Title/Subject: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Applies to: ☒Faculty ☒Staff ☐Students ☒Student Employees ☐Visitors ☐Contractors

Effective Date of This Revision: November 3, 2023

Policy Owner: University Marketing and Communications (MarCom)

Background

Social media enables Central Michigan University (CMU) to share important information with students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, donors, fans, corporate partners, and community stakeholders. Social media is extremely effective when used strategically, as each platform allows CMU to engage, educate and entertain audiences in different ways.

Due to its wide use and many formats, social media is often how people first connect with CMU. Thus, it is imperative that all registered CMU social media channels representing CMU uphold the university's brand standards, support university goals and maintain brand trust through uniform social media standards.

Purpose

Establish university-wide standards for the use, creation, operation and management of official social media accounts that represent Central Michigan University.

CMU college, department and service unit accounts representing the CMU brand must comply with this policy. This applies to accounts created before and after the adoption of this policy. Completion of the precious protocol does not exempt current accounts from policy compliance.

Regardless of who created the account, accounts operating under the CMU brand and representing CMU are university property. This excludes accounts not administered by a university employee, including those of registered student organizations or online communities.

Definitions

- **Content:** Any information that is communicated on social media channel.
- **Emergency Situation:** Any situation that poses a significant threat to operations or to the life, health, safety and/or wellbeing of CMU community members.
- **KPI:** Key Performance Indicator, a standard term of metrics and analytics derived from social media and used to benchmark progress toward goals/objectives.
- **Official Accounts:** Social media accounts that are sponsored, endorsed and/or created on authority of the university or any of its colleges, departments or service units. They may represent specific divisions, departments or units within the university when in compliance with the official social media policy.
- **Personal Accounts:** Social media accounts representing a private individual's opinions, thoughts, beliefs or concerns.
- **Service Unit:** Area designed to specifically support the students, faculty and staff at Central Michigan University.
- **Social Media Directory:** Public listing of all official social media accounts that meet the requirements of this social media policy and are authorized to represent specific divisions, departments or units within CMU.
- **Social Media Manager:** Designated employee responsible for managing, monitoring and maintaining official CMU social media platforms, which includes: funding and creating content; maintaining compliance with applicable laws, regulations and policies; and overseeing social media moderators who assist with day-to-day social media activities.
- **Social Media Moderators:** Designated student interns, graduate assistants or other employees who assist social media managers in day-to-day social media activities, including finding and creating content, posting

content, and more. Interns and graduate assistants may be designated only as social media moderators, never managers.

- **Social Media Platform:** Any website or application that enables users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Snapchat, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Threads and TikTok.
- ***Social Media Strategy Worksheet*:** A document that provides social media managers, moderators and leaders the opportunity to establish clear goals and benchmarks to guide their social media strategy.
- **Strategy:** A formal approach to using and managing social media and collecting metrics to make informed choices on how to spend university time and resources.
- **University Communications:** The office responsible for promoting CMU through strategic communications and marketing, both in print and online.
- **CMU *Social Media Best Practices*:** Annually updated guidance document designed to help social media managers implement their strategies and achieve their goals.
- **Unofficial Accounts:** Social media accounts run by organizations with ties to the university, but which are not authorized to represent the university nor any of its divisions, departments or units. This could include accounts of registered student organizations and online communities not administered by a university employee.

Policy

Social media accounts can be an effective way for units to engage with their stakeholders and audiences; however, they also can pose risks. Lack of appropriate account security and oversight can lead to reputational damage to individual units and to the university overall. Therefore, unit vice presidents, deans and senior leaders should carefully consider whether their teams have the staff time, resources and skills to undertake the responsibility of social media management.

Unit vice presidents and deans, or their designees, assume responsibility for social media channels within their units. They assume responsibility for ensuring that all channels within their unit adhere to the processes and practices outlined within this policy, as well as to the university's Responsible Computing Policy.

Use

Use, Part I: Expectations and Responsibilities for Official Accounts

This policy establishes two roles – social media manager and social media moderator – for the maintenance and operation of all CMU official social media accounts. These roles are further expanded upon in *Management, Part I*, of this policy. To be registered as an official account, CMU service units, departments and colleges must have individuals designated to these roles.

Each social media manager or moderator must register with University Marketing and Communications' campus partner directory and be added to the CMU Social Media Managers Teams group. To register, email socialmedia@cmich.edu and note the name, email address and role (manager or moderator) of the individual, as well as the names of the accounts they will operate.

When a social media manager or moderator leaves the university, their supervisor must remove their access to all of the unit's social media accounts and notify University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu to remove them from the directory and Teams group.

Social media managers and moderators who operate official accounts must adhere to standard practice and procedures. Managers and moderators act as representatives for the university and their respective units, departments and officers, and are expected to maintain the following expectations on official accounts:

- Official accounts should use appropriate spelling and grammar.

