

Lake Superior State University recognizes the importance of utilizing social media to promote the achievements of our students, faculty, and staff, as well as the natural environment and resources in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Through this policy we seek to provide guidance, procedures, and best practices to safeguard the ethical utilization of social media in our academic setting.

POLICY:

SECTION 1: POLICIES FOR ALL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

When disseminating information on social media platforms:

- **Protect confidential, personal, and proprietary information:** Refrain from posting confidential information about Lake Superior State University, students, employees, or alumni. We must adhere to Federal requirements, such as FERPA and HIPAA. University policies and procedures regarding privacy and confidentiality must be followed.
- **Respect copyright and fair use:** Be mindful of copyright and intellectual property rights when posting. If in doubt as to whether materials are protected by copyright or intellectual property rights, do not post until the issue can be resolved.
- **Exercise caution when using the University, its logos, and its branding:** When utilizing the Lake Superior State University name, visual identity, logos, or branding, ensure that the communicated message aligns with LSSU's mission, vision, core values, and strategic plan. Present the content in a manner that highlights the education, activities, collaborations, and achievements of LSSU students, alumni, faculty, and staff as opposed to an endorsement of an outside product or entity.
- **Do not make posts that may be offensive based on protected characteristics:** Posts must be mindful of the University's commitment to non-discrimination/non-harassment based on protected characteristics. University policies against discrimination and harassment apply to social media posts.
- **Do not use personal social media in a way that may imply that it is a post on behalf of the University:** Using social media to promote LSSU initiatives, programs, and events is encouraged. While doing so, keep personal political views separate from University promotions. The University disavows any political opinions or activities that do not align with LSSU's mission. Direct communication of new information, especially announcements intended for public dissemination, should be initiated through official University channels. This includes updates related to programs, events, news, or any other University-related content. Please contact the marketing department for assistance with these needs (marketing@lssu.edu).

SECTION 2: INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA APPROVAL AND CONTINUITY

This section applies to the development of social media presences that represent an official University department, unit or group.

- Secure the approval of your department head, manager, or the Dean of Student Affairs prior to establishing a social media presence. Your request for approval should include:
 - Media platform being used (Facebook, X, etc.).
 - Title of your page or account (and official university department, unit or group if different from the title).
 - Primary faculty or staff member responsible for the page and for the continuity of access.
 - Secondary faculty or staff member(s) responsible for the page and for the continuity of access.
 - A plan for maintaining future access to the above information, full-resolution images, graphics, and files (e.g. shared Google or University drive).
- Forward the above plan and approval to the University Marketing team at marketing@lssu.edu.

SECTION 3: BEST PRACTICES

This section applies for any posting on behalf of an official university department, unit or group, but the guidelines may be helpful for anyone posting on social media.

- **Exercise caution prior to sharing content:** Privacy is virtually non-existent within the realm of social media. Ponder the potential ramifications of your posts should they gain wide visibility, and contemplate how they may reflect upon both your personal image and the reputation of the university. It is crucial to recognize that search engines can unearth past posts, and comments can be readily shared or duplicated.
- **Be respectful:** Consider that any content contributed to a social media site can encourage comments or discussion of opposing viewpoints. Responses should be considered very carefully in light of how they may reflect on you and the university. In some cases the best practice is to not engage and instead the moderators should reserve the right to delete comments that violate FERPA or HIPAA, are a means of phishing, and/or are a form of cyberbullying or online harassment.
- **Consider and grow your audience:** Each social media platform has unique norms and demographics. Consider your audience when building content. When appropriate, link back to the primary university social media accounts and/or use hashtags that grow the reach of the site.