

# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

2024

---

UNIVERSITY SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACTS ..... 2

USE OF UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED SOCIAL MEDIA ..... 2

    Who is Subject to This Policy? ..... 2

DEFINITIONS ..... 3

RESPONSIBILITIES..... 3

    University Marketing ..... 3

    Colleges, Departments, Programs, Offices, Student and Employee Organizations, and  
    Other University Units ..... 4

    Account Administrators (Admins)..... 4

    Social Media Managers ..... 5

OVERSIGHT ..... 5

RESOURCES ..... 5

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT ..... 6

PRIVACY ..... 6

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ..... 6

    Use of University Symbols and Logos ..... 6

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ..... 7

## UNIVERSITY SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACTS

Valparaiso University's marketing department is responsible for maintaining the integrity and best-practices of the University's brand and sponsored social media accounts. Guidance is always available from the marketing department. Contact the following with any inquiries about these policies or managing social media accounts:

**Kristen Knoerzer**, Executive Director of Marketing, [kristen.knoerzer@valpo.edu](mailto:kristen.knoerzer@valpo.edu)

**Darlene Cohn**, Director of Paid and Digital Media, [darlene.cohn@valpo.edu](mailto:darlene.cohn@valpo.edu)

## USE OF UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media offers a unique opportunity for Valparaiso University and its associated accounts to engage with the University, local, state, national, and international communities. It can be a source of connecting the University with its students, potential students, families, alumni, and the community at large; however, social media also poses a number of risks. This section aims to outline official policy guidelines for all University-sponsored social media accounts to minimize risk while maximizing positive outcomes.

### Who is Subject to This Policy?

Valparaiso University's marketing, communications, admission, and athletics offices maintain official brand accounts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Snapchat, and X (formerly Twitter) for the purposes of promoting the University. The University also sponsors the accounts of its associated departments and organizations, including those of colleges, departments, classes, programs, and student and employee organizations. As such, regardless of which platforms these departments and organizations use, each account must be used in accordance with its intended purpose and is subject to the rules and guidelines outlined within this policy. Accounts established for employee organizations for the purpose of discussing or assessing terms and conditions of employments, work-related issues, employment disputes, or assisting with workplace issues will be honored.

## DEFINITIONS

**Valparaiso University Brand Accounts** – The official social media accounts of Valparaiso University, administered by the marketing, communications, admission, and athletics offices.

**University–Sponsored Accounts** – Social media accounts maintained by Valparaiso University departments and organizations other than the official brand accounts.

**Account Administrators (Admins)** – Individuals responsible for the oversight of social media accounts. These individuals have admin–level access to the accounts.

**Social Media Managers** – Individuals responsible for the day–to–day maintenance of social media accounts.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### University Marketing

The marketing office, in collaboration with University administration and leadership, is responsible for:

- a. Maintaining an up–to–date database of University brand and University–sponsored social media accounts
- b. Ensuring the use of social media accounts by University departments and organizations follows the policies outlined in this document
- c. Providing guidance for the creation and maintenance of social media accounts
- d. In the event that a social media account violates this policy or is unused, informing the appropriate people of the issue and working with them to resolve the issue or terminate the account

## **Colleges, Departments, Programs, Offices, Student and Employee Organizations, and Other University Units**

University departments are responsible for:

- a. Designating TWO University–employed staff members to act as account administrators, even if the social media management is performed by other individuals. If Meta Business Suite is used, it also needs two designated administrators. The purpose of having two administrators is to help safeguard against hacking as well as account and financial loss.
- b. Reporting all University–sponsored social media accounts to the marketing department
- c. Consulting with the marketing department before creating any new University–sponsored social media accounts
- d. Assessing their social media accounts and usage to ensure accounts are complying with University policies and are kept up to date
- e. Reporting any changes to the account or administrators to the marketing department

### **Account Administrators (Admins)**

Account administrators are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring their social media accounts and posts (including text, graphics, photography, videography, and other forms of content) adhere to University social media policies and brand guidelines and that any social media managers are familiar with these policies
- b. Assigning social media managers, if desired, to the day–to–day operations of social media management
- c. Keeping social media account access secure and up–to–date
- d. Regularly reviewing account administrator and social media manager privileges
- e. Using department or organization email addresses (not individuals’ email addresses) for social media accounts
- f. Setting strong passwords and keep them secure
- g. Changing passwords promptly after any change in account management

- h. Notifying the Valparaiso University Police Department and the marketing office of any threatening or similarly concerning social media comments, bios, or engagements
- i. Taking steps to verify that social media accounts that are no longer in use are closed, not visible to the public, and can no longer be posted to

## Social Media Managers

Social media managers are responsible for:

- a. Creating and posting new, relevant content for social media accounts on a regular basis
- b. Monitoring comments and engagements with posts and responding in a timely, appropriate manner
- c. Reporting any threatening or otherwise concerning social media engagements to account administrators

## OVERSIGHT

Every unit with one or more social media accounts will inform the marketing office which social media platforms they use and their account handles. In this way, the University is aware of all associated social media accounts. Please email this information to [social.media@valpo.edu](mailto:social.media@valpo.edu). Any changes to this information should be reported to the marketing office.

