

# Social Media at UNCW

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set forth guidelines and best-practices for the establishment, participation and presence of UNCW units on social media networks, including, but not limited to, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds or any other social media community, administered by UNCW staff and/or faculty and representing a campus unit in an official capacity.

These guidelines help UNCW effectively promote and protect the university and assist campus units in creating and managing their respective departmental/unit accounts.

Note: These guidelines do not apply to non-university or personal social media accounts. (See the disclaimer language on page 5.)

All views and comments posted by users are the responsibility of the account administrator. UNCW students, faculty and staff acting in an individual capacity should exercise caution in their social media communications and clearly express that they are not acting in a representative capacity for the university nor expressing the views held by the university.

## Introduction

Standards for effective social media usage will evolve as technology and innovation change. The Office of University Relations (OUR) has developed the following overview of resources and information related to university social media accounts.

1. Types of UNCW social media accounts
2. UNCW policies and guidelines affecting social media
3. Frequently asked questions
4. Social media strategy development
5. Social media best practices
6. UNCW social media directory

## 1. Types of UNCW Social Media Accounts

There are four types of university-related social media accounts:

### **Institutional accounts:**

These represent the official university social media communication venues. Such sites are created and managed by OUR administrators. No additional administrators outside OUR can be added without the (written) permission of the chief communications officer or his/her designee.

**University-recognized departmental/unit accounts:**

These represent official university units and have full-time university employees assigned to administer the account. University units associated with a recognized account are responsible for the content, and it is the responsibility of the account administrator to oversee the content and dialogue.

**Student organization accounts:**

These represent student organizations that are affiliated with the university and/or choose to incorporate the university's visual identity standards in their social media venue. They are required to fully comply with the university's social media guidelines and visual identity standards.

**Unaffiliated accounts:**

These represent groups of users with a common interest and identification with the university, such as incoming freshmen who may create a Facebook group to establish connections prior to attending UNCW, a residence hall grouping (Smith Hall Breakfast Club), etc.

**Procedures and Guidelines for University-Recognized Accounts:**

University-recognized social media accounts are listed publically at [uncw.edu/ur/socialmedia/directory](http://uncw.edu/ur/socialmedia/directory). This access allows users to network with other departments and organizations using social media tools and to leverage UNCW's brand among recognized accounts. It also allows for a smooth transition among site administrators and gives unit leadership appropriate oversight in managing their university recognized site.

To become a university-recognized social media account, complete the form at [selectsurvey.uncw.edu/selectsurveyenet//TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=743Inml1](http://selectsurvey.uncw.edu/selectsurveyenet//TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=743Inml1)

All applications for university-registered social media accounts are required to request graphics assistance from OUR. If no graphic assistance is needed, departments/units must submit the profile image for each account to OUR during the registration process to ensure that UNCW branding standards are upheld.

All social media accounts recognized by UNCW must have at least two UNCW employees as administrators, preferably including the department chair or unit head, at all times to ensure adherence to these guidelines. When an account administrator leaves the university or no longer wishes to be an account administrator, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to designate another UNCW employee to be the account administrator and update the site's registration. If there are any problems in identifying an administrator or deleting a social media account, contact OUR.

It is strongly recommended that each university-recognized departmental/unit account include this disclaimer regarding content and opinions contained on the site: “The views expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of North Carolina Wilmington.”

The university reserves the right to remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including, but not limited to, content that is deemed threatening, obscene, in violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise inappropriate, offensive, injurious or illegal. Administrators and department chairs or unit heads are responsible for managing and monitoring the content of their respective social media accounts, including the removal of content that may violate the social media’s respective terms and conditions. The request for removal of such material may be made at the direction of a department head, dean, vice chancellor, chief communications officer or designee. The chief communications officer or his/her designee is responsible for administering these guidelines. OUR staff manages the day-to-day application process, updates the official university social media directory as needed and is available to provide input and assistance in university outreach and training on these guidelines and best practices.

## **2. UNCW Policies and Guidelines Affecting Social Media**

University representatives using social media should consult the following before opening a social media account.

- Confidentiality and Privacy
  - [uncw.edu/generalcounsel/LTFERPA.html](http://uncw.edu/generalcounsel/LTFERPA.html)
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act: FERPA is federal legislation that restricts the type of information that universities can release about a student’s education record. Information that is considered to be "directory information" can be released. "Directory information" includes information contained in the education records of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Typically, "directory information" includes information such as name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and dates of attendance.
  - [ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa](http://ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa)
- University Logos
  - [uncw.edu/licensing/logos.html](http://uncw.edu/licensing/logos.html)
- University Photos
  - [www.uncw.edu/ur/photography](http://www.uncw.edu/ur/photography)

- Responsible Use of Electronic Resources (PDF)
  - [uncw.edu/policies/documents/07.100\\_Resp\\_Use\\_of\\_Elec\\_Resources0807.pdf](http://uncw.edu/policies/documents/07.100_Resp_Use_of_Elec_Resources0807.pdf)
- Brand Identity Guide
  - [uncw.edu/ur/big](http://uncw.edu/ur/big)
- Copyright, Intellectual Property and Disclaimers
  - [uncw.edu/generalcounsel/LTcopyright.html](http://uncw.edu/generalcounsel/LTcopyright.html)
- Web Standards
  - [uncw.edu/web](http://uncw.edu/web)
- Harassment
  - [uncw.edu/titleix](http://uncw.edu/titleix)

### 3. Frequently Asked Questions

#### ***What are the benefits of having a UNCW-registered social media site?***

- It will be listed on the UNCW Social Media Directory, which is aimed at driving users to your account.
- It will receive a legal disclaimer that states it is a UNCW-recognized account.
- It will be connected to UNCW's main profiles on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.
- You will have access to university-created and approved icons and social media designs that can be used and adapted for individual schools, colleges and programs.
- You will have access to time-sensitive information in the event that community-wide communication is required, such as emergency information.

