Murray State University Social Media, Web and Mobile Communications Policy
Updated June 2013

Purpose of Policy
It is the purpose of this document to call attention to existing policies that have impact on official use of social media, web and mobile communications by Murray State University faculty, staff, and students. This document defines official use as limited to accounts that belong to and express content related to department/unit/division levels of organization within the university, represent the university voice, or utilize institutional branding in any way. This includes registered student organizations.

All official use accounts should register any and all social media platforms with the University Communications office through the form found at www.murraystate.edu/connect.

It is not the intent of University Communications to manage or specify content but to ensure users of social media are in compliance with existing policies and have access to best practices as mentioned below.

Existing Policies
1.   Murray State University Acceptable Use Policy
2.   Regent's Policy on Faculty and Staff Liability
3.   Murray State University Privacy Policy
4.   Faculty, Staff, and Student Handbooks
5.   Policies regarding use of copyrighted symbols, names, titles, etc.
6.   Board of Regents Code of Conduct Sections 3,4 and 5

Definition of Social Media
Social media is powerful communications tools that have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Social media platforms are defined as internet and mobile media designed to create social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram.
Also, this document clarifies the request of registry of any social media presence with the University Communications office through a form found at

www.murraystate.edu (WILL KNOW EXACT LINK LATER). It is also expected that users will seek out resources for best practices to insure the greatest effectiveness and safety of the use of social media.

Best Practices
This section applies to those posting on behalf of an official university unit, though the guidelines may be helpful for anyone posting on social media in any capacity. All university members are subject to 5.3 of the Board of Regents Code of Conduct Policy.

Think twice before posting: Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the account administrators and the university. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. 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 for input or contact University Communications.

Strive for accuracy: Get the facts straight before posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important if posting on behalf of the university in any capacity.

Be respectful: Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the account administrators and/or the university.

Remember your audiences: Be aware that a presence in the social media world is or easily can be made available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, and peers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.

Photography: Remember that photographs posted on social media sites easily can be saved by visitors and used without your consent. Most people will click on a picture before they will read information so it is best to use visual pictures/images as often as possible. Call the University Communications office for access to official university photos, which are available online to all university staff and faculty.   This will also help you stay in line with the university branding guidelines.

Administration: It is best to have more than one administrator assigned to each social media platform. When a person is no longer working with your unit or their responsibilities change within your unit, immediately delete them as an

administrator from the account. If they were the only administrator of an account, you should immediately change login information or delete them from administration.

Personal Posts: Identify your views as your own. If you identify yourself as a Murray State University faculty or staff member online, it should be clear that the views expressed are not necessarily those of the institution.

*For more Best Practices and platform information, please refer to the Murray State University Social Media Guide

Administrator Responsibilities

If you post on behalf of an official university unit or organization, the following policies must be adhered to in addition to all policies and best practices listed above:

Register your accounts: Departments or university units that have a social media page, or would like to start one, should contact the Social Media Marketing Manager in University Communications at 809-2798 or dhoward@murraystate.edu. You will then be asked to fill out a form to register your accounts. All institutional pages must have an appointed employee who is identified as being responsible for content and their information will be used in the registration process. If a student is managing the account, then a full time staff member should be identified instead and the student listed under "other admins."

Have a plan: Departments should consider their messages, audiences, and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media sites up-to-date. The Social Media Marketing Manager in University Communications can assist and advise you with your social media planning. You should not create your accounts until you have a plan for what you will be using the accounts for.

Protect the institutional voice and brand: Posts on social media sites should protect the university's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. Each unit should protect the university brand but no individual unit should construe its social media site as representing the university as a whole. Consider this when naming pages or accounts, selecting a profile picture or icon, and selecting content to post—names, profile images, and posts should all be clearly linked to the particular department or unit rather than to the institution as a whole. Official university branding is provided to all units by University Communications.

Link back to the university: Whenever possible, link back to Murray State websites, blogs or information. Ideally, posts should be brief although not sound automated, redirecting a visitor to relevant information. When linking to a news

article about Murray State University, check first to see whether you can link to a release on the Murray State University's news blog MSU Today (msutoday.murraystate.net) instead of to a publication or other media outlet.

Moderate Comments and Discussions:
By their nature, social networking sites are participatory and involve sharing among multiple users. However, it is important to monitor live discussions for off-topic or abusive comments. Whenever possible, moderate comments and be transparent about doing so by including language similar to the Facebook policy we have at www.murraystate.edu/connect

Courses of Action

For accounts not registered using the University Communications registration form, those accounts will be reported to the platform to be removed for trademark violations.

For accounts registered with University Communications that go against the policies listed above, the administrators will be contacted and asked to change information and conform to the standard uses and policies. The Social Media Marketing Manager will work with the administrators of those accounts and the department/unit the account represents to make valuable changes.

For accounts that are deemed as false accounts or wrongly representing the university or slandering the university, they will be reported immediately as "impersonation" (most platforms have strict rules against this) and requested that the account be deleted.

For information about what is considered a "parody" account vs. an "impersonation" or "abusive" account for Twitter please refer to https://support.twitter.com/

Contact Information

For more information about this policy please contact Dana Howard, Social Media Marketing Manager at 270-809-2798