

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Basis for Policy

The University of Nebraska Medical Center shall support the use of social media - tools such as blogs, wikis, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and the like - as a communications platform to connect with patients, students, colleagues, alumni and friends. Because many community members use these platforms in both their personal and professional lives, it is important to distinguish proper use of these tools as a member of UNMC.

These guidelines are meant to permit appropriate use of social media while prohibiting conduct through social media that is illegal or against UNMC policy or professional standards.

Purpose

To help students, faculty and staff understand how UNMC policies apply to social media (including blogs, wikis, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, social networks, social collaboration tools, text messages, etc.).

Authorities and Administration

The UNMC Strategic Communications Executive Director is responsible for the administration, implementation and maintenance of the Social Media Policy at the campus level, in consultation with the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance and the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and the Privacy Officer.

Scope

The UNMC Social Media Policy applies to all individuals including faculty, employees, students, volunteers, appointees, etc. This policy applies to all forms of social media, multimedia, wikis and blogs of a personal and professional nature, including the most widely-used platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, etc.), as well as those not in existence at the time this policy was developed.

These guidelines apply to employees outside of work hours, even while using personal accounts when use of social media affects an individual's responsibility as a member of the UNMC community as further explained in the last section of these guidelines.

Users of UNMC computing resources should be aware that such use is not private and may be monitored in accordance with UNMC Policy No. 6045, Privacy, Confidentiality and Security of Patient and Proprietary Information (<https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Privacy/Confidentiality/>) and UNMC Policy No. 6051, Computer Use and Electronic Information Security (https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Computer_Use/Electronic_Information/).

Codes of Conduct

Social media activities of members of the University community must be consistent with all codes of conduct.

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom, as noted in the UNMC Faculty Handbook, does not remove from faculty the responsibility of adhering to the UNMC Social Media Policy.

Concerted Activity

UNMC employees may use their personal social media accounts for purposes of self-organization or to form, join, or assist labor organizations or to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection. These activities are protected only as long as they do not violate any other provisions of this policy or other applicable policies, laws or regulations.

Confidentiality of Student, Applicant and Alumni Records

Federal laws (including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, [FERPA]), Nebraska law, and University of Nebraska policies governing the confidentiality of student, alumni and applicant records apply to social media use. Information from student, alumni or application records (including but not limited to academic records, disciplinary records, correspondence through e-mail or other means, or (with limited exceptions) any other records individually identifying students of or applicants to the University of Nebraska Medical Center) should never be released via social media without the written approval of the Student Affairs Officer.

Confidentiality of Employee Records

Records including but not limited to employment records, disciplinary records, correspondence through e-mail or other means, or with limited exceptions, any other records individually identifying employees of, or applicants to, the University of Nebraska Medical Center should never be released via social media without express written approval of the Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources.

Patient Privacy

Use of social media, even in a personal capacity, must comply with state and federal laws concerning patient information, including but not limited to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). For a general overview of HIPAA, please visit <http://www.unmc.edu/hipaa> (<http://www.unmc.edu/hipaa/>).

Protected health information may not be released by faculty, employees, or students on a social media site unless that patient (or patient's parent/guardian) signs an Authorization For Release of Information form.

University of Nebraska Medical Center personnel may not reveal patients' health information or describe patient care events, even if patient names or other identifying information are not used on social media sites

unless the patient or patient's parent/guardian has signed authorization specifically authorizing the individual to release the information broadly. Contact The Nebraska Medical Center Health Information Management Department for an Authorization form.

Research and Intellectual Property

Releasing unpublished research data or unprotected intellectual property would impair its protection and may violate University of Nebraska and UNMC policies. In keeping with the University of Nebraska's Regents Policy 4.4.1: Intellectual Property Policy, subsection 3.2: (http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1013&context=ir_information)

- "It is essential, however, that Authors and/or Inventors understand that early publication of their patentable research results without notification to the University can compromise the University's patent rights in the research, and by implication, the Authors' and/or Inventors' royalty interest therein. Therefore, if an Author or Inventor wishes to publish research results which involve patentable subject matter, the Author or Inventor should first submit a patent disclosure to the University patent administrator and also disclose the existence of the pending publication so as to allow for the appropriate filings to preserve the University's patent rights."

