Nova Southeastern University: Institutional Social Media Policy

At Nova Southeastern University, we realize social media is a powerful communication tool that enables open discussion and learning between NSU and our many constituents. It also has a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. Because it blurs the lines between personal voice and institutional voice, NSU has created a university-wide Social Media Policy to assist in clarifying and help improve personal and professional reputations when engaging in social media.

Social media can be defined as online media or content designed to be shared and discussed through social interactions. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Foursquare, Flickr, and MySpace.

NSU supports the use of social media by employees to connect with students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, fans, colleagues, and more. This guide offers information about how to manage an online presence safely and within university guidelines.

Employees need to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media, and other university constituents apply to online social media accounts as they do in the real world. As with everything, we are guided by our eight core values. Employees are liable for anything they post to social media sites.

Social media tools, uses and challenges are changing rapidly and NSU will continue to monitor strategies and best practices for using these media. As a result, this guide will continue to evolve. Please send suggestions or questions to social@nova.edu.

Section 1: Policies for all Social Media Sites, Including Personal Sites

- **Notify the university:** All departments or university units that have a social media page or would like to start one must contact social@nova.edu. By doing this, you are making NSU aware of any social media profiles that exist on behalf of the university. You can request a custom profile image and add your official social media pages to the NSU Social Media Chart. Units that are unsure who to contact or do not have a marketing manager should read NSU's Brand Standards pages so that all institutional social media sites coordinate with other NSU sites and their content. All NSU social media pages must have a designated employee will be responsible for the content.

- **Protect confidential and proprietary information:** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about NSU, students, employees, or alumni. Employees must still follow the applicable federal requirements such as FERPA and HIPAA, as well as NCAA regulations. Be sure to adhere to all applicable university privacy and confidentiality policies. Employees who share confidential information do so at the risk of disciplinary action or termination.
Respect copyright and fair use: When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the university. For guidance, consult NSU’s IZone.

Don't use NSU logos for endorsements: Do not use the NSU logo or any other university images or iconography on personal social media sites. Do not use NSU’s name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate. If you want to use the NSU logo for an official NSU social media page, please refer to our Social Media Best Practices page. Contact the Office of Publications for any questions related to using the NSU logo.

Respect university time and property: University computers, equipment, and time on the job are reserved for university-related business as approved by supervisors or advisers and in accordance with NSU's Acceptable Use of Computing Resources.

Terms of service: Be sure to follow the Terms of Service for all social media platforms employed.

Section 2: 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.

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

Think twice before posting: Assume any online posting could at some point become public information. As privacy settings change, search engines such as Google can turn up posts years after they are created. Private comments and emails can be forwarded or copied. If you wouldn't say it in the workplace or to a co-worker or supervisor, 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 social@nova.edu.

Strive for accuracy: Make sure you get the facts and strive for accuracy before posting on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important if posting on behalf of the university in any capacity. (See "Institutional social media" below.)

Be respectful: Realize that any content has the potential to have discussion or opposing views. Before you post a reply, reflect on the poster and/or the university and its institutional voice.

On personal websites, identify your views as your own. If you identify yourself as NSU faculty or staff member on your personal social media sites, it should be clear that the views expressed are not necessarily those of NSU.

NSU will not tolerate content that infringes on proprietary information, or that is pornographic, libelous, defamatory, harassing, or inhospitable to a reasonable work environment. We will not pre-screen content, but reserve the right to remove any content that is considered to violate content policies.
Photography: Any photographs posted on social media sites can become shareable. If you want to protect your images, consider adding a watermark and reducing the resolution.

Section 3: Institutional Social Media

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

- **Acknowledge who you are:** If you are representing NSU when posting on any social media site, be sure to acknowledge this.

- **Have a plan:** Departments should consider your content, audiences or fans, and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media sites up-to-date. Please see our Brand Standards, Getting Started, and Best Practices web pages.

- **Link back to the university:** Whenever possible, link back to the Nova Southeastern University website. Ideally, posts should be very brief, redirecting a visitor to content that resides within the NSU webspace. When linking to a news article about NSU, check first to see whether you can link to a release on the NSU News Center (www.nsunews.nova.edu) instead of to a publication or other media outlet.

- **Protect the institutional voice:** Posts on social media sites should protect the university’s institutional voice and image by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. No individual NSU unit should construe its social media site or audience to believe it's 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.

Nova Southeastern University also has created a Web page with advice and recommendations for posting to specific popular social media sites. Refer to NSU’s Brand Standards webpage for more information.