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Social Media Policy and Guidelines

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Be real. Use good judgment.



What is social media?

- **Social media** are media for social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable communication techniques.
- Examples include: **Facebook, Google Plus, Twitter, Podcasts, Vodcasts, Text Messaging, Email Blasts, MySpace, Flickr, YouTube, Blogs, Social Bookmarking**
- Check our directory of social media accounts associated with Lehigh Athletics by clicking here: **Social Media Directory**

Why do we engage in social media?

The Athletics department is using social media to engage and connect with our fans, alumni, recruits, parents, the Lehigh community, and the wider Lehigh Valley public. Social media provide powerful communication opportunities. Relationships grow with personal, regular, and honest communication, therefore, social media provide us with powerful tools to build relationships.

Athletic Department Policies

- **A full time staff member must be the owner of the account.**
Other staff/students can be made administrators on an account and may post content but the account must ultimately be "owned" by a full time staff member.
- **Put "Lehigh" in the front of your account's name.**
Any "official" social media account affiliated with Lehigh Athletics must use the prefix "Lehigh" in its name. For example: "Lehigh Football" or "Lehigh Campus Athletics"
- **Notify us of new official accounts.**
If you want to start a new "official Lehigh" social media account, please alert **Julie Oltman**.
- **Do not post anything that is confidential, sensitive, or private.**
- **Follow all applicable laws, NCAA rules, and University and Athletic Department policies and guidelines.**
- **Do not comment on athlete injuries, rosters, playbooks, officiating, or any other team information that should be kept confidential.**
- **Follow all Social Media site rules.** Here are the terms for **Facebook** and **Twitter**.
- **Respect copyright and fair use.**

Best Practices

- **Think twice before posting.** If you wouldn't want your boss, parents, or future employer to see your post, don't post it.
- **Be accurate.** If you make a mistake, own up and correct it quickly.
- **Be respectful.** Be positive. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. It's the Golden Rule!
- **Be honest.** Be transparent. Always tell the truth.
- **Remember many different audiences will see your posts** including fans, alumni, kids, student athletes, parents, staff, faculty, and maybe even Alice Gast herself!
- **Be professional and polite.**
- **Share the love!** Link back to other University and Athletics postings
- **Be authentic. Be real.** Don't sound like you're selling something. The expected tone within social media sites is conversational and personal.
- **Moderate your content.** Respond promptly to comments where a response is expected.
- **Remember that the internet is permanent.** Even if you delete something, it's still out there somewhere. Google has a long memory!
- **Don't post our logo.** It needs to be protected and it can be easily copied from a social media site.
- **Don't spam. Ever.** Repeated posts about something you're selling will result in turning people off and you will lose your audience.
- **Avoid topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory, like politics and religion.**
- **Don't post anything that you wouldn't say openly in a workplace** such as comments about drug use, profanity, off-color or sexual humor, ethnic slurs, or personal insults.
- **Don't forget your day job!** Social media outlets can be very effective when used strategically but they can also be huge time-burners. Have a plan for your social media activity. Whenever you post something, make sure it adds value so that there is a return on your investment of time.
- **Be in the right state of mind when you make a post.** Don't post when you're angry, upset, or your judgment is impaired in any way. Remember, the internet is permanent!

Note regarding personal social media accounts:

- We believe deeply in free speech, but if you post anything regarding work from your personal social media account, be transparent and state that you are an employee of Lehigh University and be clear about your role.
- If you post an opinion about anything Lehigh on your own accounts, please make it clear that your post represents your OWN view and does not represent the University.
- **Understand and use the privacy settings! Facebook and Twitter**
- **Remember that it is your responsibility to follow NCAA rules when posting content on a Lehigh site or your personal web site or social media account.** You should assume anything you post on your personal account could be read by staff, opposing teams, recruits, alumni, future employees or coaches. Be smart because you are always "on the clock" when it comes to the rules and representing Lehigh. General athletics content may be posted to your site but don't forget that many areas have restrictions: video content, recruiting information, endorsements and more. **Ask if you are not sure!**

Training

If you are unfamiliar with social media, it is highly recommended that you get some training! Please contact either **Julie Oltman, Erin Iwaskiewicz, Sally Gilotti** (University Communications) or **Lauren Sammak** (University Business Services) and we'll gladly set up a time to do some one on one training.

Resources for this page include:

- **Social Media Policy Database**
- **Best Buy's Social Media Policy**
- **16 Social Media Guidelines Used by Real Companies**
- **IMB Social Computing Guidelines**

▪ 50 Tips for Student Athletes



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