

Title/Subject: **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Applies to:  faculty  staff  students  student employees  visitors  contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: July 1, 2022

Contact for More Information: University Communications

Board Policy  Administrative Policy  Procedure  Guideline

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Social media enables Central Michigan University (CMU) to share important information with students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, donors, fans, corporate partners and community stakeholders. Social media is extremely effective when used strategically, as each platform allows CMU to engage, educate and entertain audiences in different ways.

Due to its wide use and many formats, social media is often how people first connect with CMU. Thus, it is imperative that all registered CMU social media channels representing CMU uphold the university's brand standards, support university goals and maintain brand trust through uniform social media standards.

### **PURPOSE:**

Establish universitywide standards for the use, creation, operation and management of official social media accounts that represent Central Michigan University.

CMU college, department and service unit accounts representing the CMU brand must comply with this policy. This applies to accounts created before and after the adoption of this policy. Completion of the previous protocol does not exempt current accounts from policy compliance.

Regardless of who created the account, accounts operating under the CMU brand and representing CMU are university property. This excludes accounts not administered by a university employee, including those of registered student organizations or online communities.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

- Content: Any information that is communicated on a social media channel.
- Emergency situation: Any situation that poses a significant threat to operations or has negative consequences.
- KPI: Key Performance Indicators, a standard term for metrics and analytics derived from social media.
- Official accounts: Social media accounts that are sponsored, endorsed or created on authority of the university or any of its colleges, departments or service units. They are allowed represent specific divisions, departments or units within the university when in compliance with the official social media policy.
- Personal accounts: Social media accounts representing a private individual's opinions, thoughts or concerns.
- Service unit: Area designed to specifically support the students, faculty and staff at Central Michigan University.
- Social media directory: Public listing of all official social media accounts that meet the requirements of the social media policy and are authorized to represent specific divisions, departments or units within CMU.

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- Social media manager: Designated employee responsible for monitoring and maintaining official CMU social media platforms, which includes: finding and creating content; maintaining compliance with applicable laws, regulations and policies; and overseeing social media moderators who assist with day-to-day social media activities.
- Social media moderators: Designated student interns, graduate assistants or other employees who assist social media managers in day-to-day social media activities, including finding and creating content, posting content, and more. On accounts representing specific divisions, departments or units within CMU, interns and graduate assistants may be designated **only** as social media moderators.
- Social media platform: Any website or application that enables users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Snapchat, WhatsApp, LinkedIn and TikTok.
- Social media strategy worksheet: A document that provides social media managers and moderators clear goals and benchmarks to guide their social media strategy.
- Strategy: A formal approach to using and managing social media and collecting metrics to make informed choices on how to spend university time and resources.
- University Communications: The office responsible for promoting CMU through strategic communications and marketing, both in print and online.
- CMU Social Media Best Practices: Annually updated guidance document designed to help social media managers implement their strategies and achieve their goals.
- Unofficial accounts: Social media accounts run by organizations with ties to the university but are not authorized to represent the university nor any of its divisions, departments or units. This could include accounts of registered student organizations and online communities not administered by a university employee.

## **POLICY:**

### *Use*

#### Use, Part I: Expectations and responsibilities for official accounts

This policy establishes two roles — social media manager and social media moderator — for the maintenance and operation of all CMU official social media accounts. These roles are further expanded upon in *Management, Part I*, of this policy. To be registered as an official account, CMU service units, departments and colleges must have individuals designated to these roles.

Social media managers and moderators who operate official accounts must adhere to standard practice and procedures. Managers and moderators act as representatives for the university and their respective units, departments and offices, and are expected to maintain the following expectations on official accounts:

- Official accounts should use appropriate spelling and grammar.
- Official accounts are expected to maintain all CMU Brand Guidelines and other best practices as defined in CMU Social Media Best Practices document, which is updated annually.
- Social media managers and/or moderators should annually collect and review KPIs to assess platform performance and value of managing each channel. They should discuss their findings with the appropriate supervisor, unit vice president or dean.
- Accounts must adhere to each social media platform's terms of service, community standards and other basic rules outlined by the social media platform.

**These are the general expectations of an official account.** If a service unit, department or college is unable to follow these expectations, University Communications will meet with appropriate individuals to review account status, determine support necessary and develop an action plan.

If issues persist after this process, University Communications may request an account deletion by the vice president of University Communications/chief marketing officer. The vice president will review the request and issue notice to appropriate individuals on action needed.

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Use, Part II: Official accounts during emergency situations

Emergency situations may occur at any time. **Social media managers and moderators should immediately pause any planned social media posts when notified to do so by University Communications.**

University Communications is responsible for communicating on behalf of the university during an emergency situation. Follow the lead of CMU's primary channels by only sharing their social media communications. Do not share posts from news outlets or other external sources.