#### ***Who should apply to register?***

Any UNCW college, department, group or program wanting to maintain a social media presence with a university affiliation. At least one UNCW employee must be registered as the account administrator for the purpose of identifying the accounts' point person and to provide continuity. As a best-practices suggestion, OUR recommends two staff members have access to the social media account(s). It is recommended that the UNCW employee who intends to serve as one of the account's administrators complete and submit the online application.

***How long does it take to become recognized by UNCW?***

2-3 business days

***Should existing social media accounts be registered with the university?***

Yes. In order to be officially recognized by the university, an account must be registered using the form at:

<https://selectsurvey.uncw.edu/SelectSurveyNET//TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=92007o3K#>

***Does UNCW's social media policy apply to my personal accounts on Facebook, Twitter, etc.?***

No. The guidelines only apply to accounts that represent the university in an official capacity. As with any public forum, university employees are responsible for their statements.

As protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and by the N.C. Constitution, Sec. 14, Freedom of Speech and Press, each member of the university community has the right to freely express his/her views on any subject. However, in exercising these rights, the resources of the university cannot be used. Engagement in personal social media activities by university employees should be conducted independently of their university employment and at times when such activity does not interfere with employment obligations to the university.

OUR recommends employees use their best judgments and suggested best practices in using social media sites and follow the terms of use set forth by the respective user agreements governing usage of each social media sites.

#### **4. Social Media Strategy Development**

- Find the right people. Your account is only as good as the people responsible for populating, maintaining and monitoring your social media presence. Do they have skills and time? List the team members. Which permanent employee(s), preferably two individuals, will be ultimately responsible for the accounts upkeep? Avoid relying only on students.
- Identify measureable goals. Why do you want the account? What do you hope to accomplish? Do you want to launch a campaign, advertise an event, promote your department or communicate externally or internally?

- Identify your audiences. With whom do you want to communicate? Donors? Alumni? Supporters? Other? Target your groups and prioritize them. What behavior change do you want as a result of interacting with your social media account?
- Content matters. Do you have the right content and the right quantity of content to elicit a conversation with the audience you want. What will be the content that will drive the conversation? Who will be the content provider?
- Engage, stick around, come back for more. Social media is all about conversations, not monologues. What is the writing style with your social media venue? Conversational? Phrases? Text messaging? AP style? Base it upon the venue, subject matter and most importantly, your audience. Remember, it's not about you. Ask questions to elicit a dialogue.
- Include social media accounts in other marketing venues. Define your goal and list promotions tactics, for example, "We will list our Facebook URL on all print materials and our website."
- Define and measure your success. What do you hope to gain? How will you know when you have it? Is it to increase website traffic? To have a more energetic interaction with prospective students? Reach out to new colleagues internally and externally? Define your success, how you'll measure it and what are the tools to measure it, such as Google Analytics?
- Conduct an evaluation. Evaluate your account(s) based on the above plan. Remember, social media is not a project with an end date. It's an ongoing effort. Tweak as you go. Regular evaluation with a scheduled timeline also should be part of your effort.

## **5. Best Practices**

- Employees are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct online as they would in the workplace. Laws and policies regarding contracts and conflict of interest, as well as policies and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors and other university constituents apply in a social media context just as they would with professional and personal interests. Employees are fully responsible for what they post to the university-recognized social media sites.
- Representing a personal opinion and leaving the impression that the opinion is endorsed by the university or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. University name or marks may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, personal business, cause or political candidate.

- While the university is committed to the protection of academic freedom, it does not regularly review content posted to social media sites. The university retains the right to remove content on institutional university-recognized social media, for any lawful reason, including, but not limited to, content that is deemed threatening, obscene, in violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise inappropriate, offensive, injurious or illegal.
- Be transparent. Be honest about your identity. If you are authorized by your supervisor to represent UNCW in social media, say so. The keys to success in social media are being honest about who you are, being thoughtful before you post and respecting the purpose of the community where you are posting. In December 2009, the Federal Trade Commission implemented regulations requiring bloggers and those who write online reviews to reveal if they have been compensated in any way—a free copy of a book, dinner, complimentary admission—or have a relationship to a company, product or service they review. Already a "best practice" for most bloggers, such disclosure is now being enforced and should be a consideration for any social media posts.
- Be accurate. Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible. If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly. This will earn you respect in the online community.
- Be respectful. You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your opinions if you are constructive and respectful.
- Consider your audiences. Social media often span traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Use privacy settings to restrict personal information on otherwise public sites. Choose profile photos and avatars carefully. Be thoughtful about the type of photos you upload.
- Think before you post. Search engines can turn up posts years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if a post is deleted.
- Maintain confidentiality. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the university, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies and federal requirements, such as FERPA.

If you discuss a situation involving individuals on a social media site, be sure they cannot be identified. As a guideline, don't post anything that you would not present at a conference.

- Respect university time and property. University computers and your work time are to be used for university-related business. It's appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. You should maintain your personal sites on your own time, using non-UNCW computers.
- Follow the terms of service and conditions of your chosen accounts.

## **7. UNCW Social Media Directory**

A webpage to showcase the social media accounts of UNCW-affiliated groups is located at [uncw.edu/ur/socialmedia/directory](http://uncw.edu/ur/socialmedia/directory).

Contact our@uncw.edu to have links to your social media accounts added.