

Social Media Policy

Policy Statement:

This policy is intended to aid Marywood University community members who create and manage social media channels officially or unofficially on behalf of their academic or administrative departments or program area.

While schools, departments, programs, classes, clubs, etc., may want their own social media channels, they should consider posting announcements from one of the main University social media account(s) to their respective web pages to reach a broader audience. Linking from Marywood University official pages is a useful means of promoting Marywood's Mission and Core Values and building awareness and community.

The following guidelines will not infringe upon freedom of speech, academic freedom, and freedom of the press.

Definitions:

Social media includes all social networking sites including, but not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest and any additional social media or blogging sites where Marywood University is represented.

Procedures:

Using Social Media on Behalf of the University

Marywood University's website (marywood.edu) is the official digital channel of information for the University and keeping this website current takes priority over posting to social platforms. (*See [University Website Policy](#).*)

Marywood University's official social media pages should reflect Marywood's Mission and Core Values and be used to further our educational purpose, brand awareness, and communication reach. Marywood faculty members, administrators, staff, and students are encouraged to use social media to share Marywood social posts, news, and events. It is important that official social media pages link back to <http://www.marywood.edu/> or other Marywood online assets.

Members of the Marywood Community who engage in online communications for Marywood-related purposes should follow this policy when creating, branding, posting, and maintaining University social media accounts.

Before Creating a New Social Account

Social media accounts that will be used minimally should first consider using existing University social accounts or web pages that represent the larger community. Marywood recommends using a related existing page to host or share content instead of creating a new social media page. If practical, instead of

creating a new social media page, a department, program, or club should consult with their chair/director, vice president, or the Marketing Department to determine if such page would be an appropriate place to share their content. In doing so, the University will:

- Ensure that the overall message has greater visibility,
- Streamline the time necessary to manage multiple social media pages, and
- Enable the poster(s) to broaden their network within the University and engage with other faculty members, staff members, or students who have similar interests.

Maintaining University Social Accounts

- **Crisis Management Communication** - For any issues that may impact the health, safety, and welfare of members of the Marywood community, a person should immediately contact Campus Safety. The Crisis Safety Implementation Task Force will manage all social media relative to a crisis situation.
- **Proper Branding** - All University-affiliated social media profiles should uphold the [Marywood University Branding Guidelines](#). Only properly branded social media profile pictures and cover photos as well as information that is presented in a manner consistent with Marywood's Mission and Core Values should be used. If branded social media assets are needed, the Marywood Marketing Department may provide them.
- **Maintain Confidentiality and Privacy** - Confidential or proprietary information about Marywood University or any student, alumni, employee, or other third party should not be posted. Posting must comply with all federal, state, and local laws, including, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Information about Marywood students or employees should not be posted on social media without the explicit permission from the person who is the subject of the piece. Social media is a public forum and anything posted will be seen publicly.
- **Consistent Messaging** – Messages and images used as content should always reflect the Marywood Mission and Core Values.
- **Respect University Time and Property** - Social media may fall under the job description of Marywood employees. Accounts should be used appropriately to post work-related information, as such postings relate to the Marywood goals of social media. Access to social media for personal use should be made during off-work hours.
- **Consider the Relationship Aspect of Social Media** - When using social media, users should consider what it means to friend, like, follow, or link to another person/organization's account. Social relationships among faculty and students, supervisors and staff, and staff and students require careful consideration as to the nature of the interaction.
- **Be Thoughtful, Respectful, and Responsible** - It is both an opportunity and a privilege to post on behalf of Marywood University. Questions as to whether content is appropriate to post on behalf of Marywood University should be directed to the Marketing Department prior to posting. Individual and page managers are responsible for public content. Language or conduct, online or

offline, should follow the [Marywood University Code of Conduct](#). The privacy of others must be respected. Poster(s) should be sensitive to topics that may not be appropriate for discussion on social platforms.