Managers and moderators may encounter content online that risks evolving into an emergency situation. Examples include public harassment, threats or rumors that cause concern. In these circumstances, contact University Communications immediately. Do not respond in any way without consulting University Communications.

***Creation***

Creation, Part I: Account creation

CMU employees who wish to create a social media account on behalf of specific divisions, departments or units within CMU or use social media to conduct CMU business must communicate and receive approval from their unit's supervisor(s), designated communications staff (if applicable) and/or dean (if applicable).

Following leadership approval, contact University Communications at [socialmedia@cmich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@cmich.edu) to request an official account.

The requestee must complete a *Social Media Strategy Worksheet* and consult with University Communications before they may:

- Onboard new channels into the universitywide social media content management tool. For more information, see *Operation, Part I*, of this policy.
- Complete additional training sessions as required by University Communications staff. Mandatory training includes basic social media management at CMU, training on the universitywide social media content management tool, and brand building on social media.
- Register all managers and moderators with University Communications' social media team.

Upon completion of all requirements, accounts will be authorized and listed in the official social media directory. University Communications will follow up with social media managers on a regular basis throughout the year to provide support and guidance.

If a social media manager or moderator will no longer have oversight of an account, please immediately notify University Communications. See *Management, Part I*, of this policy for next steps.

Accounts predating this social media policy are expected to complete a *Social Media Strategy Worksheet*, complete mandatory training and register all managers and moderators with University Communications immediately.

Creation, Part II: Social media strategy

The *Social Media Strategy Worksheet* is required for all official accounts, as it provides managers and moderators with clear goals and benchmarks to guide their social media presence. Social media managers should update and review the worksheet yearly to assess account growth, health and opportunities for improvement.

University Communications will conduct an annual audit of official social media channels and provide suggestions and guidance to help social media managers execute their strategies.

Creation, Part III: Compliance with official CMU procedures and best practices

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University Communications will update the CMU Social Media Best Practices on an annual basis, based on brand standards, universitywide goals and platform updates. This document, and other resources, will be provided to all CMU social media managers and moderators.

University Communications also will establish community groups for social media managers using Microsoft Teams; these groups will receive regular updates on platform best practices, tools and resources, and more.

#### Creation, Part IV: Social media account registration

All official social media accounts, as well as corresponding social media managers and moderators, are required to be registered with University Communications. Registration will be reviewed annually to ensure that accurate contact information is available in case of emergency.

To be registered, accounts must do the following:

- Provide University Communications with updated contact information for all social media managers and moderators.
- Complete a *Social Media Strategy Worksheet*.
- Inform University Communications of the number of users and accounts representing the department, unit or college for the upcoming year into the social media management tool.
- Complete all required trainings.

Accounts will not be added to the official social media directory until all steps of registration are completed.

#### Creation, Part V: Account deletion

Official CMU social media accounts are the property of CMU and the department, division or unit they represent. No social media manager or moderator may delete an official social media account without both written permission from their dean or division vice president *and* consultation with University Communications.

A social media manager who wishes to delete an official social media account should contact University Communications at [socialmedia@cmich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@cmich.edu) to request a consultation; this consultation is the first step to begin the request for account deletion.

Violations of this policy may result in referral to Human Resources and/or faculty Personnel Services for appropriate action.

### ***Operation***

#### Operation, Part I: Use of social media management tool

Social media management software provides managers one platform to access multiple social media accounts. It also offers advanced features including automated reporting, social listening and more. Managers will be able to access in-depth reporting tools, create a standardized labeling system to assess engagement with posts by topic and better track online conversations.

Having a standardized cross-campus platform also will assist managers in knowledge and skill sharing while creating a more cohesive social media presence representing CMU.

**All official social media accounts are required to utilize CMU's social media management software.** Channels will not be added to the official social media directory until social media managers register their accounts in the social media management software.

As part of the onboarding process, all managers and moderators will be required to complete a training session on the platform with University Communications.

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### Operation, Part II: Analytics and metrics

Analytics and metrics should be reviewed annually with appropriate department, division or unit leaders. These reviews ensure that employee time spent managing/moderating university platforms is worth the investment. The CMU Social Media Best Practices document includes information and recommendations for channel and content analysis.

## ***Management***

### Management, Part I: Social media roles and responsibilities

#### *Social media managers*

Social media managers are responsible for ensuring factual accuracy, editorial quality and upholding university brand standards on official accounts. They must be CMU employees who have the capacity to dedicate time to social media every day.

Every official account must have a minimum of two registered managers and a maximum of four. As the official contacts for accounts, managers must be registered with University Communications and comply with all policies and procedures in place.

