



Social Media Policy

Policy Title:	Social Media Policy
Policy Type:	Administrative
Policy Number:	50-8 (2020)
Responsible Office:	Office of Communications and Marketing
Approved:	May 18, 2020
Responsible Executive:	Vice President for Operations and Chief Strategist for Institutional Effectiveness
Applies to:	University Community

POLICY STATEMENT

Norfolk State University supports the need to increase our social media presence as a unified higher learning institution. This is an effort to reach prospective students, elevate the accomplishments of currently enrolled students, to promote the achievements of faculty/staff and alumni and to inform the entire community about our programs and offerings.

Our primary goal is to encourage colleges, schools, departments, programs, groups, and entities to be active in the social space and create social media accounts to build more enriching relationships with each other and the community.

The Office of Communications and Marketing has developed a social media policy to ensure that any and all interactions on behalf of NSU represent the University's best interests.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will apply to social media accounts created by the University's employees for the official business of Norfolk State University including faculty, groups, departments, programs, and all other component entities of the University.

This policy will impact students, faculty and staff members who choose to use social media to communicate with stakeholders of Norfolk State University. These channels will include but are not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest, etc.



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DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY

Officially Recognized Account: Any social media account created by an employee of Norfolk State University for the purpose of promoting the University’s brand is considered officially recognized once the chosen administrator(s) has agreed to the provisions outlined in the social media policy and the account is listed in the social media directory on nsu.edu.

Administrator: Any person who has been designated as the individual who will take full responsibility for content posted on an officially recognized social media account. Each department should assign two people who shall assume this role. These individuals will also have administrative control of every channel connected to that department and can make all changes necessary to each account.

Post: A social media post can consist of plain text, photos, video, or links uploaded to a social media platform.

Social Media: An online communications channel that is designed to create a social interaction by publishing various types of content including hyperlinks, photos, and videos. This type of media uses the Internet, web-based and mobile-based technologies to transform how people communicate with one another and receive news.

Hashtags: On social media, a hash or a pound sign (#) is used to identify messages on a specific topic. Once these words including the pound sign are included in a post, the social media platform will group them with other posts that include the same kind of content.



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Facebook: With more than one billion active users, Facebook is the world’s largest social media platform. It allows registered users and companies to create pages/profiles to communicate with a preferred audience. Facebook provides a host of marketing tools to help users reach their target audiences more efficiently. This can be achieved using organic or paid means.

Instagram: This social media platform is a mobile photo sharing network used by more than 1 billion active users. Users are able to share their experiences using photos and videos posted to their profiles.

Snapchat: Snapchat is a mobile messaging service from Snap, Inc. that sends a photo or video to someone that lasts up to only 10 seconds before it disappears. Users can post photos, videos and messages quickly.

Twitter: Twitter is a social networking microblogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts called tweets. These tweets may include hyperlinks and are limited to 280 characters.

YouTube: YouTube is a web video service that allows users (individuals, corporations, colleges and universities) to search or post raw or produced video footage directly to its servers. The website is the world’s most used search engine.

**The social media platforms listed are subject to change or be discontinued based on popularity and social media trends. Once an account is no longer used, the social media profile will be deleted and the directory will be updated.*

CONTACT(S):

The Norfolk State University Office of Communications and Marketing Policy officially interprets this policy. Communications and Marketing is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by BOV Policy # 01 (2014) Creating and Maintaining Policies through the appropriate governance structures. Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Norfolk State University Office of Communications and Marketing at marketing@nsu.edu or 757-823-8373.

STAKEHOLDER(S):

The Norfolk State University Community including faculty, staff, current students, alumni, donors, members of the community and prospective students.

POLICY CONTENTS

Norfolk State University employees must adhere to the same standards of conduct online as they would in the workplace. Laws and policies respecting contracting and conflict of interest, as well as applicable policies and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media



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and all other University constituents apply online and in the social media context just as they do in personal interactions. Employees are fully responsible for what they post to social media sites.

1. Employees must exercise professional judgment about content and respect privacy laws including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. Employees must not include confidential information about the University, its staff or its students. Examples include posting about a student's grades or performance, admission status, address, email, phone number, social security number, and any/all information that would be covered by FERPA; personally identifiable health information such as medical conditions or injuries or healthcare sought or received; and other private or personal information that the person has not consented to have published. The University will not ask, and employees are prohibited from asking, for an individual to send credit card or payment information, classified information, privileged information, private information or information subject to non-disclosure agreements via any social network.
2. Employees must not post items that contain vulgar or obscene language or material, threatening language or material, or any content that violates intellectual property rights, or privacy laws, or which is otherwise injurious or illegal.
3. Representation of personal opinions as being endorsed by the University or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. Norfolk State University's name or marks may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, religion, private business cause or political candidate.
4. By posting content to any social media site, an employee represents that they or the University owns or otherwise has all rights necessary to lawfully use that content or that the use of the content is permitted by Fair Use (Please see [Copyright 101](#) for more information). In posting to social media, employees also agree that they are not knowingly providing misleading or false information and that they will protect and hold the University harmless for any claims resulting from the content.
5. While NSU is committed to the protection of academic freedom and freedom of speech, it does not regularly review content posted to social media sites. Under this Social Media Policy, the Communications and Marketing Department may review content posted to social media sites. It may remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.
6. When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, employees must always include citations and must provide a link to the original material, if applicable. If unsure how to link social media material, contact the NSU Office of Communications and Marketing for more information.



