



University Social Media Accounts

POLICY STATEMENT

Cornell authorizes the creation and use of university social media accounts, provided their use is professional, protects the reputation and brand of the university, and complies with Cornell policies and applicable laws and regulations.

REASON FOR POLICY

The university recognizes the value of social media platforms for a range of business goals and must balance its support of social media with the preservation of Cornell's brand identity, integrity, and reputation.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- All units of the university

WHO SHOULD READ THIS POLICY

- All faculty, staff members, and students

WEB ADDRESS FOR THIS POLICY

- This policy: www.dfa.cornell.edu/policy/policies/university-social-media-accounts
- University Policy Office: www.policy.cornell.edu

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RELATED RESOURCES

University Policies and Documents Applicable to All Units of the University

[University Policy 3.17, Accepting Credit Cards to Conduct University Business](#)

[University Policy 4.6, Standards of Ethical Conduct](#)

[University Policy 4.10, Use of Cornell's Name, Logos, Trademarks, and Insignias](#)

[University Policy 5.1, Responsible Use of Information Technology Resources](#)

[University Policy 5.10, Information Security](#)

[Abuse of Computers and Network Systems](#)

[Campus Code of Conduct](#)

[Social Media section of the University Brand Book](#)

University Policies and Documents Applicable to Only Ithaca Campus Units

[University Policy 4.3, Sales Activities on Campus](#)

[University Policy 4.12, Data Stewardship and Custodianship](#)

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CONTACTS

Direct any general questions about this policy to your college or unit administrative office. If you have questions about specific issues, contact the following offices.

Contacts, Ithaca Campus Units

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	University Communications	(607) 254-7116	socialmedia@cornell.edu
Establishing a New University Social Media Account	University Communications	(607) 254-7116	socialmedia@cornell.edu
	Your unit's communications professional	Unit-specific	
Social Media "House Rules"	University Communications	(607) 254 7116	socialmedia@cornell.edu

Contacts, Weill Cornell Campus Units

Subject	Contact	Telephone	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Office of External Affairs at Weill Cornell Medicine	(646) 317-7401	social-oversight@med.cornell.edu
Establishing a New University Social Media Account	Office of External Affairs at Weill Cornell Medicine	(646) 317-7401	social-oversight@med.cornell.edu
Social Media "House Rules"	Office of External Affairs at Weill Cornell Medicine	(646) 317-7401	social-oversight@med.cornell.edu

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DEFINITIONS

These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy.

Account Administrator	A Cornell faculty member, staff member, or student who administers or authors content for any university social media account (see definition below).
Communications Professional at the Unit Level	A university staff member within a unit charged with communications oversight at the unit level.
Social Media	A website or application external to Cornell University that permits sharing of information between people. This includes Internet-based social networking applications, blogs, chat rooms, collaborative information and publishing systems, video- and photo-sharing websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and other websites with user-generated content.
Unit	A college, department, program, research center, service or transaction center, office, or other operating unit.
University Social Media Account	Any registered account administered by an official university unit on any social network used in support of the business function or needs of that unit. Typically, these accounts include the name of Cornell University and the name of the unit. ◆ Note: Accounts administered by any other groups or individuals are considered non-sponsored accounts, and the university is not responsible for the content shared on those accounts.
User	A person who places postings, commentary, or other content on a university social media account or space.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

The major responsibilities each party has in connection with this policy are as follows:

Account Administrator

Before launching a social media account, consult with University Communications and the communications professional at the unit level for guidance on compliance with this policy, as well as with University Policy 4.10, Use of Cornell's Name, Logos, Trademarks, and Insignias.

Correct or modify university social media accounts under the administrator's control, as directed by University Communications.

Terminate any university social media accounts that cannot be made compliant with this policy.

Deactivate obsolete accounts.

Communications Professional at the Unit Level

Work collaboratively with University Communications to review and approve new university social media accounts.

Provide guidance and support to new account administrators in their units.

Document the university social media accounts in their units.

Individual

Refrain from using or posting to university social media accounts in violation of this policy.

Surrender access to university social media accounts, as appropriate, when university status changes.

University Communications

Oversee Cornell's institutional presence on social networking platforms.

Determine whether to allow university social media accounts on new platforms as they become available. Authorize these accounts as appropriate.

Review social media accounts that represent the university for compliance with this policy.

Instruct account administrators to correct, modify, or terminate university social media accounts that are not in compliance with this policy.

Terminate university social media accounts, where appropriate.

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PRINCIPLES

Overview

The university recognizes the value of social media platforms for a range of business goals. The university must balance its support of social media, however, with the need to carry out its missions responsibly with minimum risk and complies with applicable laws and regulations. This document supplements existing policies regarding use of communication technologies at Cornell University, as well as those that regulate the use of the university's name and branding assets.

