Social Media Guidelines

Overview

What the guidelines will do
- Provide Loyola University Maryland faculty and administrative staff with guidelines for using social media **in an official university capacity**.
- Ensure that social communications adhere to Loyola's core values.

Who the guidelines govern
- The guidelines apply to anyone from the Loyola community, excluding students, who oversees and maintains a social media account that represents a Loyola department, program, or related entity **in an official capacity**.

Why we have guidelines
- Establish best practices for organization and uniformity of message and branding, and minimize risk to administrators.

Who administers the guidelines
- Loyola's office of marketing and communications oversees the University's social media guidelines and its primary social media accounts. All social media-related questions and inquiries should be directed to MarComm at socialmedia@loyola.edu.

Setting up a new account + account recognition

Two options
- If you're confident a social media tool would be a good fit for you or your department and you're comfortable using various existing social media channels, create your account(s) and submit a registration form to be considered for official recognition by the university and listed in its social media directory.
- If you're new to social media or you're not sure if you or your department would benefit from opening one or more accounts on popular channels (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), contact MarComm to discuss what strategy would fit you best.

Recognition
All admins of new **and** existing accounts must complete a registration form to be considered for official recognition by the University and listed in its social media directory.

Conduct

All policies outlined in the Loyola Staff and Administrator Policy Manual apply to your conduct on social media when representing the University. A review of section VIII (code of conduct) is recommended, with particular attention to:

- o Copyright Policy (sec. 8.3)
- o Harassment and Discrimination Policy (sec. 8.6)
- o Workplace Violence (sec. 8.9)
- o Information Security Policy (sec. 8.20)
- For potential breaches of section VIII (code of conduct) of the Staff and Administrator Policy Manual, contact the director of human resources generalist services at x1367 or assistant vice president of human resources at x1350.
- **Remember**: Anything posted on social media could potentially be perceived to reflect the views of the university as a whole.
- Contact MarComm to discuss best practices for effective content.

Role of account administrators

Account administrators have responsibilities beyond occasionally posting news and information about their respective department/program/organization/event. Admins are encouraged to:
- Actively maintain social media accounts and post content.
- Interact with audience and monitor comments.
- Accept full responsibility for all content posted on social media channels.
- Share account login information with one other colleague.
    - o If the primary contact admin is no longer responsible for an account for any reason, MarComm should be notified and sent contact information for interim admin and subsequent new admin.
- Meet at least once with MarComm to discuss strategy.

Logo/branding/naming of account

Social media accounts affiliated with Loyola should adhere to the University's official branding guidelines. The minimum brand requirements are as follows:
- Your account should include Loyola's full name ("Loyola University Maryland") at least once in the publicly accessible information used to identify who or what the account represents. 'Publicly accessible information' refers to the names, titles, usernames, profile descriptions, 'About' sections, etc., available to anonymous or registered users who visit a social media profile.
- The logo for your account **cannot** be the official University logo only. If your logo is a derivative of the official university logo, it must be approved by MarComm.
- If MarComm has created an official logo for the entity the account represents, you are strongly encouraged to use that logo.
- If you would like to create a new logo that matches Loyola's branding guidelines, submit a project request.
- If you'd prefer to create a logo on your own that is outside of Loyola's branding guidelines, be sure the logo clearly and accurately represents your department/program/organization/event's brand and message.

Comment moderation

Social media users will interact with your page/profile and your content 24 hours a day, and often they expect a response – in some form – from you. Comments could be positive, negative, neutral, self-serving, non-sequitur, or wholly random in nature. For these reasons it's critical that you *listen* to discussions about you on social media. Admins should:
- Encourage fans/followers/friends/connections (users) to comment and interact with content and each other.
- Comment back and engage in conversation/answer questions **in real time**.
- Monitor conversation outside normal business hours.
- Monitor third party conversations/mentions (e.g., monitoring a Twitter search of "Loyola University Maryland").
- Regularly look for offensive comments/spam made by users and delete when appropriate.
    - Err on the side of "don't delete." You shouldn't delete something simply because you disagree with it. Contact MarComm if you are unsure or need further guidance.
    - ***If possible, include the following language in a publicly-accessible location on your account: *"We reserve the right to delete comments or posts that we deem to be offensive or inappropriate. We also reserve the right to delete comments or posts that are solicitations, sales, advertising, or spam."*
- Consider blocking/banning fans/followers who are abusive.
- If you believe any comment violates section VIII (code of conduct) of the Staff and Administrator Policy Manual, contact the director of human resources generalist services at x1367 or assistant vice president of human resources at x1350.

Personal accounts

If you maintain a personal, publicly visible social media account and publicly identify your **primary representation** in that account as an employee of Loyola University Maryland, you are encouraged to include language in your profile similar to the following:

"*The thoughts expressed here are my own and do not reflect the views or opinions of Loyola University Maryland*" or "*Thoughts are my own.*"

In most cases, your affiliation with Loyola will be one of numerous forms of public identification in the account (e.g., most Facebook and LinkedIn profiles), so you will not need to consider including this language.
- If your personal account is primarily used for university purposes (e.g., the Twitter account of an athletics coach), you do not need to include this language.
- If your privacy settings are such that only a close circle of connections is able to view your activity (e.g., a personal Facebook page with the privacy settings set to "Friends only") and/or the content you post **is not** publicly accessible, you do not need to include this language.

Student organizations

It is in Loyola's interest to officially recognize social media accounts that represent student organizations. These accounts do not need to be approved by MarComm and are not governed by these guidelines, but it would be beneficial to include student organization accounts in the University's official social media directory online. If you are the administrator for a student account, please complete and submit a registration form to be considered for recognition.

Crisis communications

During any crisis or incident of disruption the first social media source for official University information will be the university-wide social media channels maintained by MarComm. Admins of all other Loyola-affiliated social media accounts are encouraged to disseminate official information **after** it has been released on the University's flagship social media channels ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)). Admins should make every effort on social media to direct users to the University's primary social media channels for official updates during a crisis.

- Example of what **not to do**: Post "Loyola is closing early" on your Loyola-affiliated Facebook page before the University has made the announcement on its Facebook page (announcement will be made via social media/email/homepage simultaneously).
- Example of what **to do**: Loyola posts closing information on its Facebook page; you then 'share' the post on your affiliated Facebook page.

If, on any of your social media channels, another social media user expresses dissatisfaction with a person, department, program, entity, or anything else affiliated with Loyola but outside your office or department, notify the appropriate person in the other office/department immediately and determine whether a response is warranted.

- For legitimate complaints, some kind of response – even if it's only to acknowledge the complaint – is generally encouraged. Contact MarComm for guidance.

Media inquiries

Any media inquiries received via social media or about what's posted on your Loyola social media account should be referred to MarComm. In general, all media inquiries should be forwarded to MarComm in a timely fashion.

Contact

If you have any questions, contact MarComm at x5025 or socialmedia@loyola.edu.