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7. Employees must refrain from using information and conducting activities that may violate local, state, or federal laws and regulations. If unsure whether certain content is protected by privacy or intellectual property laws, contact NSU's Department of Human Resources.
8. If an employee maintains his or her own personal social media accounts, they must avoid creating confusion over whether or not the account is associated with NSU. If an employee identifies himself or herself as a Norfolk State University faculty or staff member online, it must be clear that the views expressed on the site are not those of the University and the employee is not acting in their official capacity as an employee. While not a requirement, NSU employees may consider adding the following disclaimer to personal social media accounts.

"While I am an employee at Norfolk State University, comments made on this account are my own and not those of the University."

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Use of Social Media Sites for General Business, Communications and Marketing

The Social Media Manager of Communications and Marketing will be responsible for administering this policy.

The Social Media Manager will provide input and assist in University outreach and training on this policy and best practices. The Social Media Manager will manage the day-to-day application process and will update the Norfolk State University directory as needed.

Administrators may contact the Social Media Manager or anyone on the Communications and Marketing Team at any time for consultation at socialmedia@nsu.edu.

The following requirements apply to all officially recognized University Social Media accounts:

- a. All applicants for officially recognized social media accounts are required to submit the profile image/avatar of each account as part of the application process to ensure that NSU's branding standards are met.
- b. All social media accounts officially recognized by the University must have at least two NSU employees as administrators at all times to ensure adherence to this policy.
- c. Should an NSU employee administrator of an account leave the University for any reason or no longer wishes to be an account administrator, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to designate another employee to be an account administrator and remove the former employee's administrative permissions to the site.



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- d. If there are not two employees available to serve as administrators, at least one person must be designated from each unit/department. If there are any problems identifying a new administrator, please contact the Office of Communications and Marketing for assistance.
- e. NSU employees identified as administrators of accounts are responsible for managing and monitoring content of their social media accounts. Administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the University's policies.
- f. The Office of Communications and Marketing is not responsible for posting content to any department's social media channels nor are we obligated to post any college/school's content to the University's main pages. The Office of Communications and Marketing will often post photos, event information from various colleges/schools that will appeal to the larger University audience. The Social Media Manager will provide necessary consultations if any department requests more assistance beyond initial trainings.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

A social media account often requires the account creator to agree to certain terms and conditions for use of the site by means of so-called "click-through" agreements; for example, by clicking "yes" or "I accept" as part of the account creation process.

These agreements, which are often long and complicated, are legal contracts binding the user and the University. They often contain terms and conditions that are either illegal for state agencies to enter into, or create risks for the account creator and the University (for officially recognized NSU accounts). In view of this, NSU has adopted this policy to manage these agreements and mitigate the risks they create. Only account administrators, and no other employees, are delegated authority to create official social media accounts through completion of the application process and approval by the Office of Communications and Marketing.

APPROVAL PROCESS:

All departments, colleges, and organizations connected to Norfolk State University that wish to use social media must go through an approval process to be officially recognized.

Leadership of each area must identify two individuals as Administrators who will be responsible for monitoring and managing their specific University social media accounts.

The Administrators must fill out an online application on nsu.edu/social-media, and their names and contact information will be added to a database in the Communications and Marketing Department.



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Once this form is completed and submitted, the Communications and Marketing Department will look at each social media account to ensure they meet University standards and suggest changes if necessary. Once this auditing process has been completed, it will then be added to a directory on nsu.edu/socialmedia that lists all University social media sites.

EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE:

The Office of Communications and Marketing shall make available to all employees training on the requirements of this policy on an annual basis. Records of the training will be maintained in the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Reports regarding University social media platforms and other social media activity will be completed by the Office of Communications and Marketing and disseminated or shared with university administrators.

PUBLICATION:

This Policy shall be widely published and distributed to the University community. To ensure timely publication and distribution thereof, the Responsible Office will make every effort to:

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronic or otherwise, to the University community within 14 days of approval.
- Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library within 14 days of approval.
- Post the policy on the appropriate website; and
- Educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy's content as necessary. Failure to meet publication requirements does not invalidate this policy.

REVIEW SCHEDULE:

- Next Scheduled Review: 05/18/2021
- Approval by, date: President, 05/18/21
- Revision History: *None – New Policy*
- Supersedes: *None – New Policy*

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

(Related documents are critical to the development of corresponding policies and procedures. Related documents include federal regulations, state regulations, state policies and BOV policies, Presidential Policies, Administrative or Interim Policies. If there are no related documents, insert the following statement: *There are no related documents associated with this policy.*)



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1. Norfolk State University Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Norfolk-State-University-114887855927/timeline/>
2. Norfolk State University Twitter: <https://twitter.com/norfolkstate>
3. Norfolk State University YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NSUMarketing>
4. Norfolk State University Instagram: https://instagram.com/norfolk_state_university/
5. Norfolk State University LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/norfolk-state-university/>

FORMS:

Social Media Toolbox: The Social Media Toolbox provides a set of standards and tools to be used by University communicators to build consistent, clear, and positive images of the University in the minds of constituents. It includes detailed information on the brand use of the logo, colors and typography <https://www.nsu.edu/About/Administrative-Offices-Services/Communications-and-Marketing/Brand-and-Visual-Identity/Brand-Logo>

Social Media Administrator Application <https://www.nsu.edu/About/Administrative-Offices-Services/Communications-and-Marketing/Social-Media/Sign-Up-Form>