

# The University of Mississippi Social Media Policy

## 1. PURPOSE

The proper and effective use of social media presents unequalled opportunities for the university to share its story in an authentic, transparent and timely manner while building richer, more substantive relationships with people we may not have reached through traditional communication channels. This policy defines the rules for the use of all Official University Social Media Accounts (see definition 3.2 at the bottom of this policy) to ensure that university-sponsored social media (see definition 3.1 at the bottom of this policy) is both legal and in compliance with UM policies.

## 2. POLICY

2.1 All Official University Social Media Accounts should be registered with University Marketing & Communications. Click here to register official social media accounts ([INSERT LINK TO SOCIAL MEDIA REGISTRY ONCE LIVE](#)).

2.2 The university is committed to fostering an educational environment that allows for freedoms of speech and expression in accordance with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. At the same time, the university does not condone any activity or posting on an Official University Social Media Account (see definition 3.2 at the bottom of this policy) that reflects exceptions to First Amendment protection, such as speech deemed to be unlawful, defamatory, or obscene. The university reserves the right to remove any such posting without notice. The university also reserves the right to refer social media activity to the applicable social media platform and/or authorities for further review and appropriate action.

2.4 When using social media as a part of their official duties, and/or when presenting oneself in social media settings as a university representative, all faculty and staff should conduct themselves in a way that is befitting of the institution and complies with the following applicable university policies governing employee behavior and acceptable use of electronic and information resources:

[IT Appropriate Use](#)

[Information Confidentiality/Security](#)

[Official Web Pages](#)

[Privacy in the Electronic Environment](#)

[Employee Conflict of Interest](#)

[Media Relations](#)

[Sexual Harassment](#)

[Non-Discrimination & Complaint Procedure](#)

[Permission Required to Use University Trademarks](#)

[Political Activities and Public Office](#)  
[Code of Ethics and Conduct](#)  
[Copyright \(Intellectual Property\)](#)

- 2.5 Primary administrative rights for Official University Social Media Accounts should be assigned only to university employees. Official University Social Media Accounts should have a Primary and a Secondary administrator to ensure that the site is managed consistently. Should the Primary administrator be unavailable, the Secondary administrator will manage the account to keep it current and monitor activity on the site. At least one of the administrators should be a permanent, full-time university employee.
- 2.6 Confidential or proprietary information about the university or its students, employees, patients or alumni should not be posted on any social media account. Employees must follow applicable federal requirements, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act ([HIPAA](#)). All University of Mississippi employees should also abide by all NCAA regulations governing interactions between the institution and its employees and prospective student-athletes. All employees should refrain from contacting prospective student-athletes prior to the student-athlete signing a National Letter of Intent to enroll at the University of Mississippi. Please visit the [Ole Miss Compliance website](#) and consult with Ole Miss Athletics Compliance Office if you have questions about content before posting.
- 2.7 All official social media accounts are digital representatives of the University of Mississippi. As such, it's important to be accurate. When possible, link back to original source material on olemiss.edu websites. When linking to a news article about the university, check first to see whether you can link to a release on [Ole Miss News](#), the official UM news website, instead of linking to an external publication or other media outlet. If you must link to an external original source of information outside of the university website, be sure to verify and confirm its accuracy.
- 2.8 In order to ensure that Official University Social Media Accounts are adopted and maintained in ways that reflect the university's brand and brand standards, University Marketing & Communications reserves the right to administer the social media application process as well as remove posts from Official University Social Media Accounts in the event of accidental or erroneous posts. UM employees who fail to comply with this policy will be referred to their supervisor for commensurate disciplinary action.

All university social media accounts must comply with any approved applicable university branding standards. Any use of official university logos, trademarks, or other images on Official University Social Media Accounts must have prior approval.\*

*\*Brand standards are now under development as part of our relationship with Ologie and will be introduced to marketing and communications professionals across campus during the summer of 2020.*

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Social Media: Forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content (such as videos). Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snap, Twitter, YouTube, and other similar platforms or applications.
- 3.2 Official University Social Media Account: A social media site that represents a University of Mississippi college, department, or official program. Any other social media site, such as a registered student organization site or an employee's personal social media site, is NOT subject to this policy.