



Social Media Policy

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General Description

Policy Summary:

This Social Media Policy includes legal information you need to know, along with supplementary tips to aid your success. This is a living document which will be updated from time to time as the social media landscape continues to shift. Please contact Marketing Communications, at marketing@trinity.edu with any feedback.

Purpose:

At Trinity University, we encourage our students and employees to embrace social media sites as easy-access venues for streamlining processes and enriching communications and engagement.

While we are excited about these resources, we want to make sure that you - our social media users - are aware of your rights and boundaries.

Exceptions:

None

Policy Content

TU Employees who maintain TU social media sites

Legal

Follow all applicable state, federal, and University laws, faculty and staff handbooks, regulations, and policies, such as FERPA, HIPAA, and NCAA Regulations. Any content and/or online activity created by a poster or site moderator that violates these ordinances, or contains/leads to the release of a student's private personal information is strictly prohibited and should be removed.

Protect confidential information with privacy laws, especially FERPA: "The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a

Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education." ([read more](#)).

If you are an employee of Trinity University or provide work for Trinity University, do not engage in any conversations or post any information regarding student records. Some examples of student records include names, admission status, GPA, Social Security number, and any/all other information that would be covered by FERPA. If students request help, you can direct them to a more secure discussion platform, such as phone, or email.

Protect confidential medical records, as specified by [HIPAA](#): "The Privacy Rule protects all "individually identifiable health information" held or transmitted by a covered entity or its business associate, in any form or media, whether electronic, paper, or oral." Examples of protected information include: "...the individual's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, the provision of health care to the individual, or, the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe can be used to identify the individual." [See more regarding HIPAA.](#)

The world of social media has changed the face of communication and recruiting in collegiate sports and all TU employees are asked to abide by NCAA regulations when interacting and communicating on social media platforms.

The University does not endorse or use any social network internet communication service or media sharing service as a secure means of communication for online business transactions or matters involving personal information. The University will not ask for, nor should an individual send, credit card or payment information, classified information, privileged information, private information or information subject to nondisclosure agreements via any social network internet communication service.

Do not engage in personal affairs under the guise of your TU entity's social site.

If there is a filter option for comments, disable it or set it to the lowest possible setting.

If there is an option to add information on your site, please add this disclaimer: "All content posted here does not necessarily reflect the views/opinions of the University."

If you photograph an individual, who is not part of the Trinity community, with the intent to publish that photo on a social media site, you need to have your subject sign a [release form](#) before you post the photo. If the individual is in the background and not recognizable, a release form does not need to be obtained. If, however, individuals are

recognizable, and not part of the Trinity community, discretion is advised.

Regarding the posting of faculty and staff pictures in TU publications or mediums, it is recommended to exercise proper judgment and discretion in determining whether to post such pictures and to seek permission in any instance where faculty or staff would have some expectation of privacy. For example, group shots of University employees at University events should be fine. For the posting of employee pictures online, it is suggested, but not mandatory, to ask for permission. This can be done in writing, by email, or with the standard TU photo [release form](#). The key is to be respectful of employees' privacy considerations.

Respect copyright law. "Copyright, a form of intellectual property law, protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture. Copyright does not protect facts, ideas, systems, or methods of operation, although it may protect the way these things are expressed." Also see copyright policy information on the University [website](#).

Fair use allows portions of certain works to be used without consent under specific situations however, "The safest course is always to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material."

Utilize available graphics to reinforce the University brand. Do not abuse logos. Your social media icon/profile image for your entity should comply with the TU branding standards. It should either be a photograph related to your entity, an approved logo for your entity, or another appropriately branded image. Logos and brand colors can be found [here](#).

TU employees who have authority to update TU social media sites should not post personal information or personal updates to TU social media sites.

Employees must adhere to regular employee policies and standards of conduct. You can review information related to faculty and staff [here](#).

Obey the terms of use for your social media platform. These rules are constantly changing so it is your duty to stay up to date. Here are links to policies for some of the more popular platforms:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Google+](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

- [Flickr](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Wordpress](#)
- [Blogger](#)
- [Snapchat](#)
- [Pinterest](#)
- [Foursquare](#)
- [Tumblr](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Please understand that by posting content to third party applications such as social media sites, you are almost always releasing ownership rights to and control of that content. For this reason we ask that you do not share any restricted-use photos to which you may have access. If you are a faculty member using social media as a means of communicating information to your students, consider it a supplementary form of communication and not the primary form of communication.

Advised

You are encouraged to link to your source material any time you are able. This will help reduce the possibility of misinformation (and it will also drive traffic to your post).

Protect your own privacy online by adjusting your privacy settings and publishing your updates only to the audiences with whom you wish to share your status.

