who engage in any discussions relating to the University on official social media platforms are required to post a disclosure that your posts are your own opinions, and not necessarily those of Ferris State University.
- D. **Privacy Policy:** Follow all University policies as well as federal regulations as they relate to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Specifically, you are prohibited from posting confidential information about Ferris State University, its students, employees, alumni or vendors. Follow this link for more information: <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/buspolletter/Bp11104.pdf>
- E. **Mitigate both personal and institutional risks:** Please keep the following in mind while engaging in social media:
- It is important to consider all copyright laws when you are posting materials on social media platforms. Employees are encouraged to share official information regarding the University, but linking to the original source will prevent copyright infringement.
 - Note that employees are personally responsible for their conduct on social media platforms, just as they are in their personal and professional lives. Please refer to the employee dignity policy for additional guidance: <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/adminandfinance/Human/HRPPs/FSU-HRPP0451EmployeeDignity.pdf>
 - In addition, you must abide by the usage policies of individual social media platforms.
- F. **Acceptable Use:** Please ensure that your conduct on social media platforms respects University time and resources. Please refer to these guidelines for additional information: <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/buspolletter/Bp19607.htm>

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