 <p><b>SOUTHEAST MISSOURI</b> STATE UNIVERSITY · 1873<sup>®</sup></p>	<p><b>BUSINESS POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL</b></p>	Date Issued: <b>12/23</b>	Revision Date:	Page: 1 of 1
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**GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Social media is an important part of the way we communicate in today’s world, and these communication tools have the potential to create a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. The purpose of this policy and its related procedures is to ensure that any and all social media interactions on behalf of Southeast Missouri State University represent the University’s best interests, and that individuals who speak on behalf of the University have the authority and approval to do so under the circumstances.

This policy applies to all University social media accounts created by University employees and agents for the official business purposes of the University.

This policy applies only to University social media accounts and the use of social media accounts created for the purpose of officially representing Southeast Missouri State University and its constituent groups, departments, programs, and entities. This policy is not intended for internet activities that do not associate or identify a faculty, staff member, student employee or student organizations with the University, do not use University email addresses, do not discuss the University and are purely about personal matters.

The Office of University Marketing and Communications is responsible for maintaining any operating procedures related to this policy.

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## SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

These procedures are intended to assist University faculty, staff, and students who create, manage, or utilize social media presences as representatives of the University. These procedures apply regardless of one's status as an individual professional, as a representative of particular academic or administrative departments, or as a student representing a registered student organization.

### 1. University-Affiliated Social Media Accounts


To ensure compliance with applicable laws, and regulations, and to protect the University and members of its community, the University has established the following procedures related to university social media accounts.

1. *University Social Media Accounts.* University social media accounts are social media accounts established and maintained by the University or a Department of the University (e.g., the University or Department's) Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and Instagram accounts, used to interact with students, faculty, and staff, and/or the non-University community or general public. A University social media account may include multiple pages, tweets, channels, posts, groups and/or other features. For example, the University's Facebook account may, at any given time, include several Facebook groups as well as pages for courses and events. Features offered by social media platforms change over time.
2. *Running University-Affiliated Accounts.* The following apply to running a University-Affiliated social media account:
  - Departments or other University Offices or Units that would like to start a social media account should contact the Office of Marketing and Communications to ensure all University-Affiliated social media accounts adhere to [University Business Policies and Procedures](#), [brand standards](#), and other appropriate considerations.
  - Anyone who manages a Southeast-related social media account must complete this form to register your social media account to the [Southeast Social Media Account Directory](#).
  - When possible, any University-affiliated account must have at least two full-time faculty/staff members from the office or department designated as administrators as well as a member of the Marketing and Communications social media team. Students may not serve as administrators for University-affiliated social media accounts, except in limited situations that will need to be discussed, and approved first by University Marketing and Communications.
  - Manage social media accounts responsibly, responding, when appropriate, to inquiries and discussions.
  - Do not express personal opinions on your University-Affiliated accounts or use University branding without authorization.
  - Secure social media account passwords and comply with account safety measures.



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- Use authorized logos provided by Marketing and Communications.
  - Obtain consent before referencing colleagues or co-workers.
  - Maintain active social media account(s).
  - Make sure your posts are accessible and include alt text and closed captioning.
  - Tailor content to specific social media platforms and include links to relevant information.
  - Use a welcoming and engaging tone while being brief.
3. *Training.* Anyone can start a social media account, but it takes skill to use the account to reach your goals. If you have an existing University-affiliated account, request social media training by filling out the [Request A Review](#) form. If you do not currently run a University-affiliated account please email [social@semo.edu](mailto:social@semo.edu) to schedule a training appointment before creating an account. Social media training consists of two levels. All training participants will begin at Level I.
4. *Changing Account Administrators.* When it's time to hand a social media account to the next administrator, the following steps shall be taken:
- First, designate a new administrator before you are finished with the account.
  - Second, provide University Marketing and Communications the name and contact information of the new administrator.
  - Third, ensure you are no longer tied to the account as an administrator and log out of the account on all devices. Consult University Marketing and Communications if guidance is needed.
  - Lastly, new administrators should immediately update passwords on all accounts.
5. *Media Contacts.* If someone from the media or press, to include student press such as the Arrow, contacts users or administrators about posts made in online forums that relate to the University in any way, users must alert their supervisor and contact the Office of University Marketing and Communications before responding.
6. *Job Postings.* Job postings follow University established processes. Unless otherwise approved and coordinated with the Office of Human Resources, Social Media may not be used in place of HR processes.
7. *Public Forums.* Some University social media accounts may be created for the sole purpose of distributing the University's own content, with user comments or other interactive communications not permitted. For other University social media accounts in which interactive communications are permitted, you should assume a public forum has been created. In such a case, the circumstances under which administrators may remove comments or block users is limited where appropriate and permitted by law (e.g., inciting imminent lawless action, fighting words, true threats, illegal harassment) and University policy.

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## 2. Social Media for Instructional Purposes

To ensure compliance with applicable laws, and regulations, and to protect the University and members of its community, the University has established the following procedures related to faculty use of social media for instructional purposes.

- Consistent with the principles of academic freedom (as described in [Chapter 2 of the Faculty Handbook](#)), faculty members may choose to use social media as a tool to engage students in discussions about their coursework in the classroom, blended, and online courses.
- Just as would be true inside a physical classroom, discussions on social media for instructional purposes may be limited to matters relating to the subject matter of the coursework, but any such limitations (e.g., deleting certain comments) must be reasonable and viewpoint neutral.
- Notify students of privacy settings and options when using social media for educational/instructional purposes.

