



Responsible Use of University Computing Resources Policy Document

Social Media

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Montclair State University recognizes the benefits of using social media (which may include but is not limited to Facebook, Myspace, Friendster, Youtube, LinkedIn and Twitter)("Social Media") to promote the University's goals and activities. In addition, the University also supports the First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and expression. However, information disseminated on Social Media can implicate confidential information, infringe upon the rights of others, and be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Therefore, the University adopts this Social Media Policy to clearly communicate the expectations and prohibitions applicable to the use of Social Media.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The University provides faculty, staff and students with computers, cell phones and other computer devices that are governed by the University's Policies on Responsible Use of University Computing Resources, Guidelines for Responsible Computing, Web Publishing Guidelines, Safeguarding Sensitive and Confidential Information, and Student Code of Conduct. Because individuals may access Social Media through the use of University provided computer equipment, hardware and services, the University is adopting this Social Media Policy to incorporate by reference and supplement its other existing policies.

3.0 EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

University employees have no expectation of privacy in work product that is created in the course of their employment on a University provided or personally owned computer, cell phone, or other related device. In addition, University employees and students have no expectation of privacy in any information that is created by, stored within, or publicly disseminated through University e-mail, and University provided computer or other related device. The University may

disclose information created and obtained from such sources to appropriate University personnel and/or law enforcement agencies, in University disciplinary proceedings, as discovery in litigation, and in response to a request for information as permitted by the Open Public Records Act.

4.0 PROHIBITED USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

To ensure the safety of University employees and students and consistent with the University's mission, University employees and students must follow the University's policies, procedures and standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and other University employees and contractors apply online as in the real world. Anyone who violates any University policy is personally liable for anything they post on a Social Media. The following speech is specifically prohibited using Social Media:

1. Speech that would constitute libel. This includes intentionally or negligently making false statements about an individual, group or entity that is not a public official that causes injury to their reputation; and maliciously making false statements about a public official that causes injury to its reputation. False statements included within an opinion are also prohibited as libel.
2. Speech that is obscene. This would include a depiction or description, in a patently offensive way, of sexual conduct or excretory functions; or when taken as a whole, lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value; or the average person, applying contemporary local standards, would find, as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest.
3. Speech that constitutes harassment, sexual harassment or discrimination under NJ or Federal law, the Student Code of Conduct or University policy.
4. Speech that incites violence and which is prohibited by NJ or Federal Law.
5. Speech that reveals confidential information and is in violation of the University's Safeguarding Sensitive and Confidential Information Policy.
6. Speech that violates the rules and procedures issued by the NJ Ethics Commission governing State employees. For example, speech that would promote or endorse a product, University vendor, political party, political candidate, or a personal cause.

7. The use of film, photographs, logos, or other materials that would violate the copyright, trademark or intellectual property rights of the University or others.

5.0 PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

University employees and students must comply with the University's Web Publishing Guidelines in the use of Social Media. Unless permitted by the University's Web Publishing Guidelines, University employees and students may not use Social Media to display video, audio, photographs, written text or any other material to identify their employment with Montclair State University or to directly or indirectly suggest that the University endorses their views or opinions. Unless otherwise permitted by the University's Web Publishing Guidelines, University employees and students must identify the material they post to Social Media as their own, and that what they have expressed is not necessarily the view of the University.

6.0 UNIVERISTY SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees, students, departments and units that have or want to create a Social Media page must comply with the University's Web Publishing Guidelines and reflect the University's voice by remaining profession in tone and in good taste. In addition, the University's Office of Communications has created a web page with advice and recommendations for posting to specific popular Social Media sites and its information can be found here:
<http://www.montclair.edu/universitycommunications/webservices/socialnetworking/>.

The following are a list of best practices that must be followed by any individual who is posting on behalf of the University on Social Media:

1. **Think twice before posting.** Privacy does not exist in Social Media. Consider what could happen if a post became widely known and how that may reflect both on the poster and the University. If you wouldn't say it at a conference or to a member of the media, consider whether you should post it online. If you are unsure about posting something or responding to a comment, ask your supervisor or contact the University's Office of Communications.
2. **Be accurate.** Verify facts before posting on Social Media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors.
3. **Be respectful.** Understand that content contributed to Social Media could

encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster and the University.

4. **Remember your audience.** Be aware that a presence in Social Media is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, and alumni. Consider this before publishing to ensure that the post will not alienate, harm or provoke these groups.
5. **Photography.** Photographs posted on Social media can easily be appropriated. Consider using a watermark to protect any intellectual property in them. The Photography Policies on the Office of Communications webpage should be consulted before posting photographs on any Social Media.

7.0 Enforcement

Any University employee or student who violates this Policy is subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the applicable employment handbook, collective bargaining agreement, and student code of conduct, and discipline may include, but not be limited to, expulsion and/or termination of employment.

8.0 Related Policies and Links

- [Safeguarding Sensitive and Confidential Information Policy](#)
- [Web Application Development Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)