**Official Social Media Accounts UPPS No. 06.05.05**

**Issue No. 3**

**Effective Date: 08/17/2023**

**Next Review Date: 07/01/2025 (E2Y)**

**Sr. Reviewer: Assistant Vice President for University Marketing**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*Texas State University is committed to maintaining social media accounts that properly reflect the university’s mission and values.*

**01. SCOPE**

01.01 This policy applies to all social media accounts created to represent Texas State University and any of its divisions, units, colleges, departments, programs, offices, or centers.

01.02 Accounts must follow the social media guidelines and best practices outlined on the Division of Marking and Communications’ [Social Media Guidelines](https://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/) and [Brand Guidelines](https://brand.txst.edu/). Accounts that fail to comply with social media policies and guidelines will be seized and possibly deleted by the Division of Marking and Communications.

01.03 This policy applies to all social media channels including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, Snapchat, and similar services.

01.04 While personal accounts of faculty and staff members are exempt from these policies, faculty and staff should not create the impression that their accounts officially represent Texas State or that their personal opinions are official university positions.

01.05 While social media accounts of student organizations are not included in this policy, they are encouraged to follow the standards outlined in Section 04.

01.06 This policy does not include advertisements on social media sites promoting Texas State units or ads promoting the unit’s social media accounts.

**02. DEFINITIONS**

02.01 Copyright – the ownership and control of intellectual property in original works of authorship, subject to copyright law. It includes exclusive rights granted to the author (creator) of a creative work such as a book, movie, song, painting, photograph, design, computer software, or architectural rendering. These rights include the right to make copies, authorize others to make copies, make derivative works, sell and market the work, and perform the work. These rights may be sold, transferred, licensed, gifted, or inherited, in whole or in part (for additional information, see [UPPS No. 01.04.27](http://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/01-04-27.html), Intellectual Property: Ownership and Use of Copyrighted Works).

02.02 Official Social Media Account — a social media account that represents a Texas State division, unit, college, department, program, office, or center established in accordance with this policy.

02.03 Social Media – an online publishing platform through which users create communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content with each other. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Flickr, Pinterest, Tumblr, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snapchat, and other similar platforms.

02.04 Social Media Administrator – a person who handles a Texas State unit’s presence on social media as part of their job duties, regardless of their official job title. Administrators plan, create, and publish content that represents the unit and the university.

**03. PROCEDURES FOR ACCOUNT SETUP AND REGISTRATION**

03.01 Use of social media by university faculty and staff must comply with the university [Standards for Technologies Prohibited by Regulation](https://infosecurity.txst.edu/work/spg/standards-regulation-prohibited-technologies.html).

03.02 Official social media accounts must be registered with the Division of Marketing and Communications. Accounts can be registered by going to the [Register Your Account webpage](http://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/new-account/register.html).

03.03 Accounts must follow the setup, registration, and security instructions outlined on the [Social Media Guidelines site](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/).

03.04 Accounts that need to be deactivated or deleted should refer to instructions on the [Social Media Guidelines site](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/). It is important to download and store data from the accounts before deletion in accordance with university record retention schedules.

**04. APPLICABLE STANDARDS**

04.01 Administrators must follow the guidelines and best practices outlined on the Division of Marketing and Communications’ [Social Media Guidelines site](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/) and [Brand Guidelines site](https://brand.txst.edu/). Accounts that fail to comply with social media or brand policies and guidelines will be seized and possibly deleted by the Division of Marketing and Communications.

After determining an account is in violation of standards, the assistant vice president for University Marketing will notify account owners about noncompliance issues. The account owner will have 30 days to make progress on bringing their account into compliance. If no progress has been made after 30 days, account administrators will be required to give the Division of Marketing and Communications access to the accounts, and the Division of Marketing and Communications will take control of the account. If access is not granted, the Division of Marketing and Communications will work with the Division of Information Technology or the social media platforms to seize or shut down the accounts.

If the assistant vice president for University Marketing determines that an official account must be immediately removed (e.g., posts do not align with the mission, values, and goals of the university and are deemed lewd, harmful, or disruptive to Texas State community members), the Division of Marketing and Communications may immediately seize and shut down the account.

04.02 Texas State strives to make content accessible to all users. Social media administrators must adhere to [ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990)](https://www.ada.gov/pubs/ada.htm) standards (see the Division of Marketing and Communications’ [Social Media Policies page](http://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/policies.html) for accessibility best practices).

04.03 Social media administrators are expected to follow all copyright and intellectual property laws when posting to any social network. It is necessary to always get permission to use copyrighted material, and always give credit for the material (see [UPPS No. 01.04.27](http://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/01-04-27.html), Intellectual Property: Ownership and Use of Copyrighted Works for more information about copyright).