Social media managers may employ social media moderators to help with the day-to-day maintenance of their social media channels; social media managers are responsible for the oversight, training and actions of these team members.

Social media managers who no longer oversee social media on behalf of CMU should email University Communications at [socialmedia@cmich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@cmich.edu). Any new social media manager onboarded during the year must register with University Communications immediately to receive training and information before receiving password access to any accounts.

#### *Social media moderators*

Social media moderators may assist social media managers in content creation, social listening and other tasks, but they may not be the sole individuals responsible for an official account. Social media moderators can be employees, students or graduate assistants.

***Students and graduate assistants cannot be social media managers, only social media moderators.***

### Management, Part II: Security protocols

Security protocols will differ based on individual social media platforms and changes to terms of service. However, these are best practices that all managers and moderators should follow.

All passwords must comply with the CMU Office of Information Technology's [password standards](#).

#### *Social media management system security protocols*

- Multifactor authentication is required to be in place for all users of the social media management system.
- Passwords for the social media management system should be unique to this system (not used anywhere else).

#### *General social media platform security protocols*

- All accounts must be created using a shared or general email address accessible to more than one person (i.e., [socialmedia@cmich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@cmich.edu)). Email addresses already established are preferred.
- Passwords and logins to social media platforms should be maintained by managers and their direct leadership.
- Passwords and logins to social media platforms must be shared with University Communications so accounts can be added to the university-established social media management system.
- Passwords to social media platforms should be changed when a person with access is no longer employed with the university.

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- Accounts that are idle for more than three months become easy targets for hackers. Accounts that cannot be updated regularly should be deleted. Social media managers must contact University Communications to remove an idle account.
- Avoid third-party apps when possible. The exceptions are the social media content management system designated by the university and password manager apps approved by Office of Information Technology.

*Platform-specific security protocols*

- To ensure continuity of account access for Facebook channels, all official Facebook accounts must be owned by Central Michigan University within the Meta Business Manager.
- Managers or moderators may not create accounts that defy Meta's Terms of Service to serve as administrators. Contact University Communications with any questions or concerns.

Management, Part III: Legal compliance

Managers and moderators are expected to abide by the terms of service when utilizing social media platforms, as well as all requirements set forth by CMU's Office of General Counsel.

In addition, managers and moderators shall adhere to the following:

- **Refrain from promoting third-party products, events and businesses.** Official accounts should not promote third-party products, events and business, to avoid the appearance of an official CMU endorsement. This also includes sharing or promoting fundraisers, GoFundMe accounts, petitions, etc.
- **Contests must meet platform terms of service.** Contests on social media platforms must meet each platform's terms of service and comply with university policies and regulations. If you are interested in hosting a contest, please contact University Communications at [socialmedia@cmich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@cmich.edu).
- **Be mindful of copyright and intellectual property rights.** If it is not your content, do not post it or otherwise present it as your own. When using others' content, link to the original content wherever possible; in all cases, you must make sure to tag and give appropriate credit to the original creator of the content.
- **Do not act as a spokesperson for CMU on any social media platform.** Please direct requests for official statements/university responses to University Communications.

*Personal social media accounts*

All CMU employees are encouraged to exercise sound judgment when participating in social media activities on personal accounts. It is important for university employees to consider how their conduct online may reflect on CMU.

**CMU's recommendations for employees' personal behavior on social media**

1. **Avoid using unapproved CMU likenesses or images in your personal accounts.** This includes, but is not limited to, your social media name, handle and URL. CMU's logos and registered trademarks (such as the Action C) are the property of Central Michigan University; they should be used only in circumstances where they are provided for public use in the manner intended.
2. **Avoid posting CMU-owned photo and video assets as personal content without permission.** We encourage employees to share posts on social media made by CMU accounts. However, employees should refrain from posting university-owned photo and video assets and presenting them as personal content *unless* they obtain permission from the appropriate office.
3. **Employees are accountable for their personal conduct online.** CMU respects First Amendment rights and encourages free speech by all university employees. Remember that students, colleagues, and supervisors often have access to your publicly published content. It is contrary to CMU policy to disclose information that is not intended for dissemination outside of CMU. It is illegal to disclose information that is protected by FERPA, HIPAA or other laws. CMU is not responsible for, and does not support, any post made by a user whose public positions are counter to the mission or interests of CMU.

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4. **Let CMU University Communications and official spokespersons engage with negative content.** Unless you are a university-designated spokesperson, you should not respond to negative comments or speak on behalf of CMU. If you see something of concern, contact University Communications immediately at [ucomm@cmich.edu](mailto:ucomm@cmich.edu).

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

*Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to, modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines relative to this subject.*