

PROCEDURE LIT.6.05.02 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

SCOPE: Faculty and Staff

1. Be Responsible in your communications.

The keys to success in social media are honesty, thoughtfulness, and awareness of the target audience. Communications must be professional and sensitive about linking to content. Redirecting to another site may imply an endorsement. Above all, exercise good judgment and common sense. Do not use profanity, slurs, or derogatory comments. Be civil. There is no such thing as a “private” social media site. Remember that a post has a longer shelf life than the individual posting the comments does. Archival systems save information even after deleting a post. Always post or communicate with a calm and clear head.

2. Be transparent and authentic.

Be honest about one's identity. If choosing to post about LIT on personal time, please identify yourself as LIT faculty or staff member when appropriate. Never hide one's identity for the purpose of promoting LIT through social media.

Never pretend to be someone else and post about LIT.

The essence of a community is that it exists so that employees can support others and they, in turn, can support the institution. Learn to balance personal and professional information and the important role that transparency plays in building a community.

A good resource about communicating with transparency and integrity is, “Communicating with Transparency and Integrity,” by Student Affairs Lead Big UC Berkeley at <https://sa.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/images/communicatingwithtransparency.pdf>

3. Be accurate.

Ensure all the facts have been gathered before posting a comment or communication. Verify information with a source, rather than posting a correction or retraction later. Cite and link sources whenever possible, redirecting back to the LIT website. If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly.

4. Respect copyrights and fair use.

Always give people proper credit for their work, ensure the right to use something before publishing. Only those authorized by LIT may use the college's branding. Do not include LIT branding in personal posting.

5. Protect confidential & proprietary information.

Online postings and conversations are not private. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about LIT, its students, its alumni or colleagues. Use good ethical judgment. Follow college policies and federal requirements, such as FERPA.

6. Productivity matters – respect institutional time and property.

LIT computers and employee work time are for college-related business. It is appropriate to post at work if instructed to or comments relate directly to accomplishing established work goals. For example, seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. Maintain personal sites on one's own time using non-LIT computers.

7. Endorsements.

Do not use LIT's name to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party or candidate. Linking to other sites is occasionally acceptable. However, it is important to consider associations with potential applicants, donors and research-funding agencies. Share links appropriate and relevant to the institution.

8. Social media comments.

We encourage our LIT community to comment, post, share and interact while remaining respectful of others' opinions and rights. A page administrator must review comments for inappropriate content.

LIT reserves the right to block users or remove comments that (are):

- Unrelated to the topic of the post.
- Abusive, vulgar, profane, racist, sexist, violent or use hate speech.
- Obscene or contain sexually harassing content.
- Considered to be spam, advertisements or vendor promotions unrelated to LIT.
- Defaming, contain falsehoods or unsupported accusations of LIT students, employees, visitors or other individuals.
- Encourage illegal, dangerous or destructive activity.
- Threatening, harassment or personal attacks toward specific individuals or groups.

In general, if the content is positive or negative and in context to the conversation, then the content is approved, regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to LIT. Be aware that any comment/post can be attributed to you in a news story.

9. Employees Personal use of Electronic Media

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram).

Think first, post second. The activity and behavior that is prohibited and may subject you to discipline in "real life" with the college can do the same in the realm of the internet and social media. Some examples include but are not limited to sexually harassing a colleague; inappropriate interactions with students; derogatory statements; threatening or intimidating others; violating privacy policies or laws; or defamation of the college.

10. Non-Compliance/Breach of Policy

Violations of the Social Media policy and procedures will result in a review of the incident and may include action under appropriate college discipline processes.

11. Lamar Institute of Technology Style Guidelines

Social media posts must comply with criteria established in the LIT Branding Style Guide.

Related Policies: LIT.6.05 Social Media

Relevant Forms/Documents:

Relevant TSUS Policies/Forms/Documents:

Relevant Statutes:

Relevant SACSOC Standards:

Document History:

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