## 3. Personal Social Media Use

All University employees are expected to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in the real world. The same laws, professional expectations, policies, procedures and/or guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media, any other University constituency, and the general public, also apply in the social media environment.

When using University electronic resources for personal use of social media, use unrelated to the employee's job duties, such use must be limited to incidental use. All employees must abide by the University's Information Technology policies as set forth in Chapter 10 of these Business Policies and Procedures

The University respects the rights of its employees to identify themselves as employees of the University on their own personal social media accounts, and/or when they interact with the social media accounts of others. However, please be clear you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of the University. The use of disclaimers, stating that the views expressed are your own and not the University's, can be very helpful. As an employee of Southeast Missouri State University, what you do and say online or in any other forum, reflects directly on the institution. Depending on one's affiliation with the University, personal online activity may be subject to other Southeast Missouri State [University Business Policies and Procedures](#), the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and/or the [Faculty Handbook](#).


When utilizing or engaging on social media for online professional or personal social media activity, Faculty, Staff and Students are encouraged to adhere to the following, particularly, where there is the potential for confusion about ones role as a University agent/expert versus personal opinion:

1. *Do No Harm.* All users must ensure that their social media use does no harm to the University or to themselves whether navigating sites on the job or off. Be sure that what you put on the web is factually correct.



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2. *Personal Responsibility.* Users are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated content. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time - protect your privacy. In addition, Users are responsible for what they post on their own site and on the sites of others. Refrain from harassing, abusive, threatening, or harmful language. Be mindful that individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene (as defined by courts).
3. *Comply with Regulations.* Do not post sensitive or confidential information about Southeast Missouri State University, its students, employees or alumni. Employees should be mindful of legal liabilities and intellectual property rights. Employees must follow appropriate state, federal, and other requirements such as, but not limited to FERPA, HIPPA, NCAA, as well as adhere to the University's Business Policies and Procedures.
4. *Identify your Affiliation/Use Disclaimers.* If you publish or post content to any website or social media platform outside of the University and it has something to do with the work you do or subjects associated with the University, use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this stie are my own and do not represent the University's positions, strategies or opinions."
5. *Maintain Transparency.* The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred. Therefore, users must be thoughtful about a posting's content and potential audiences. Users must also be honest about their identity. Never pretend to be someone else. Tracking tools enable supposedly anonymous posts to be traced back to their authors.
6. *Conflict of Interest.* If someone or some group offers to pay users for participating in an online forum in their University role, offers advertising for pay and/or for endorsement, this could constitute conflict of interest and University policies and procedures apply.
7. *Media Contacts.* If someone from the media or press, to include student press such as the Arrow, contacts users about posts made in online forums that relate to the University in any way, users must alert their supervisor and contact the Office of University Marketing and Communications before responding.
8. *Relationships.* Users should give careful consideration to assess the implications of "friending", "linking", "following" or accepting such a request from another person. For example, there is a potential for misinterpretation of the relationship or the potential of sharing protected information. Relationships such as, but not limited to, faculty-student, supervisor-subordinate or staff-student merit close consideration of the implications and the nature of the social interaction.
9. *University Resources.* Faculty and staff should respect University time and property. When appropriate, it is suitable to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. Faculty and staff should participate in personal social media conversations on their own time. See [Chapter 10 of the University Business Policies and Procedures](#) for additional guidance.
10. *University Name, Marks and Logos.* Do not use the University signature block, academic logo, athletic logo, or other University marks or images on their personal online sites where you are making a profit or advocating for a cause or agenda not approved and endorsed by the University. Do not use the University's name or logo to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party or candidate, personal opinions, or non-University

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services.

## 4. Crisis Communication on Social Media

When crises occur, many times students and their parents look to University-Affiliated social media pages for communication from the University. The process of communication followed at Southeast during a time of crisis begins with the University administration. Once it designates a message, University Marketing and Communications and the Department of Public Safety staff will share it through email, text, and through the SEAlerts pages on social media. After the information is sent out, University-Affiliated social media accounts can share and post the messages on Facebook, X, Instagram, and other platforms as necessary.

## 5. Cyberbullying

While the policy and these procedures is not meant to apply to personal social media accounts, instances of cyberbullying toward any other member of the University are not acceptable whether it be from an official University-Affiliated account or from a personal account. This includes any violations of local, state, or federal laws. Cyberbullying includes harassment, threats, intimidation, coercion, and/or any other conduct that by design, intent, or recklessness places another individual in reasonable fear of physical harm or creates emotional distress in which others are unable to reasonably conduct or participate in work, education, research, living, or other activities.

## 6. Use of University Technology

All students, faculty and staff must abide by Southeast’s technology policies or be subject to disciplinary action. For policy details, see [Business Policy and Procedure 10-05 Appropriate Use of Information Technology Resources](#).

## 7. Violations and Disciplinary Actions

Violation of any University policy is inappropriate and may result in disciplinary actions. Any violation of this policy and its procedures should be immediately reported to the user’s supervisor or the director of Human Resources, if applicable. Refer to the following for additional details on implementation of disciplinary actions:

- Students - [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- Staff - [Staff Handbook](#)
- Faculty - [Faculty Handbook](#)
- Student Organizations - [Student Organization Requirements](#)

Unless otherwise specified, all questions regarding these procedures should be directed to University Marketing and Communications, 573.651.2459.