Should the marketing office or other campus authority determine that a University-sponsored social media account has violated this policy or appears to no longer be maintained, the unit will be notified. If the issue is not resolved, the social media account may be closed to ensure it is no longer visible to the public and that content can no longer be posted to it.

## RESOURCES

The marketing office will provide social media training, when requested, to any unit running University-sponsored social media accounts. Any questions are welcome and may be directed to [social.media@valpo.edu](mailto:social.media@valpo.edu). Units may choose to create supplemental guidelines for their social media accounts; please share these guidelines with the marketing office.

## ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

Account administrators and social media managers are responsible for the maintenance of their social media accounts, which includes:

- a. Complying with this policy and related laws, regulations, and University policies, as well as any applicable terms and conditions imposed by any third-party social media outlet
- b. Regularly generating new content on the social media account
- c. Monitoring comments or engagements posted to the social media account and responding promptly and appropriately

## PRIVACY

All Valparaiso University faculty and staff must adhere to all University policies and procedures, as well as federal laws such as FERPA and HIPAA. Posting confidential and proprietary information is prohibited, including confidential information about the University, students, faculty, staff, alumni, or donors.

Photographs of individuals at public events may be posted. Please obtain permission from individuals at private events before posting. Please refrain from posting photographs of children without express permission from parents or guardians unless they are part of a crowd. When in doubt, obtain permission.

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

As a respected University, we must be especially mindful of copyright and intellectual property laws. Do not post anything that violates copyright or intellectual property law. This includes images, music, video, written materials, and other owned media. When posting these materials, take the time to research and properly attribute any creators or owners. Obtain permission to post these materials when necessary.

### **Use of University Symbols and Logos**

Use of official Valparaiso University logos and images is encouraged, but these logos and images must not be altered as they are registered with the United States

Patent Office. Find more information about official University branding guidelines and logos at [valpo.edu/marcom](http://valpo.edu/marcom), or contact the brand manager with clarifying questions at [brand.manager@valpo.edu](mailto:brand.manager@valpo.edu).

## PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

This section applies to an employee's or student's personal use of social media and is governed by the University's general counsel office. Further, it outlines the potential impact of personal social media use to your employment or student relationship with Valparaiso University.

- a. Think first, post second. Employees and students are free to use their personal social media accounts as they so choose; however, things that can cause trouble in "real life" with the University can also get you in trouble in the realm of the internet and social media. Some examples include sexually harassing a colleague, inappropriate interactions with students, derogatory statements, threatening or intimidating others, or defamation.
- b. Generally, employees should manage their personal social media accounts on their own time. There may be *de minimis* personal use of social media while utilizing University resources but only to the extent such use does not hinder an employee's job productivity; however, it is acknowledged that faculty may choose to use their personal social media accounts in furtherance of their academic endeavors and employment with the University and this policy is not intended to hinder that option.
- c. Computers, hardware, and information technology infrastructure are property owned and operated by the University. As a result, the law does not grant you an expectation of privacy in your usage of them.
- d. You are prohibited from using the Valparaiso University name or image to endorse an opinion, product, cause, business, or political candidate or otherwise holding yourself as a representative of the University when you are not. When expressing a personal opinion, acknowledge this, especially if your statement could be reasonably interpreted by the message receiver that you are speaking on behalf of the University. You can use the following statement to help dissociate your opinions from those of the University: "The views expressed herein are my personal opinions and are not necessarily those of Valparaiso University."



- e. Only authorized University staff members may recruit potential student-athletes. The University may be held in violation of NCAA rules and regulations if you use your personal social media accounts to contact potential student-athletes in an attempt to recruit or entice them to attend Valparaiso University.

Non-compliance with this policy by University employees will result in a review of the incident. Disciplinary action may involve a verbal or written warning, suspension, or potential termination of employment or privileges with Valparaiso University. This section is not a substitute for any applicable University processes that implement employee or student disciplinary proceedings.