

<b>UT Health Science Center: CM0006-H Social Media</b>	
<b>Version 2</b>	<b>Publication Date: 10/02/2023</b>

## Objective

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) has developed a social media policy and application process to ensure that all interactions on behalf of UTHSC on social media represent the University's best interests.

## Scope

This policy will apply to social media accounts created by UTHSC employees and students for the official business purposes of the University, as well as to represent student organizations, and applies to all UTHSC staff, faculty, residents, students, groups, units, departments, programs, entities, etc. It will therefore impact students, faculty, and staff who utilize various social media for communication in conjunction with representing UTHSC. Some examples of the various communication media included under this policy are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and Threads.

All officially recognized UTHSC social media accounts will be publicly listed by the University in a directory on the UTHSC social media website: <https://uthsc.edu/social-media/>

Please note – this policy will apply only to social media accounts created for the purpose of officially representing UTHSC groups, units, colleges, departments, programs, entities, etc. and will not apply to private social media accounts. University employees acting in an individual capacity should exercise caution to communicate clearly that they are not acting in a representative capacity or expressing the views of the University.

## Roles

This policy will apply to social media accounts created by UTHSC employees and students for the official business purposes of the University, as well as to represent student organizations, and applies to all UTHSC staff, faculty, residents, students, groups, units, departments, programs, entities, etc.

## Definitions

- I. **Poster or User:** A person submitting content to any social media site that is officially recognized by UTHSC.
- II. **Social Media:** Social media is media designed to be disseminated through social interaction using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media uses Internet and web-based technologies to transform how people communicate with one another and receive news, information and entertainment. Social media has transformed people from content consumers to content producers. Types of social media include networks like Facebook and YouTube but also include blogs and podcasts.

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- III. **Social Media Accounts:** These are accounts or profiles created in social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Threads and LinkedIn.
- IV. **Social Media Best Practices:** These consist of widely recognized guidelines, ethical considerations, and conventions for creating successful social media campaigns and accounts.
- V. **Social Media Terms and Conditions:** The terms and conditions imposed by the social media website in which the User is participating.
- VI. **University's best interest:** To represent the University in a fair, accurate, and legal manner while protecting the brand and reputation of the institution.

## Procedure

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

The Vice Chancellor for Communications and Marketing and the Office of Communications and Marketing (OCM) will be responsible for administering this policy. Administrators may contact the OCM at any time for consultation.

II. The following requirements apply to all UTHSC social media accounts:

- A. All applicants for officially recognized social media accounts are required to submit the profile image/avatar of each account as part of the application process to ensure that UTHSC's Branding Guidelines are upheld. If a profile image or avatar, an applicant must fill out our communications and marketing request form:  
<https://uthsc.edu/communications/form.php>
- B. All social media accounts officially recognized by UTHSC must have at least two UTHSC employees as administrators at all times to ensure adherence to this policy.
- C. Should a UTHSC employee administrator of an account leave the University for any reason or no longer wishes to be an account administrator, it is the academic or administrative department's responsibility to designate another UTHSC employee to be an account administrator and remove the former employee's administrative permissions to the site. Whenever possible, a department should appoint two individuals to act concurrently as account administrators for a social media site representing UTHSC.
- D. If there are not two employees available to serve as account administrators, a member of the UTHSC OCM may serve in that capacity.

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- E. If there are any problems identifying a new administrator, please contact OCM.
- F. UTHSC employees identified as administrators of accounts are responsible for managing and monitoring content of those social media accounts. Administrators are responsible to remove content that may violate the university conduct policies or the social media terms and conditions.

### III. Guidelines for Content

- A. UTHSC employees are expected to adhere to the same standards of conduct online as they would in the workplace. Laws and policies respecting workplace conduct, contracting and conflict of interest, as well as applicable policies and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, donors, media and all other University constituents apply online and in the social media context just as they do in personal interactions. Employees are fully responsible for what they post to social media sites.
- B. Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Do not include confidential information about the University, its staff, or its students in materials posted on social media sites. Examples include information about a student's grades or performance, admission status, GPA, Social Security number, and any/all other information that would be covered by FERPA; personally identifiable health information such as medical conditions or injuries or healthcare sought or received; and other private personal information that the person has not consented to have published. The university will not ask for, nor should an individual send, credit card or payment information, classified information, privileged information, private information or information subject to non-disclosure agreements via any social network internet communication service.
- C. Post only content that is not threatening, obscene, a violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal. If you are unsure whether certain content is protected by privacy or intellectual property laws, contact UTHSC's Institutional Compliance Office or the Office of General Counsel.
- D. Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the University or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. UTHSC's name or marks may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.

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- E. By posting content to any social media site, the poster represents that the poster owns or otherwise has all of the rights necessary to lawfully use that content or that the use of the content is permitted by fair use. Posters also agree that they will not knowingly provide misleading or false information, and that they will indemnify and hold the University harmless for any claims resulting from the content.
  
- F. While UTHSC is committed to the protection of academic freedom, and it does not regularly review content posted to social media sites, it shall have the right to do so, and, with respect to any site maintained in the name of the University, may remove or cause the removal of any content for any lawful reason, including but not limited to, content that it deems threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.
  
- G. When using or posting online material that includes direct or paraphrased quotes, thoughts, ideas, photos, or videos, always include citations. Provide a link to the original material if applicable.
  
- H. If you also maintain your own personal social media accounts, you should avoid creating confusion over whether or not the account is associated with UTHSC. If you identify yourself as a UTHSC faculty or staff member online, it should be clear that the views expressed on your site are not those of the University and you are not acting in your capacity as a UTHSC employee. While not a requirement, UTHSC employees may consider adding the following disclaimer to personal social media accounts. “While I am an employee at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, comments made on this account are my own and not that of the University.”

University employees and departments are not authorized to enter into advertising agreements with social media sites without prior authorization and approval obtained by contacting the Procurement Services Department. Any UTHSC unit wishing to purchase advertising services from social media sites, or from any type of publication, must follow all applicable rules and policies governing both the public relations considerations and the procurement and contracting considerations related to such services.

**Penalties/Disciplinary Action for Non-Compliance**

Any person not following the policy outlined above will be asked to remove their social media accounts and all references to the University.

**Related Policies/Guidance Documents**

[UTHSC Branding Guidelines](#)

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[CM0001-H Advertising](#)

[CM0004-H Logo Usage](#)

[CM0005-H Media](#)