Auburn University at Montgomery
Policies and Procedures

Title: Social Media Policy
Responsible Office: University Relations

I.   PURPOSE

This policy outlines the procedures governing social media pages created by university entities for the purpose of promoting university departments or events on social media outlets including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and similar sites.

II.   POLICY

Official use of social media by university staff, faculty, students, or others representing the university must follow the procedures below.

1. All social media profiles (e.g., Facebook pages, Twitter accounts) representing the university must be registered with University Relations. Administrators must submit the name and link of the social media site, along with a list of Administrators and their contact information, to University Relations and their department head or unit director. This applies to all schools, departments, centers, programs, student groups, and organizations.

2. Creators of social media profiles must provide University Relations with the name and contact information of the individual(s) authorized by the department or unit to create, operate, monitor, and edit the social media site on an ongoing basis. This person will be the Administrator. Students may be named as Administrators only when a departmental faculty or staff member is also an Administrator and has full access to the page.

3. Authorized Administrators must maintain the security of social media passwords and identification; these individuals are fully responsible for all use of the account and any actions that take place using the account.

4. In Facebook, or similar social media allowing the creation of pages, pages created on behalf of the university must be created as organization pages rather than groups or personal profiles; the page profile should be created for use by an entity (a non-individual) for business purposes.

5. Social media pages must feature the department's official departmental logo or program logo, not the university's logo. That logo and any icons or graphics used on the site must comply with the university's Style Guide, available at www.aum.edu/Style_Guide. If the department does not have a logo or is uncertain whether a current logo is consistent with the guidelines, a request may be made to the Office of University Relations for the creation or review of a logo.

6. Administrators must not post or allow the posting of content that might be embarrassing to an individual or that could be construed as placing an individual in a bad or false light.

7. Administrators must not use or allow the use of lewd language, inappropriate content or libelous comments about anything or anyone in any posts representing the university.

8. Administrators must not post or allow the posting of content that is not their property or the property of the university. Any material that is copyrighted by another individual or organization should not be posted.

9. Merchandise sales through social media is prohibited. Event ticket sales and fundraising campaigns must be approved by the Office of Advancement and University Relations.

10. Administrators must not collect personal information, such as social security numbers and addresses, from social media users. The official form of communication for the university is e-mail.

11. Administrators must not use social media when communicating about an issue involving student records, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition, discussion of personnel and employee health issues are to be avoided in accordance with federal privacy laws.

12. Administrators must not use social media as an official form of communication from the university.

13. Make it clear that the views and opinions expressed in social media are yours alone and do not represent the official views of the university.

III.   EFFECTIVE DATE

September 15, 2011

IV.   APPLICABILITY

Faculty, staff, students, and representatives of the university are required to abide by this policy.

V.   RESPONSIBILITY

The University Relations Office will administer this policy.

VI.   DEFINITIONS

Social Media – includes Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and any other social communication sites. It does not include anything that is a part of the aum.edu website.

VII.   PROCEDURES

Users should reference the AUM Social Media Guidelines to avoid violation of this policy. See Appendix A.

VIII.   SANCTIONS

Violations of this policy by AUM employees or students will be handled in accordance with the applicable faculty, staff, and student policies.

IX.   EXCLUSIONS

None.

X.   INTERPRETATION

The University Relations Director will interpret policies as needed.

APPROVAL TO PROCEED: _____   **DATE:** _____

APPENDIX A

<p align="center">AUM Social Media Guidelines</p>

Guidelines for the use of Social Media at AUM
Social network sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are exciting communication tools used to share knowledge, express creativity, and connect with others who share interests. AUM supports participation in these online communities to further our branding messages and build community.

We have assembled the following "best practice" guidelines from respected online and industry sources to help employees and students use these forums effectively, protect their personal and professional reputations, and follow university policies.

Did you know posting university content on Facebook authorizes the site to make copies and use it for virtually any purpose? Copyright claims could be asserted against the university if a department inadvertently posted a picture or video to which a third party claims a copyright. Posting of inappropriate content, even if unauthorized, could subject the university to embarrassment or worse.

Because of these types of issues, it is important that official use of social media by university representatives adheres to appropriate guidelines intended to minimize such risks. Questions regarding the use of social media or these guidelines should be referred to University Relations, 334-244-3642.

Posting of Content
The following issues should be considered prior to posting content (e.g., text, a photograph, or video) to a social media site:

1. General content issues:
- Remember that content posted may be redistributed through the internet and other media channels and may be viewed by the general public. If deleted or modified, older versions may continue to exist online. Content should not be posted unless it furthers the university's mission. Share only information that is appropriate for the public.

