

SECTION: 01 GENERAL
SUBJECT: SOCIAL MEDIAL ACCOUNTS

Background: Lewis-Clark State College (LC State) recognizes the importance and benefits of communicating through social media. Social media is a powerful vehicle through which LC State can disseminate relevant news to its community, listen to voices and perceptions of LC State, connect with audiences online, and build goodwill. Social networks and other online media are great tools for engagement and two-way communication, but there is the potential for significant risks associated with inappropriate use. Existing legal responsibilities and college policies remain in place when LC State employees use social media for work purposes.

Point of Contact: Communications & Marketing

Other LC State offices directly involved with implementation of this policy or significantly affected by the policy: Sr. Vice President/Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for Finance & Administration, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dean of Professional Studies, Dean of Career Technical Education, Athletics, IT, College Advancement.

Date of approval by LC State authority: October 31, 2018

Date of State Board Approval: N/A

Date of Most Recent Review: May 2025

Summary of Major Changes incorporated in this revision to the policy: Updated language.

PURPOSE: This policy applies to LC State students, faculty and staff who speak on behalf of the college through social media. This includes anyone managing or contributing to a social media channel on behalf of a school, academic department, office or other official entity at the college. Social media channels can include blogs, wikis, social networks (e.g., Facebook, X, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.), and other media yet to be developed. This policy only applies to those individuals when they are posting on such official sites and/or when they otherwise speak as representative of the college.

This policy does **not** apply to other social media communications and postings that such individuals may make on personal social media sites so long as such communications do not indicate that the individual is speaking on behalf of LC State.

This is intended to be a living document, which will reflect Lewis-Clark State College's current needs and may adjust to future changes in social media.

POLICY:

1. Authorized Communications

Before creating any official social media account at Lewis-Clark State College, authorization must be granted by LC State's Director of Communications & Marketing. If applicable, the requesting department will discuss communications strategies specific to the department or

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discipline. The discussion will include tactics, goals, messaging and best practices. All official social media accounts at Lewis-Clark State College, with the name and contact information for the account manager, must be registered with the Office of Communication & Marketing. Users should only post on behalf of LC State or its affiliates in an official capacity where they have been explicitly authorized by their supervisor to do so. Users should only create an account in the name of a recognized LC State entity if they are authorized to represent that entity.

2. Confidentiality

Confidential or proprietary information about LC State, or LC State employees, students, affiliates, or alumni that would violate such persons' rights to privacy under applicable federal and state laws and regulations such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and other college policies should not be posted. Non-disclosure agreements that prohibit the college from disclosing information also bind its employees from disclosing such information.

3. Privacy

Information that should not be shared publicly should never be posted to any official social media channel. In particular, situations involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their knowledge or permission should not be published. This does not include photos from the LC State digital collections and archives or photos in which individuals are not clearly recognizable. Users should keep in mind that for reasons of privacy or security some students may not want it publicly known that they attend LC State. The sharing of Social Security numbers, addresses or other personally identifiable information (PII) is prohibited. It is important to note that whatever is shared on social media may be public for an indefinite period of time, even if attempts are made to modify or delete it.

4. Responsibility

Use of social media on an official LC State channel must be managed responsibly because it reflects on the college, its faculty, its students, its alumni, and its employees.

A. Emergencies and Crisis Situations: In the event of an emergency or crisis situation, managers of official LC State accounts are asked to share only official information provided by the main LC State social media accounts and shared in official college messages. Sharing information found online or not approved by LC State may lead to false or confusing information reaching the community and spreading online. Official accounts are also asked to delete or postpone any previously scheduled content during an emergency or crisis situation.

B. HIPAA/FERPA Violation: Social media account managers should take steps in advance to prevent the exposure of confidential medical or student information. Confidential information should never be posted online. Photos should also be inspected closely before publication to make sure no confidential, personal information, such as Social Security numbers, addresses, or academic records can be seen. Never publish a name or photo without that individual's permission.

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- C. **Other Users:** Other users, including student groups at LC State, may have different interests, attitudes and opinions than official LC State social media accounts. Before sharing content posted by others on official college channels, be careful that such content is accurate and reflects the college's position.
- D. **Fake Accounts:** Employees should never create fake social media accounts (i.e., an account that seems to be the work of a third party) or share false or misleading information through a college account.
- E. **Correcting Information:** If incorrect information is posted, whether intentionally or unintentionally, it should be corrected visibly and publicly as quickly as possible. Doing so will earn respect in the online community.

