Associated Students
California State University, Northridge

Social Media Guidelines

For questions about these guidelines, please contact the A.S. Marketing and Public Relations office at (818) 677-4236
Mission Statement

The Associated Students is the primary advocate for students at California State University, Northridge and provides excellent, meaningful programs and services designed to create and enhance a spirited, learning-focused campus environment.

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Social Media Guidelines – Policy Statement

The use of social media websites is increasingly common for university departments, auxiliaries, students, faculty, and staff, and these communications tools have the potential to create a significant impact on both organizational and professional reputations.

Associated Students (A.S.) at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) has developed these guidelines to properly portray, promote and protect A.S. in relation to social media. These guidelines also provide suggestions to protect personal, professional and organizational reputations while using social media. These guidelines require that:

• Officially-recognized social media accounts and web pages be reviewed and approved through an approval process.

• Officially-approved social media accounts must be administrated by an A.S. staff member.

• Officially-approved accounts include a disclaimer statement regarding content and opinions contained on the site (see Disclaimers).

• Inappropriate, offensive, injurious, libelous and illegal content may be removed by A.S. account administrators or at the direction of the A.S. Marketing department.

1. Application of Guidelines

These guidelines apply to social media accounts created by A.S. employees for the official business purposes, including A.S. departments, programs, entities, etc. The guidelines will therefore impact students, faculty, and staff who utilize various social media. Some examples of the various social media included under these guidelines are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, and YouTube. All officially-recognized social media accounts will be publicly listed on the A.S. website and on printed promotional material as applicable.

Definitions

• **Poster or User:** A person submitting content to any social media site that is officially recognized by A.S. This may be a staff employee, a student employee, a student leader, or a volunteer.

• **Social Media:** Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Types of social media include networks like Facebook and YouTube as well as blogs and podcasts.

• **Social Media Accounts:** Accounts or profiles created in social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, and LinkedIn.

• **Social Media Best Practices:** Widely recognized guidelines, ethical considerations, and conventions for creating successful social media campaigns and accounts.

• **Social Media Terms and Conditions:** Terms and conditions imposed by the social media website in which the User is participating.
2. Procedures and Responsibility

Use of Social Media Sites for General Business, Marketing and Communications

- The A.S. Support Services department will be responsible for administering A.S. social media guidelines and approving all actions related to it.

- A.S. Marketing staff will provide input and assist in A.S. outreach and training on these guidelines and best practices.

- All those interested in an officially-recognized social media account are required to submit the profile image/avatar of each account for approval to ensure that A.S.'s branding standards set forth in the A.S. Style Guide are upheld.

- Should an A.S. identified administrator of an account leave A.S. or no longer wishes to be an account administrator, it is the department’s responsibility to designate another entity to be an account administrator and remove the former employee’s administrative permissions to the site. A department will have two individuals to act concurrently as account administrators for a social media site where the second person is a staff employee from A.S. Support Services department.

- A.S. identified as administrators of accounts are responsible for managing and monitoring content of their social media accounts. Administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the University Code of Conduct Policies.

3. Legal Matters

- Posters using social media channels are expected to do so without infringing on the copyrights of others. Posters are prohibited from engaging in any activities via social media channels that could easily provoke a legitimate copyright infringement claim.

- Posters are prohibited from using social media channels for evaluating the performance of their co-workers, business partners or vendors.

- Posters are prohibited from using social media channels to publicly criticize or complain about the behavior or actions of any students and/or staff.

- Posters are prohibited from using social media channels to discuss legal matters, or litigation. All inquiries of a legal nature should be referred to an appropriate staff member.
4. Privacy

Students and staff have a right to their personal privacy. They have the right to keep their personal opinions, beliefs, thoughts and emotions private. Posters are prohibited from sharing anything via social media channels that could violate another’s right to privacy.

Examples of social media disclosures that may compromise staff or student's right to privacy include, but are not limited to: pictures, video or audio recorded and shared through social media channels without permission, the public disclosure of private facts or the disclosure of information gained through unreasonable intrusion.

6. Disclaimers

Only those authorized to speak on behalf of A.S. in an official capacity may do so via social media channels. Posters not authorized to speak on behalf of A.S. may share their opinions or thoughts via social media channels, as long as they precede their social media disclosure with a disclaimer clearly acknowledging that their personal opinions do not reflect the opinions of A.S. such as:

"I work for Associated Students, but this is my personal opinion."
"I am not an official spokesperson, but my personal opinion is..."

Posters who choose to use social media channels to distribute links to official A.S. content are not required to disclaim their relationship to A.S. in their social media disclosure, so long as they have clearly acknowledged their relationship to A.S. on the profile page of the social media account.

Posters who choose to use social media to publish content or engage in online conversations in an unofficial capacity without referencing links to official A.S. content, must feature the following disclaimer prominently on the profile page of the social media channel:

"The postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent Associated Students’ positions, strategies or opinions.”

This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt posters from responsibility when making social media disclosures. By virtue of their position, they must consider whether the personal thoughts they publish may be misunderstood as expressing positions. Social media channels are not the place to communicate policies or guidelines to employees.

6. Penalties

Failure to comply with these social media guidelines may result in:

- Withdrawal of access to information and/or information resources.
- Disciplinary action, up to and including termination or removal from position or office.
- Civil or criminal penalties as provided by law.
7. References

Associated Students Facebook account
http://www.facebook.com/csunas

CSUN Facebook account
http://www.facebook.com/calstatenorthridge

CSUN Copyright Material Policy
http://www-admn.csun.edu/vp/policies/500_itr/500-54.pdf

Protection of Confidential Electronic Information
http://www-admn.csun.edu/vp/policies/500_itr/500-52.pdf

CSUN Student Code of Conduct
http://www.csun.edu/anr/soc/studentconduct.html

Associated Students Personnel Manual
http://www.csunas.org/hr

Facebook Statement of Rights and Responsibilities
http://www.facebook.com/terms.php

Facebook Safety Center
http://www.facebook.com/help/safety

Twitter Privacy Policy
https://twitter.com/privacy

YouTube Code of Conduct/Terms
http://www.youtube.com/t/terms

Flickr Community Guidelines
http://www.flickr.com/guidelines.gne

Foursquare Terms
https://foursquare.com/legal/terms