- In order to avoid discrepancies and minimize the need for updating, social media pages should not be used to post detailed policy or procedure information such as program admission criteria. Rather, users should be directed to the official university publications or website for such information.

- Do not include any personally identifiable information that can be used to locate someone offline. This includes anyone's screen name, personal photo, hobbies, identification numbers such as Social Security numbers or student IDs, addresses, and phone numbers (other than an authorized business address or business phone number).

- Do not upload, post, transmit, share, store, or otherwise make publicly available on the site any private information of any third party including addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, Social Security numbers, credit card numbers, etc.

- Generally speaking, content should not be posted if it depicts a dangerous activity, unless approved by the Director of University Relations. If approved, a legal warning/disclaimer may be appropriate. Consult University Relations for assistance.

- Content must not be posted unless it is clearly suitable for all ages.

- Use caution when posting content that could create a security risk for the university. Examples include, but are not limited to, images of child care facilities, restricted access research areas, and information technology facilities.

- Do not post content that shows (or may be perceived to show) someone getting hurt, attacked, or humiliated; might be considered offensive to a particular group, racist, bigoted, or demeaning; depicts an activity that is (or may be perceived to be) illegal (e.g., drug use); or could otherwise do harm to the reputation of the university or anyone associated with the university.

2. Use of university marks:
- When using departmental logos, make sure the image is not inappropriately cropped in thumbnail versions that will be viewed in other places on the social media site. Departments also are encouraged to use photographs to display campus beauty, but not as profile images. Photos suitable for web posting are available for free in University Relations, 109 Administration Building.

3. Use of copyrighted or proprietary materials, such as music, art, photographs, text, video, or information considered to be a trade secret by a university contractor:

- The university must secure written permission prior to using/incorporating any copyrighted or proprietary materials. Questions regarding the appropriateness of a posting should be addressed to University Relations. The safest course is to use only materials created by the university for such purposes. Contact University Relations at socialmedia@aum.edu for assistance.

4. Use of individual's images:
- Generally speaking, prior permission (i.e. a release) must be obtained from individuals whose images are identifiable unless that person is in a public setting (e.g., crowd at a football game). For that reason, it is always best to use content, such as photographs or videos, provided by University Relations and/or the university photographer specifically for this purpose. Assistance with releases, or answers to questions about exceptions to the requirement for a release, can be obtained from University Relations.

- Do not post images that might be embarrassing to an individual or that could be construed as placing an individual in a bad or false light.

- Do not post images that might cause someone to believe his or her name, image, likeness, or other identifying aspect of his or her identity is being used for commercial purposes without permission.

- Special care must always be taken when dealing with images of special populations (e.g., minors, health care patients, research subjects). Stringent legal requirements apply. Such images should never be used in this type of context without approval of the appropriate authorities.

Best Practices:

- Monitor and update sites regularly. To be effective, sites must be dynamic and will require updating more frequently than a website. A stale page will likely cause more damage to the image of an entity than having no page at all. Using a free social media management service such as www.hootsuite.com

will enable Administrators to schedule messages in various social media outlets at once and keep content fresh.

- **Don't tell secrets.** It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but is not appropriate to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about proprietary research, details of current projects, financial information, and personnel information.

- **Protect your own privacy.** Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information that is similar to that which would be on the AUM website. Privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information you would not want the public to see.

- **Be honest.** Do not blog anonymously using pseudonyms or false screen names. AUM is committed to the principles of transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear about who you are, and identify that you work for AUM. Do not say anything dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be cautious about disclosing personal details. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty.

- **Respect copyright laws.** It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others, including AUM-owned copyrights and brands. Never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

- **Respect your audience, AUM, and your colleagues.** The public and AUM's employees and students reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Don't say anything that contradicts the AUM website. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious consideration one must take in posting (e.g., no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity), but also includes proper consideration of privacy and non-offensive topics that still may be considered objectionable or inflammatory to some, such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of AUM.

- **Protect AUM students, prospective students, alumni, faculty, staff, business partners, and vendors.** Students, prospective students, alumni, faculty, staff, partners, or vendors should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a student, prospective student, alumnus, faculty member, staff member, business or research partner, or vendors by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a vendor or client engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying examples if the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements that may be in place with the research partner or make it easy for someone to identify the vendor.

- **Tread carefully on controversial issues.** If you see misrepresentations made about AUM in social media, you may point them out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments – they may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

- **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes.** If you make an error, be up front about it and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone

accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly. It is better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action. University Relations staff can assist you by providing advice on wording of a posting to correct an error if needed.

Reporting Problems

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other sites accept complaints regarding abuse and other issues, including harassing messages. This can be done via "Report" links below a piece of content, or by locating the appropriate links on the sites' "help" pages. Immediately report problems or concerns to University Relations.