



# MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Murray State University Social Media Policy  
Updated January 2019

## Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this document is to call attention to existing policies that impact official use of social media and other digital communications by Murray State University faculty, staff and students. This document defines official use as accounts that operate on behalf of the University or express content that represent University voice or institutional branding in any way (including department pages and student organizations.)

Official use accounts should register their social media platforms with the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office through the form found at [www.murraystate.edu/connect](http://www.murraystate.edu/connect).

It is not the intent of the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office to manage or specify content, but ensure official use social media is in compliance with existing policies and best social media practices. It is expected that users will take proper precautions to foster an informative, effective and safe platform.

## 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 Handbook
5. Policies regarding use of copyrighted symbols, names, titles, etc.

## Definition of Social Media

Social media is a powerful communication tool that has a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. By definition, social media platforms are internet and mobile media designed to create social interaction by using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube and LinkedIn.

## Management Guidelines

This section applies to those posting on behalf of an official University unit. However, these guidelines may be helpful to anyone posting in any social media platform.

**Think twice before posting:** Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if an inaccurate or inappropriate post becomes widely viewed by University stakeholders; these posts can have a negative effect on both account administrators and the University. Search engines can reveal posts and comments years after they are created or deleted. If you would not say it at a conference or to a reporter, do not post it on social media. If you are unsure about creating a post or responding to a comment, contact the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office.

**Check your grammar:** Review all content for grammatical and spelling errors. In addition, follow the University's official and updated style guidelines at [murraystate.edu/toolkit](http://murraystate.edu/toolkit). If you need grammar, spelling or style assistance, contact the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office.

**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 the University. In most cases, no response is appropriate. If special cases present themselves, use discretion or contact the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office.

**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, colleagues and peers. Consider your audience 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 can easily 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 images as often as possible. Call the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office for access to official University photos, which are available online to all University staff and faculty.

**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 the views expressed are not necessarily those of the institution.

**Profanity:** For any platforms allowing a profanity filter setting, the filter should be set at its strongest setting. If, for some reason, a comment or post is not filtered but does contain profanity, the unit has the right to delete the comment or post. Please contact the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office if there are questions concerning profanity.

**\*For more best practices and platform information, please refer to the Murray State University Social Media Best Practices Handbook.**

### 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 specialist in the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office at 270-809-2798 or bbohannan@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 will be responsible for the social media content, even if a student or another employee is assisting in managing the account.

**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, relevant and accurate. The social media specialist in the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office 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. Do not create additional accounts for your unit or organization without approval from the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office.

**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 the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office.

**Link back to the university:** Whenever possible, link back to Murray State websites, accounts or information. Ideally, posts should be brief and redirect 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 Murray State University's news site, The Blue & Gold (msubblueandgold.org), instead of another 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](http://www.murraystate.edu/connect).

#### Courses of Action

For accounts not registered using the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office registration form, those accounts will be reported to the platform for removal.

For accounts registered with the Branding, Marketing and Communication Office that go against the policies and guidelines listed above, the administrators will be contacted and asked to change information and conform to the standard uses and policies. The social media specialist 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 (wrongly representing the university or slandering the university) or inactive accounts, they will be reported to the platform for deactivation.

#### Contact Information

For more information about this policy, please contact Bailey Bohannon, social media specialist, at 270-809-2798.