Forms and permission to disclose intellectual property must be obtained through the Intellectual Property Office at 402-559-2468.

Misrepresentation

You may not portray yourself as acting on behalf of the University or any part of the University, or present a social media account as an official University account unless authorized to do so. Even when you act within your UNMC capacity, you may not represent your own positions and opinions as those of the University. When using social media in a personal capacity, you must take reasonable precautions to indicate you are engaging in the activity as a private person and not as an employee, agent, or spokesperson for UNMC.

Employees, including faculty, are free to disclose their relationship with UNMC; however, they must represent their opinions as their own and not the official position of UNMC.

Authorization

Authorization to present a social media account as an official University activity must come from the Department of Strategic Communications. Permission to use any UNMC service marks, trademarks or logos must be obtained from UNMC Strategic Communications. Information about the process of creating an account and a link to a request form are available on the UNMC Brand site (<https://brandwise.unmc.edu/unmc/social-media/>).

Inappropriate and Abusive Content

UNMC reserves the right to remove/delete comments from any of its social media networks that violate any of the above policies, those that

disparage any individual or organization and those that are abusive, offensive, defamatory, disruptive or inappropriate in nature.

Corrective Action

UNMC Community members who violate this policy may be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment or academic disciplinary action, including dismissal.

General Guidance

Beyond the restrictions of this policy, additional considerations to make prior to engaging in social media, include the following:

1. **Be mindful of your reputation:** While you may disclose information about yourself, you should exercise caution in doing so for your own protection. Once disclosed through social media, this information is often archived beyond University control and may be accessed indefinitely and in many contexts (e.g. actual and potential employers, professional licensure authorities, elections, current and future family) that you may not have contemplated at the time of the disclosure.
2. **Display respectful and professional behavior:** This extends not only to patients and colleagues, but also to business partners, government agencies, and competing institutions. Because social media is tied closely to work as well as personal interests, members of the community are advised to act as if they are always a representative of UNMC, through affiliation and actions, at and away from work.
3. **Communicate with accuracy, transparency and clarity:** Omissions and inaccuracies affect the reputation of both you and UNMC, and place both at risk of liability. Being transparent about intent builds confidence and keeps dealings with the public above-board.
4. **Write in the first person and indicate you are not speaking on UNMC's behalf:** UNMC's leaders, public relations team, and designated individuals are the official spokespeople of UNMC. Individuals keeping a blog, Facebook group, or other webpage should add a disclaimer of "The views expressed in this [blog, website, group, etc.] are my own and do not reflect the views of UNMC" to the footer or a page within the appropriate site to clarify their status.
5. **When commenting or posting personal views, use personal email address rather than unmc.edu address:** Distinguishing personal communication from professional is critical to good social media practice. Just as one wouldn't write a letter to a friend on UNMC letterhead, don't use a UNMC email address when communicating personal opinions.
6. **If your social media activities are inconsistent with UNMC's brand, mission, or message, you may not use UNMC-branded materials:** Community members' actions can and do impact our reputation. To prevent confusion between personal and professional materials, do not use any UNMC graphics, titles, usernames, or otherwise represent yourself as UNMC in any way in unofficial or personal social media activities without prior approval by the Department of Strategic Communications. Personal directory information - e.g. name, academic rank, unit, and contact information - are not restricted.
7. **Ensure social media activities do not interfere with your work commitments.**

8. **When in doubt, contact Strategic Communications:** Social media technologies are changing far faster than UNMC's policies are for managing them. If there is a question or concern about using social media, please contact UNMC Strategic Communications, 402-559-4353, or Strategic Communications (strategic-comms@unmc.edu).

Additional Information

- Department of Strategic Communications (strategic-comms@unmc.edu), 402-559-4353
- UNMC Policy No. 6045, Privacy, Confidentiality and Security of Patient and Proprietary Information (<https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Privacy/Confidentiality/>)
- UNMC Policy No. 6051, Computer Use and Electronic Information Security (https://wiki.unmc.edu/index.php/Computer_Use/Electronic_Information/)
- University of Nebraska's Regents Policy 4.4.1: Intellectual Property Policy, subsection 3.2: (http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1013&context=ir_information)

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