Think about the content you are about to post and double check everything, with special attention to accuracy, spelling, and grammar. Think about the value of the content and consider whether or not it may potentially malign or polarize any person or group.

Be respectful. If an audience member posts a comment to your site that upsets you, give yourself some time to cool down before responding. Display good sportsmanship; do not malign others. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

If you are maintaining a personal site that does not serve the purpose of representing or promoting the University, then it is recommended that you add this phrase somewhere on your site: "Views expressed here are my own, and do not necessarily reflect those of my employer." Respond to comments, posts, mentions, and other interactions in a timely manner and with accurate information.

It is also desirable that all photos be edited to the following specifications: 72dpi resolution and 800x600 pixels in size (or 612x612 for square images). For those in need

of basic training on how to do this, please contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu.

It is recommended that you review your site's effectiveness once a month. This will help you understand how you can improve your communications to provide your audience with content they want. This in turn will help you grow your audience. Many social media sites come equipped with native analytics, but there are also plenty of free tools out there that can help (i.e. [Google Analytics](#), [Hootsuite](#), [bit.ly](#), [TwitterCounter](#), [SumAll](#), [Rowfeeder](#)).

If you do not post items of value, your audience will stop listening. Give them content they can share and/or that will help them succeed. Give them opportunities to flaunt their creativity or to do something fun. Every time you share a new post, ask yourself, "Would I find this valuable?" Also try to keep your language casual but professional. Ask yourself, "Would I speak to a friend like this?" It is also beneficial to cross-promote content when you can, e.g., re-share relevant content on Facebook, retweet on Twitter, etc. It does not always need to be content you generate. You can promote other interesting content to bring value to your audience.

Maintaining your site

Somewhere on your site, it is encouraged that your audience should have a way to privately contact the site administrator. If this is not a built-in feature of the site you are maintaining, then you are encouraged to list or embed email contact information somewhere on your site. On Facebook you can do this by editing your page settings under the "features" section to show the featured page author. On Twitter you can embed this information in the custom background image. Contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu with questions or comments.

Strategize. Social media can be exciting, but you should not jump in without a plan.

It is critical to offer value through to your audience, which will in term increase your number of followers in your network. With content shared, it is important to assign credit. Just like a bibliography in a school report, you want to give your audience a place to check the validity of the information you are sharing.

Reinforce the University [voice and brand](#). Help us build our reputation as an important and well known university.

All sites must have at least 2 administrators, to ensure that there is a fail-safe in case the primary administrator becomes unavailable in an emergency situation. If desired, you can request that the TU Social Media Manager be listed as your secondary admin. Please contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu for more information or

to discuss how to meet this requirement for your site.

TU Employees who maintain personal social media sites

Legal

Follow all applicable state, federal, and University laws, faculty and staff handbooks, regulations, and policies, such as FERPA, HIPAA, and NCAA Regulations. Any content and/or online activity created by a poster or site moderator that violates these ordinances, or contains/leads to the release of a student's private personal information is strictly prohibited and should be removed.

Do not divulge any confidential information you have access to as a TU employee (e.g., student information).

If you are an employee of Trinity University or provide work for Trinity University, do not engage in any conversations or post any information regarding student records. Some examples of student records include names, admission status, GPA, Social Security number, PeopleSoft number, and any/all other information that would be covered by FERPA. If students request help, you can direct them to a secure discussion platform, such as phone, or email.

Protect confidential medical records, as specified by [HIPAA](#): "The Privacy Rule protects all "individually identifiable health information" held or transmitted by a covered entity or its business associate, in any form or media, whether electronic, paper, or oral." Examples of protected information include: "...the individual's past, present or future physical or mental health or condition, the provision of health care to the individual, or, the past, present, or future payment for the provision of health care to the individual, and that identifies the individual or for which there is a reasonable basis to believe can be used to identify the individual." [See more regarding HIPPA.](#)

The world of social media has changed the face of communication and recruiting in collegiate sports and all TU employees are asked to abide by NCAA regulations when interacting and communicating on social media platforms. In addition, we ask that all employees refrain from contacting (Tweeting and friending on Facebook) prospective student-athletes on social media until after they have signed a National Letter of Intent with the school.

The University does not endorse or use any social network Internet communication service or media sharing service as a secure means of communication for online business transactions or matters involving personal information. The University will not ask for, nor should an individual send, credit card or payment information, classified information, privileged information, private information or information subject to

nondisclosure agreements via any social network internet communication service.

Respect copyright law. "Copyright, a form of intellectual property law, protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture. Copyright does not protect facts, ideas, systems, or methods of operation, although it may protect the way these things are expressed." Also see copyright policy on the University [website](#).

Fair use allows portions of certain works to be used without consent under specific situations, however, "The safest course is always to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material."