University Social Media Account

A university social media account is any registered account administered by an official university unit on any social network used in support of the business function or needs of that unit. Typically, these accounts include the name of Cornell University and the name of the unit.

Use of university social media accounts must be conducted in a manner that is professional, protects the reputation and brand of Cornell, and is in compliance with Cornell policies.

University Communications and communications professionals at the unit level collaborate to review and approve the establishment of new university social media accounts. Communications professionals at the unit level document the university social media accounts in their units and provide training and support to account administrators in their units.

Prohibited conduct includes use of social media in a way that constitutes libel, false advertising, copyright or trademark infringement, harassment, professional misconduct, or a violation of privacy or other rights protected under the law.

◆**Note:** Social media accounts administered by any other groups or individuals are not sponsored by the university, and the university is not responsible for content they share.

Business Use of Social Media

Cornell University employees may be authorized to use social media at work to promote the Cornell brand and encourage active engagement in the life of the university. These individuals must maintain Cornell's brand identity, integrity, and reputation, while minimizing potential legal risks.

Personal Use of Social Media

This policy does not seek to limit personal use of social media by faculty, staff members, or students. Cornell employees and students may mention their Cornell affiliation in the "bio" or "about" sections of personal social media accounts, but are prohibited from using Cornell brand elements on personal accounts in ways that

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PRINCIPLES, continued

might be interpreted as representing Cornell University (for example, using the university's insignia as a profile photo).

Social Media “House Rules”

Cornell encourages social media users to interact with the university and one another freely, but is not responsible for comments or wall posts made by visitors to or fans of Cornell accounts. Comments posted by visitors and fans may not reflect official views or policies of the university.

Users who make comments on social media pages should be respectful of fellow visitors and maintain civil and rational discussions. All comments are subject to social networks' terms of use and codes of conduct. In addition, Cornell University reserves the right, but assumes no obligation, to remove any inappropriate comments. The university does not permit social media messages that sell products or promote commercial, political, or other ventures.

If you have questions about the Cornell social media presence, contact University Communications at socialmedia@cornell.edu.

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PROCEDURES

Launching or Assuming Responsibility for University Social Media Accounts

Account Administrators

To establish a university social media account, contact the communications professional at the unit level. If your unit does not have a communications professional, contact University Communications.

When launching new university social media accounts, or assuming responsibility for existing ones, account administrators should familiarize themselves with this policy, the university's Social Media Primer, the Social Media section of the university's Brand Book, and University Policy 4.10, Use of Cornell's Name, Logos, Trademarks, and Insignias (see Related Resources).

Account administrators must correct or modify university social media accounts under their control, as directed by University Communications and the communications professional at the unit level.

Account administrators must terminate any university social media accounts that cannot be made compliant with this policy.

Communications Professional at the Unit Level

Communications professionals at the unit level are expected to:

1. Inform University Communications of new requests for university social media accounts.
2. Maintain a list of university social media accounts in their units.
3. Familiarize themselves with this policy, the university's Social Media Primer, the Social Media section of the university's Brand Book, and University Policy 4.10, Use of Cornell's Name, Logos, Trademarks, and Insignias (see Related Resources).
4. Train account administrators in their units about their roles under this policy.

Required Actions Upon Change in an Individual's University Status

Individual

When the status of an individual with access to a university social media account changes (e.g., role change within unit, transfer to another unit, or separation from the university), the individual is expected to surrender that access. The account administrator will transfer that access, as appropriate, to another staff member.

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PROCEDURES, continued

Account Administrator

Account administrators inform communications professionals at the unit level about changes in university social media accounts, including requests for new accounts, the decommissioning of users, or the closing of accounts. For guidance, contact University Communications (see Contacts).

Account administrators are expected to de-provision an individual's access to university social media accounts when that individual's status with university changes (e.g., role change within unit, transfer to another unit, or separation from the university). De-provisioning is required for all access privileges managed within the unit, including social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Google+, etc.); social media tools (e.g., Hootsuite, Sprout Social, etc.); and exclusively Cornell resources (e.g., photo libraries, Digital Well, Confluence pages, etc.)

1. Review the individual's access to all social media platforms, social media tools, and exclusively Cornell resources, and revoke where appropriate.
2. Where appropriate, review and modify passwords for all accounts to prevent unauthorized access.
3. New administrators must review social media policy, strategy, and brand guidelines with University Communications and the communications professional at the unit level.

Communications Professional at the Unit Level

Communications professionals at the unit level are responsible to review social media policy, strategy, and brand guidelines with new account administrators. They are responsible for updating the list of university social media accounts in their units.

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