



**Framingham**  

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**State University**

# **Social Media Participation Policy**

<i>Applicability:</i> All employees	<i>Policy Owner:</i> University Communications
<i>Approved by:</i> Executive Staff	<i>Approved on:</i> February 2019

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Social media<sup>1</sup> content posted by FSU employees can impact FSU’s reputation and public perception in positive or negative ways. FSU employees and stakeholders must exercise sound judgment and common sense, adhere to FSU’s core values, and observe all applicable policies and regulations<sup>2</sup> when communicating via social media.

This Social Media Policy defines the appropriate use of social media technologies by Framingham State University (FSU) staff, faculty, affiliates, contractors, partners and other internal stakeholders who are covered by FSU general policies. This policy covers activity while an individual either is conducting official FSU business or is representing themselves in social media as being an employee of FSU.

## 2. ASSIGNED ROLES

<b>Role</b>	<b>Assigned Responsibilities</b>
All employees	Adhere to the rules and best-practices stated in the <i>FSU Social Media Policy</i> (this document) when posting any user-generated content.
FSU site administrators	Manage FSU content and social media sites according to FSU policy and procedures.
Director of Communications	Issue emergency communications on behalf of FSU.

<sup>1</sup> Social media refers to websites, online tools, and other online media or applications which allow users to interact with each other by sharing information. It may involve the building of communities or networks, and invites participation and engagement. Social media can include text, audio, video, images and other multimedia communications and includes, but is not limited to, social media and social networking websites (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flickr, and YouTube), blogs, forums and community discussion groups or boards, and online publishing platforms.

<sup>2</sup> Applicable regulations include Federal Trade Commission regulations (e.g., the CAN-SPAM ACT), federal copyright law (Digital Millennium Copyright Act), and FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), as well as any social platforms’ Terms of Services.

### 3. RULES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROHIBITIONS

Please note: the policy statement above refers to instances when FSU employees are speaking on behalf of/representing the view of Framingham State University. Nothing in this policy negates any individual's right to free speech under the U.S. or Massachusetts constitutions<sup>3</sup> nor does it override any language regarding free speech or academic freedom in our collective bargaining agreement. Please see [Social Media Tips and Best Practices for Professional & Personal Use](#).

*All FSU employees and stakeholders when representing the University must:*

- Treat all social media users with respect, regardless of whether or not they are members of the FSU community;
- Not engage in any form of harassment or discrimination;
- Protect institutional values, brand representation, and proprietary and confidential information;
- Observe copyright law and avoid plagiarism;
- Practice ethical behavior;
- Not promote individual opinions or causes which are not directly related to Framingham State purposes.

*Site administrators must:*

- Remove advertisements from private companies soliciting students with special offers;
- Remove vulgar or inappropriate material posted on any of its social media sites;
- Ban users from a site who post vulgar or inappropriate material on more than one occasion. Consider whether or not reporting the user on the given platform may be appropriate/necessary;
- If a page has been developed and is not being used frequently/deemed unnecessary, the site administrator is encouraged to take the necessary steps to have it removed from the host network (Facebook, Twitter, etc.);

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<sup>3</sup> Categories of speech that are given lesser or no protection by the First Amendment (and therefore may be restricted) include obscenity, fraud, child pornography, speech integral to illegal conduct, speech that incites imminent lawless action, speech that violates intellectual property law, true threats, and commercial speech such as advertising. [Defamation](#) that causes harm to reputation is a [tort](#) and also an exception to free speech.

- Refrain from posting about an ongoing emergency, except in the case of sharing or re-tweeting posts that come directly from the primary University accounts overseen by the Director of Communications.

The University is committed to fostering an educational environment that encourages a wide diversity of thoughts, ideas, and opinions. However, the University will not tolerate any activity or posting on an official University social media site that is deemed unlawful or defamatory. The University also reserves the right to block users, remove posts, or restrict access to a page if a user violates FSU policies. We encourage everyone to share their opinions in a thoughtful and respectful manner by asking questions and encouraging conversation.

#### **4. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS**

All social media communication during an active emergency should only be posted by the Director of Communications through the primary University social media accounts:

- Facebook: [www.facebook.com/FraminghamStateUniversity](http://www.facebook.com/FraminghamStateUniversity)
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/FraminghamU>

Information regarding an emergency may be posted to a departmental account only if it is shared or re-tweeted directly from the accounts listed above.

#### **5. ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA PROPERTIES**

Framingham State University organizes its use and management of social properties into three categories:

- **Core:** Official properties developed and managed by the Marketing & Communications Department and its partners.
- **Sanctioned:** Proposed and approved by the Marketing & Communications Department, sanctioned properties are deemed “official” and are developed and managed by FSU centers, institutions, and stakeholders with the support of the Marketing & Communications Department.
- **User-generated:** Unofficial properties developed by FSU stakeholders that have not been proposed to or approved by FSU. The Marketing & Communications Department recognizes that these properties exist but does not provide support or endorsement unless requested, proposed, and approved by the Social Media Coordinator.

#### **6. RELATED DOCUMENTS**

<b>Document Name</b>	<b>Publisher</b>
<a href="#"><u>Acceptable Use Policy</u></a>	FSU
<a href="#"><u>Social Media Tips &amp; Best Practices</u></a>	FSU Marketing & Communications Dept.
<a href="#"><u>Procedure &amp; Guidelines for Requesting the Creation of Social Properties</u></a>	FSU Marketing & Communications Dept.

## 7. ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY VIOLATIONS

Failure to comply with this policy, intentionally or unintentionally, may result in one or more of the following:

- Termination, without notice, of access privileges to information and technology resources.
- Disciplinary action, in adherence to the procedures outlined in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, up to and including termination of employment..
- Civil or criminal penalties as provided by law.

## 8. REVISION HISTORY

*Policies must be reviewed annually by the policy owner. If a policy has been revised, then it must have all necessary approvals before being published. In the last column, indicate whether the activity was a review or a revision; if a revision, summarize the changes.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name and Title</b>	<b>Annual Review or Revision Summary</b>
1/24/23	Christina Casinelli, Web & Social Media Specialist	Revised and updated