5. Transparency

To both protect the LC State name and build trust with users, social media such as blogs, Facebook pages, X feeds, etc. that are established on behalf of LC State entities should be explicit regarding the nature of the relationship of such media to LC State. Similarly, in keeping with LC State's nonprofit status, social media should not be used for any private business or financial transactions including revenue from advertising, nor should any staff with administrative responsibilities realize any personal monetary profit from LC State-related social media. Social media may be used for fundraising as long as a transaction does not occur on the social media platform itself.

Content shared via official LC State social media channels, as well as pages or accounts that these channels like or follow, should reflect the mission and values of Lewis-Clark State College. Official LC State accounts should refrain from posting content and liking or following users or pages that reflect personal interests or that may be in conflict with LC State's mission or values.

Official LC State accounts should encourage engagement and interaction with and among followers; however, they should reserve the right to remove content that is spam, commercial, obscene, harassing or derogatory. If the social network allows for it in the "Bio" or "About" section, official accounts should post a disclaimer similar to this:

"Third-party posts on this wall do not imply endorsement of that content by LC State. We reserve the right to remove content that is spam, commercial, obscene, harassing, and/or derogatory."

6. Use of the LC State Name

In addition to meeting the requirements set forth in the LC State Communications & Marketing Visual Identity Guide, there are unique challenges associated with using the LC State name in social media, such as the potential need to abbreviate a program or entity name.

- A. Be as clear as possible when naming social media accounts, while keeping in mind character limits. Avoid using acronyms that may not be universally recognized.

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- B. Approved naming conventions include Lewis-Clark State College, Lewis-Clark State, or LC State. Additional options require the written approval of the Director of Communications & Marketing.
- C. Use of the LC State seal as a profile photo on Facebook, X, or other social media account is not allowed. The Communications & Marketing office can supply custom avatar graphics and logos if requested.

7. Copyright

LC State official accounts must follow all policies related to copyright when posting intellectual property, including photos and videos, online.

- A. Materials posted online should be the property of LC State, in the public domain, have a Creative Commons license, or fall under fair use. For all other instances, one should seek permission from the copyright holder.
- B. Where possible, best practice is to include credit/attribution.

8. Terms of Service

Official social media accounts at Lewis-Clark State College must follow the Terms of Service set forth by the social media channels they are using Facebook, X, YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, Snapchat, Vimeo.

9. Best Practices

Lewis-Clark State College has created best-practices guidelines. Official channels should follow the best practices for each platform. In some cases, deviation from best practices is warranted, but failure to follow best practices to the detriment of the college may result in, but not be limited to, exclusion from official LC State social media lists or platforms, lack of promotion from the main Lewis-Clark State College channels, and possible deactivation or deletion of the offending account. Deactivation and deletion will be carried out by contacting and working with the Director of Communications & Marketing.

10. Inactive Accounts

Social media channels at Lewis-Clark State College must be continually updated and monitored. Accounts that have been inactive for more than one month may be subject to deactivation or deletion. Deactivation and deletion will be carried out by contacting and working with the Director of Communications & Marketing.

11. Accessibility

Lewis-Clark State College is committed to ensuring effective access to communications materials for all members of the college community, including individuals with disabilities.

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- A. Visually impaired individuals and those with other disabilities may confront significant barriers when accessing certain information through social media. Accordingly, individuals who maintain social media on behalf of the college should take steps to reduce barriers to access for individuals with disabilities. For example, enabling screen reader compatibility, captioning and descriptive tags on images can help reduce barriers to accessing information for individuals with disabilities. Most major social media platforms (including Facebook, YouTube and X) provide access solutions for individuals with disabilities, including application programming interfaces (API) that enable the creation of applications that enhance accessibility of content.
- B. It is important to keep in mind that APIs do not eliminate or resolve all accessibility challenges. For additional and more current resources on improving access to LC State-related social media and LC State websites for individuals with disabilities, please contact Accessibility Services.

12. Personnel Recruitment

While social media continues to evolve and develop as an effective tool for advertising jobs at the college and for recruiting candidates, it does not replace or otherwise eliminate the need to use the college's existing recruitment systems and processes for posting positions, collecting applications, conducting background checks, making offers of employment and other related activities. All official recruitment and hiring processes, including the offer of employment, may only be extended by processes coordinated with Human Resource Services, and may never be communicated through social media.

13. Administrative Discretion

For all questions and content related to social media but not directly covered within this policy document, the Office of Communications & Marketing serves as the college's primary resource and guiding authority.

Additionally, in the administration and management of Lewis-Clark State College's social media, the Office of Communications & Marketing, specifically the department director, reserves the right to deviate from and/or modify social media policies and best practices as needs arise. Because of the fluidity of social platforms and technology, this discretion is warranted.