- **Be Credible** - Facts posted on behalf of Marywood University must be accurate. Facts should be verified before posting, linked to reliable sources, and cited, as much as possible.
- **Post Frequently and Consistently** - A social media account holder should check the social media accounts regularly and post frequently to keep social media accounts relevant.

Poster(s) should pre-plan content and use a content calendar to ensure posting is done frequently and consistently. They should maintain a backlog of content for slower periods. They should consider the audience, strategy, and goals, and whether it may be beneficial to use a white label social media scheduling/approval platform to ensure individuals who use social media stay current with communication to remain consistent with messaging and reach their audience at the optimal time they are online.

- **Stagnant and Inactive Accounts** - Marywood's goal is to eliminate unused social media profiles to put forth the best online image. Stagnant and inactive accounts reflect poorly on the University. If an account has had no activity in more than six months, Marywood University's Marketing Department has the right to request that the stagnant or inactive social media account be unpublished. When a stagnant account is identified, the Marketing Department will make two attempts in a period of thirty days to contact the social account administrator by direct message on the platform (ex. Facebook) being used. After two failed attempts, the Marketing Department will seek the best method available to remove or acquire the account, whether by contacting the platform directly, or other means of campus accounts and administrators as available per account.
- **Report Inappropriate Content** – Inappropriate content on a Marywood University affiliated page should be reported to the Marketing Department or the appropriate supervisor with documented proof of the content. The Marketing Department or supervisor must approve removing, blocking, and reporting content via the appropriate social media platform.

Using Social Media as an Individual

Social Media can have unintended consequences for the poster and the University. Here follow best practice procedures for Marywood University community members for the protection of themselves and the University; posters should:

- Be transparent when posting and inform your audience that you are not speaking on behalf of Marywood University.
- **Assume All Content is Public** - If content being shared is not acceptable or appropriate for all eyes, assume it is not appropriate for social media.
- Be aware that search engines are able to uncover social media posts for years prior and even when a posted item has been deleted, archival systems are in place to save social media information.

- Never pretend to be someone else on social media, as all posts can likely be traced back to the true identity. Exceptions can be made for accounts that are satirical or historical in nature.
- **Be Informed of Liability** - Individuals should show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. Images retrieved from the web without permission from the author or artist should not be used. Individuals who use social media or blogs are held liable for their own content and could be held responsible in the case of copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene content, as determined by the courts.
- **Uphold Marywood’s Mission and Core Values** - Posters that identify with Marywood University on social media by listing their place of employment or education, even with a disclaimer, should remember that their postings may reflect back on the Mission and Core Values of Marywood University. Posters must remember the importance of respect as a core value by upholding civility and the Marywood Code of Conduct when discussing ideas and feelings on social media.
- **When in Doubt, Use a Disclaimer** - The opinions or views expressed on Marywood social media platforms represent the thoughts of individual users and online communities, and not necessarily those of Marywood or any of its stakeholders or any of their respective officers, faculty members, employees, staff, or members of the Board of Trustees. As such, the same holds true for employees citing an affiliation with Marywood on social or blog platforms/sites. The University respects freedom of speech and academic freedom; however, posters should clearly state that their views are their own and are not those of Marywood University when citing Marywood as an employer on digital platforms. This ensures that the individual upholds their special responsibility to protect the image of Marywood as well as its employees and students. The same holds true for published work outside the realm of Marywood University blogs or other online media publications, posts, or articles. When doing so, posters should add a disclaimer similar to “The views expressed on [platform] are my own and may not reflect the views of Marywood University.”

History:

05/10/19 – The establishment of this policy was approved by the President of the University as recommended by the Policy Committee of the University.

Related Policies and Committees:

- *Code of Conduct*
- *Conditions of Computer Use*
- *Institutional Property Policy*
- *Intellectual Property Policy*
- *Severe Weather Policy*
- *Statement of Responsibility Re: Confidentiality of Student Records*
- *University Website Policy*

Technology Advisory Committee (TAC)

**MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Mary Theresa Gardier Paterson, Esquire
Secretary of the University and General Counsel**