04.04 Social media administrators must protect private and confidential information and abide by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) and [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/index.html). This is especially important in dealing with students who post questions online about their educational circumstances (e.g., “Did my credits transfer?”). Social media administrators must direct such questions to appropriate, official channels (i.e., email or phone). Direct messages are not an appropriate place to discuss confidential information.

Social media content, including posts, comments, messages, and replies, are available to the public and reflect on Texas State. While account administrators are encouraged to interact with the community, social media administrators should not conduct official business (e.g., anything involving confidential student, faculty, or staff information) on social media accounts. All discussions involving confidential information must be referred to official administrative channels (i.e., email or phone).

04.05 Social media account administrators should attempt to keep content on their accounts for two years to meet [ADM320 General Correspondence records retention requirements](http://www.univarchives.txstate.edu/records/rm-rrs.html).

04.06 Administrators must monitor and moderate comments. Accounts may include Texas State's commenting policy on relevant pages:

*Texas State encourages discussion, questions, and criticism, but asks that you keep your comments and posts relevant and respectful. We may remove any post or ban anyone who violates these guidelines. We will not tolerate personal attacks, inappropriate language, racism, and spamming.*

*Texas State reserves the right to remove posts advertising commercial products as well as posts that are inaccurate or that violate the channel's terms of service.* 

If an administrator sees a worrisome post involving threats of violence, or if a post is brought to their attention in a direct message, they must contact the University Police Department. To report an emergency or crime in progress, they must call 911. For posts involving potenial violations of the code of student conduct, administrators must contact the [Dean of Students Office](https://www.dos.txstate.edu/). If someone reports a violation of [The Texas State University Systems’ sexual misconduct policy](https://www.tsus.edu/about-tsus/policies.html), administrators must contact the [Title IX](https://compliance.txstate.edu/oeotix/) coordinator. All reporting obligations that apply to faculty and staff offline, apply on social media.

04.07 Social media accounts should be kept current. Any Texas State social media sites with no activity for 90 days or more should be inactivated by the account administrator.

04.08 Administrators must make sure social media accounts are secure (see [UPPS No. 04.01.01](http://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/04-01-01.html), Security of Texas State Information Resources, for more information about digital security). Texas State is committed to protecting personal privacy. Account administrators should be aware of [Texas State's Privacy Statement](http://www.tr.txstate.edu/privacy-statement.html). Owners with multiple accounts are encouraged to leverage the university’s social media management tool (Hootsuite).

04.09 Administrators cannot conduct any personal activity under the guise of official accounts.

04.10 Administrators must ensure accounts represent the units for which they were created and should not try to represent the university as a whole.

04.11 Social media sites are third-party sites and have terms of service and policies that are not governed by the university or the State of Texas. These third-party sites are not official Texas State websites, and the third party's website terms of service and policies apply. Administrators should be aware of and follow these policies. These sites include, but are not limited to, [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/terms.php) , [X (formerly Twitter)](https://twitter.com/en/tos), [Instagram](https://help.instagram.com/478745558852511), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/t/terms), [Snapchat](https://www.snap.com/en-US/terms/), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/legal/user-agreement), [Pinterest](https://policy.pinterest.com/en/terms-of-service), and [Spotify](https://www.spotify.com/us/legal/end-user-agreement/).

**05. ADMINISTRATION**

05.01 The Division of Marketing and Communications runs the university’s official central social media accounts, including accounts on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/txstateu/), [X (formerly Twitter)](https://twitter.com/txst), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/txst/), [Snapchat](https://www.snapchat.com/add/txstateu), [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCk2yxL5-rZ3We_UCHo5lQyw), [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.com/txst/), and [Spotify](https://open.spotify.com/user/txst).

05.02 The Division of Marketing and Communications may seize and remove any Texas State social media accounts that do not comply with this policy or the guidelines and best practices outlined on the Division of Marketing and Communications’ [Social Media Guidelines site](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/) and [Brand Guidelines site](https://brand.txst.edu/).

05.03 The Division of Marketing and Communications maintains the [Social Media Directory](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/directory.html). Accounts may be listed on the social media directory by [registering their account](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/new-account/register.html) and meeting the requirements outlined on the [Social Media Guidelines site](https://www.socialmedia.txst.edu/).

05.04 Violations of a platform’s terms of service to the social media platform must be reported. Fake accounts should also be reported to the social media platform (see the [Social Media Policies page](http://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/policies.html) for more information on reporting accounts for impersonation).

**06. REVIEWERS OF THIS UPPS**

06.01 Reviewers of this UPPS include the following:

Position Date

Assistant Vice President for July 1 E2Y

University Marketing

Vice President for Marketing and July 1 E2Y

Communications, Chief

Communications Officer

**07. CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

This UPPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities and represents Texas State policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Assistant Vice President for University Marketing; senior reviewer of this UPPS

Vice President for Marketing Communications, Chief Communications Officer

President