Obey the terms of use for your social media platform, and comply with applicable University policies, and applicable laws. The social media platforms terms of use are constantly changing so it is your duty to stay up to date. Here are links to policies for some of the more popular platforms:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Google+](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Flickr](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Wordpress](#)
- [Blogger](#)
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- [Tumblr](#)
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Advised

Protect your own privacy online by adjusting your privacy settings and publishing your updates only to the audiences with whom you wish to share your status.

If you are maintaining a personal site that does not serve the purpose of representing or promoting the University, then it is recommended that you add this phrase somewhere on your site: Views expressed here are my own, and do not necessarily reflect those of my employer.

TU Students who maintain TU social media sites

Legal

Respect copyright law. "Copyright, a form of intellectual property law, protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture. Copyright does not protect facts, ideas, systems, or methods of operation, although it may protect the way these things are expressed." Also see copyright policy on the University [website](#).

Fair use allows portions of certain works to be used without consent under specific situations, however, "The safest course is always to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material."

Utilize available graphics to reinforce the University brand. Do not abuse logos. Logos and brand colors can be found [here](#).

Adhere to the [student conduct policies](#). Please review.

Obey the terms of use for your social media platform. These rules are constantly changing so it is your duty to stay up to date. Here are links to policies for some of the more popular platforms:

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- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Flickr](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)
- [Wordpress](#)
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Please understand that by posting content to third party applications such as social media sites, you are almost always releasing ownership rights to and control of that content. For this reason we ask that you do not share any restricted-use photos to which you may have access.

Advised

You are encouraged to link to your source material any time you are able. This will help reduce the possibility of misinformation and it will also drive traffic.

Think twice about the content you are about to post and double check everything, with special attention to accuracy, spelling, and grammar. Think twice about the value of the content and consider whether or not it may potentially malign or polarize any person or group.

Be respectful. If an audience member posts a comment to your site that upsets you, give yourself some time to cool down before responding. Display good sportsmanship; do not malign your rivals. Treat others as you would like to be treated.

It is also recommended that all photos be edited to the following specifications: 72dpi resolution and 800x600 pixels in size (or 612x612 for square images). For those in need of basic training on how to do this, please contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu.

Respond to comments, posts, mentions, and other interactions in a timely manner and with accurate information. Build relationships with other student administrators of social media sites who will be able to help you answer questions quickly and accurately.

It is recommended that you review your site's effectiveness once a month. This will help you understand how you can improve your communications to provide your audience with content that they want. This in turn will help you grow your audience. Many social media sites come equipped with native analytics, but there are also plenty of free tools out there that can help (i.e. [Google Analytics](#), [Hootsuite](#), [bit.ly](#), [TwitterCounter](#), [SumAll](#), [Rowfeeder](#)).

If you do not post items of value, your audience will stop listening. Give them content they can share and/or that will help them succeed. Give them opportunities to flaunt their creativity, or to do something fun. Every time you share a new post, ask yourself, "Would I find this valuable?" Also try to keep your language casual. Ask yourself, "Would I speak to a friend like this?" It is also beneficial to cross-promote content when you can, e.g., re-share relevant content on Facebook, retweet on Twitter, etc. It does not always need to be content you generate. You can promote other interesting content to bring value to your audience.

Maintaining your site

Somewhere on your site, you should include a way for your audience members to

privately contact the site administrator. On Facebook you can do this by editing your page settings under the "features" section to show the featured page author, or you can use the built-in Facebook inbox. On Twitter you can embed this information in the custom header image. Contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu with questions or comments.

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- [Wordpress](#)
- [Blogger](#)
- [Snapchat](#)

- [Pinterest](#)
- [Foursquare](#)
- [Tumblr](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Popular social media platform how-to and best practice guides

- [Twitter Guide](#)
- [Facebook Guide](#)
- [Google+ Cheat Sheet](#)
- [LinkedIn Groups - Overview](#)
- [Creating Your First LinkedIn Groups \(Video\)](#)
- [22 Great Tips for Enhancing Your LinkedIn Profile](#)
- [About YouTube](#)
- [Flickr Tour](#)
- [Contributing to Wikipedia](#)
- [Instagram for Business](#)
- [Instagram Hashtags](#)
- [Tumblr Quick Guide](#)
- [Pinterest Best Practices](#)

Disclaimer:

This Social Media Policy does not apply to social media advertisements (ads on social media sites promoting your entity, or ads promoting your entity's social media sites). For additional information or questions regarding social media, please contact Marketing Communications at marketing@trinity.edu.

Revision Management

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Vice President Approval:

Enter Vice President(s) that are responsible for approving this document

Name:	Title:
Tess Coody-Anders	Vice President for Strategic Communications & Marketing