- Official accounts are expected to maintain all CMU Brand Guidelines and other best practices as defined in CMU *Social Media Best Practices* document, which is updated annually and is housed in the Teams group and on the cmich.edu website.
- Social media managers and/or moderators should annually collect and review KPIs to assess platform performance and value of managing each channel. They should regularly discuss their findings with the appropriate supervisor, unit vice president or dean.
    - KPIs are dependent on the desired outcomes and goals outlined in the Social Media Strategy Worksheet.
    - Social media managers can use data/key performance indicators available in each of the social media platforms to assess their performance. These include number of followers, reach, impressions, engagement rates and more.
- Accounts must adhere to each social media platform's terms of service, community standards and other basic rules outlined by the social media platform.

These are the general expectations of an official account. If a service unit, department or college is unable to follow these expectations, the vice president, dean or senior leader responsible for that area must take appropriate steps to correct account use or delete the account.

Use, Part II: Official Accounts During Emergency Situations
Emergency situations may occur at any time. **Social media managers and moderators should immediately pause any planned social media posts when notified to do so by University Marketing and Communications in the Social Media Managers Teams group.**

University Marketing and Communications is responsible for communicating on behalf of the university during an emergency. Follow the lead of CMU's primary channels by only sharing their social media communications. Do not share posts from news outlets or other external sources.

Managers and moderators may encounter content online that risks evolving into an emergency situation. Examples include public harassment, threats or rumors that cause concern. In these circumstances, contact University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu or by calling 989-774-3197 immediately. Do not respond in any way without consulting University Marketing and Communications.

Creation

Creation, Part I: Account Creation
CMU employees who wish to create a social media account on behalf of specific divisions, departments or units within CMU or use social media to conduct CMU business must receive written approval from their unit's vice president, dean or designated senior leader. A signed copy of the *Social Media Strategy Worksheet* will be required for all new official campus partner channels.

Following leadership approval, send the signed worksheet to University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu to request that the account and its managers/moderators be added to the CMU social media directory and Social Media Managers Teams group.

If a social media manager or moderator will no longer have oversight of an account, please immediately notify University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu. See *Management, Part 1*, of this policy for next steps.

Accounts predating this social media policy are expected to register all managers and moderators with University Marketing and Communications immediately.

Creation, Part II: Social Media Strategy
The Social Media Strategy Worksheet is required for all official accounts, as it provides managers and moderators with clear goals and benchmarks to guide their social media presence. Social media managers should update and

review the worksheet with their vice president, dean or designated senior leader yearly to assess account growth, health and opportunities for improvement.

University Marketing and Communications also will provide a self-auditing checklist to help social media managers and senior leaders assess the performance of their official social media channels.

Creation, Part III: Compliance with Official CMU Procedures and Best Practices
University Marketing and Communications will update the CMU *Social Media Best Practices* on an annual basis, based on brand standards, university wide goals and platform updates. This document and other resources will be provided to all CMU social media managers and moderators through the Social Media Managers Teams group. This Teams group also will receive regular updates on platform best practices, tools and resources, and more.

Creation, Part IV: Social Media Account Registration
All official social media accounts, as well as corresponding social media managers and moderators, are required to be registered with University Marketing and Communications. Registration will be reviewed semi-annually to ensure that accurate contact information is available in case of emergency.

To be registered, accounts must:

- Provide University Marketing and Communications with updated contact information for all social media managers and moderators. Send this information to socialmedia@cmich.edu.
- Complete a *Social Media Strategy Worksheet* with sign-off from unit vice president, dean or designated senior leader. Send a copy of the signed worksheet to socialmedia@cmich.edu.
- Complete all required trainings. Links to trainings will be provided to social media managers and moderators at the time of registration.

Accounts will not be added to the official social media directory until all steps of registration are completed.

Creation, Part V: Account Deletion
Official CMU social media accounts are the property of CMU and the department, division or unit they represent. No social media manager or moderator may delete an official social media account without both written permission from their unit vice president, dean or designated senior leader and consultation with University Marketing and Communications.

A social media manager who wishes to delete an official social media account and has received written permission to do so should contact University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu to request a consultation.

Violations of this policy may result in referral to Human Resources and/or Faculty Personnel Services for appropriate action.

Operation

Operation, Part I: Analytics and Metrics
Analytics and metrics should be reviewed regularly with appropriate department, division or unit leaders. These reviews ensure that employee time spent managing/moderating university platforms is worth the investment. The CMU *Social Media Best Practices* document includes information and recommendations for channel and content analysis. The self-auditing checklist also provides questions and measurements to assess platform performance.

Management

Management, Part I: Social Media Roles and Responsibilities

Social media managers
Social media managers are responsible for ensuring factual accuracy, editorial quality and adherence to university brand standards on official accounts. They must be CMU employees who have capacity to dedicate time daily to social media management.

Every official account must have a minimum of two registered managers, one whom is a unit vice president, dean or designated senior leader in that unit, and a maximum of four. As the official contacts for accounts, managers must be registered with University Marketing and Communications (email socialmedia@cmcich.edu to register a manager) and comply with all policies and procedures in place.

Social media managers may employ social media moderators to help with the day-to-day maintenance of their social media channels; social media managers are responsible for the oversight, training and actions of these team members.

Social media managers who plan to separate from the university or who will no longer oversee social media on behalf of CMU should email University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu. Offboarding steps for social media managers and moderators also are included in the HR employee separation checklist.

Any new social media manager onboarded during the year must register with University Marketing and Communications by emailing socialmedia@cmich.edu immediately to receive training and information before receiving password access to any accounts.

Social media moderators
Social media moderators may assist social media managers in content creation, social listening and other tasks, but they may not be the sole individuals responsible for an official account. Social media moderators can be employees, students or graduate assistants. Students and graduate assistants cannot be social media managers, only social media moderators.

Management, Part II: Security Protocols
Security protocols will differ based on individual social media platforms and changes to terms of service. However, these are best practices that all managers and moderators should follow.

All passwords must comply with the CMU Office of Information Technology's password standards.

Social media management system security protocols
- Multifactor authentication is required to be in place for all users of the social media management system.
- Passwords for the social media management channel should be unique to that platform (not used anywhere else).

General social media platform security protocols
- All accounts must be created using a shared or general email address accessible to more than one person (i.e., socialmedia@cmich.edu). Email addresses already established are preferred.
- Passwords and logins to social media platforms should be maintained by social media managers and their direct leadership/supervisors.
- Individuals with account access who separate from the university must be removed from all page roles within each social media platform.
- Passwords to social media platforms should be changed when a person with access separates from the university.
- Accounts that are idle for more than three months become easy targets for hackers. Accounts that cannot be updated regularly should be deleted. Social media managers must receive written permission from their unit vice president, dean or designated section leader before contacting University Marketing and Communications to remove an idle account.
- Avoid third-party apps not approved for use by University Marketing and Communications and/or CMU Contracting and Purchasing Services.

Management, Part III: Legal Compliance
Managers and moderators are expected to abide by the terms of service when utilizing social media platforms, as well as all requirements set forth by CMU's Office of General Counsel in CMU's Administrative Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.

In addition, managers and moderators shall adhere to the following:

- **Refrain from promoting third-party products, events and businesses.** Official accounts should not promote third-party products, events and businesses, to avoid the appearance on an official CMU endorsement. This also includes sharing or promoting fundraisers, GoFundMe accounts, petitions, etc.
- **Contests must meet platform terms of service**. Contests on social media platforms must meet each platform's terms of service and comply with university policies and regulations. If you are interested in hosting a contest, please contact University Marketing and Communications at socialmedia@cmich.edu.
- **Be mindful of copyright and intellectual property rights**. If it is not your content, do not post it or otherwise present it as your own. When using others' content, link the original content wherever possible; in all cases, you must make sure to tag and give appropriate credit to the original creator of the content.
- **Do not act as a spokesperson for CMU on any social media platform**. Please direct requests for official statements/university responses to University Marketing and Communications by calling 989-774-3197 or contacting the Vice President for University Marketing and Communications.

Personal Social Media Accounts

All CMU employees are encouraged to exercise sound judgement when participating in social media activities on personal accounts. It is important for university employees to consider how their conduct online may reflect on CMU.

CMU's recommendations for employees' personal behavior on social media:

1. **Avoid using unapproved CMU likeness or images in your personal accounts**. This includes, but is not limited to, your social media name, handle and URL. CMU's logos and registered trademarks (such as the Action C) are the property of Central Michigan University; they should be used only in circumstances where they are provided for public use in the manner intended.
2. **Avoid posting CMU-owned photo and video assets as personal content without permission**. We encourage employees to share posts on social media made by CMU accounts. However, employees should refrain from posting university-owned photo and video assets and presenting them as personal content unless they obtain permission from the appropriate office.
3. **Employees are accountable for their personal conduct online**. CMU respects First Amendment rights and encourages free speech by all university employees. Remember that students, colleagues, and supervisors often have access to your publicly published content. It is contrary to CMU policy to disclose information that is not intended for dissemination outside of CMU. It is illegal to disclose information that is protected by FERPA, HIPAA or other laws. CMU is not responsible for, and does not support any post made by a user whose public positions are counter to the mission or interests of CMU.
4. **Let CMU University Marketing and Communications and official spokespersons engage with negative content.** Unless you are a university-designated spokesperson, you should not respond to negative comments or speak on behalf of CMU. If you see something of concern, contact University Marketing and Communications immediately at ucomm@cmich.edu.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and include termination of employment.

Central Michigan University reserves the right to make exceptions to modify or eliminate this policy and or its content. This document supersedes all previous policies, procedures or guidelines related to this subject.

Related Policies and Laws (Add Number & Name of Significantly Related Policy(ies))	
Appendices (Optional)	
Approval Authority	Robert O. Davies, President
History of Review	N/A
Last Reviewed Date	
Anticipated Review Date	
Change/No Change	
Keywords	Social Media