Social Media Policy

The use of social media platforms is becoming common for the University community, students and employees, and these communications tools have the potential to create a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations. The University of Petroleum & Energy Studies (UPES) has developed a policy to properly portray, promote and protect the institution and to assist UPES entities in creating and managing their social media accounts. The following policy also provides suggestions on how to protect personal and professional reputations while using social media. This policy requires that:

- Officially-recognized UPES social media accounts and web pages be reviewed and approved through an application process.
- Each social media account will have responsible administrators assigned – which may be outsourced.
- Each officially-approved account must include a disclaimer statement, in the prescribed form, regarding content and opinions contained on the site.
- Inappropriate, offensive, injurious and illegal content may be removed by account administrators or at the direction of University Academic Administrators or Central IT Services.
- Best practices for social media accounts should be considered.
- Enterprise social networks (including Yammer or other equivalent) come under into the applicability of this policy.

2. Application of Policy
This policy will apply to social media accounts created by University employees for the official business purposes of the University, including UPES faculty, groups, departments, programs, entities, etc. It will therefore impact students, faculty, and staff who utilize various social media for communication in conjunction with representing the University. Some examples of the various communication media included under this policy are Yammer, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, Docstock and YouTube. Student organizations that wish to create social media accounts that will be officially recognized by the University must be registered through the University's Corporate Communication / Central IT services departments.

3. Exemptions
This policy will apply only to social media accounts created for the express purpose of officially representing University groups, 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.

4. Definitions
Poster or User: A person submitting content to any social media site that is officially recognized by UPES.

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, YouTube and Yammer but also include blogs and podcasts.

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

Social Media Best Practices: These consist of widely recognized guidelines, ethical considerations, and conventions for creating successful social media campaigns and accounts.

Social media Staff: Members of the Social media staff are from the Corporate communication department of the University. The purpose of these staff is to help UPES create, manage and succeed in using social media outlets to further their academic mission. The Social Media Staff will identify individuals and groups that currently manage social media accounts for UPES entities, advise them on the policy, and encourage those who have not done so to apply for official recognition status. The staff will provide occasional training sessions regarding social media use and its role at UPES.

Social Media Terms and Conditions: The terms and conditions imposed by the social media website in which the User is participating.

University's best interest: To represent the University in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the brand and reputation of the institution.

5. Procedures and Responsibilities
A. Use of Social Media Sites for General Business, Marketing and Communications
1. The Director – Marketing and Corporate Communication department will be responsible for administering this policy.
2. The Social Media Policy Staff will manage the day-to-day application process and update the UPES website web page and account directory as needed.
3. All social media accounts officially recognized by UPES must have at least two UPES employees as administrators at all times to ensure adherence to this policy.
4. Should a UPES employee administrator of an account leave the University for any reason or no longer wishes to be an account administrator, it is the Director - Marketing / Corporate Communications department's responsibility to designate another 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 UPES.
5. If two employees are not available to serve as account administrators, a member of the Social Media Staff may serve in that capacity.
6. Employees / students 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 Acceptable IT Policies or the Terms and Conditions of use.
7. Guidelines for Content:
a) Users are expected to adhere to same standards of conduct online as they would in the workplace. Laws and policies respecting contracting and conflict of interest, as well as applicable policies and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, media and all other University constituents apply online and in the social media context just as they do in personal interactions. Users are fully responsible for what they post to social media sites.
b) Use good judgment about content and respect privacy laws. Do not include confidential information about the University, its staff, or its students.

Post only content that is not threatening, obscene, a violation of intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal.

c) Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the University or any of its constituent entities is strictly prohibited. UPES's name or logos may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.

d) 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.

e) While UPES 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.

f) 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.

g) Refrain from using information and conducting activities that may violate University or Government rules and regulations.

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 UPES. If you identify yourself as a University student, 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 UPES employee or student. While not a requirement, UPES employees may consider adding the following disclaimer to personal social media accounts. "While I am an employee / student at the University of Petroleum & Energy Studies, comments made on this account are my own and not those of the University."

Enforcement
i. Users found violating this policy may be denied access to University computing resources and may be subject to other penalties and disciplinary action, including possible expulsion or dismissal.
ii. Alleged violations will be handled through the University disciplinary procedures applicable to the user.
iii. The University may suspend, block or restrict access to an account, independent of such procedures, when it reasonably appears necessary to do so in order to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of University or other computing resources or to protect the University from liability.
iv. The University may also refer suspected violations of applicable law to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Best Practices for Social Media
In addition, the following general guidelines apply for social media usage to all users in the University: Sharing University news, events or promoting faculty and student work through social media tools is an excellent, low-cost way to engage the community and build our brand. Employees and students are encouraged to repost and share information with their family and friends that is available to the public (press releases, articles in the University Record, etc.). The best way to share university news is to link to the original source. When sharing information that is not a matter of public record, please follow the below guidelines.

Maintain Confidentiality
Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the University, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies.

Maintain Privacy
Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured individuals on a social media site without their permission. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum.

Respect University Time and Property
It's appropriate to post at work if your comments are directly related to accomplishing work goals, such as seeking sources for information or working with others to resolve a problem. You should participate in personal social media conversations on your own time.

Do No Harm
Let your Internet social networking do no harm to the University or to yourself whether you're navigating those networks on the job or off.

Understand Your Personal Responsibility.
University employees and students are personally responsible for the content they publish on blogs, Facebook, Twitter or any other form of user-generated content. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time— protect your privacy.

Be Aware of Liability
You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be copyright infringement, defamatory, proprietary, libelous, or obscene (as defined by the courts). Increasingly, employers are conducting Web searches on job candidates before extending offers. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.

Maintain Transparency
The line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred: Be thoughtful about your postings content and potential audiences. Be honest about your identity. In personal posts, you may identify yourself as a University faculty or staff member. However, please be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of the University of Petroleum & Energy Studies.

Correct Mistakes
If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.

Respect Others
You are more likely to achieve your goals or sway others to your beliefs if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

Be a Valued Member
If you join a social network, make sure you are contributing valuable insights. Don't hijack the discussion and redirect by posting self/organizational promoting information. Self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from Web sites or groups.

Think Before You Post
There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after the publication date. Comments can be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. If you feel angry or passionate about a subject, it's wise to delay

posting until you are calm and clear-headed. Post only pictures that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public (current and future peers, employers, etc.).

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES WHEN POSTING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

UPES uses social media to supplement traditional press and marketing efforts. Employees are encouraged to share university news and events, which are a matter of public record, with their family and friends. Linking straight to the information source is an effective way to help promote the mission of the University and build community. When you might be perceived online as an agent/expert of UPES, you need to make sure it is clear to the audience that you are not representing the position of UPES or UPES policy. While the guidelines below apply only to those instances where there is the potential for confusion about your role as a UPES agent/expert versus personal opinion, they are good to keep in mind for all social media interactions. When posting to a social media site you should:

Be Authentic

Be honest about your identity. In personal posts, you may identify yourself as a UPES faculty or staff member. However, please be clear that you are sharing your personal views and are not speaking as a formal representative of UPES. If you identify yourself as a member of the UPES community, ensure your profile and related content are consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues. Internal use

Use a Disclaimer

If you publish content to any website outside of UPES and it has something to do with the work you do or subjects associated with UPES, use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and do not represent UPES's positions, strategies or opinions."

Don't Use the UPES Logo or Make Endorsements

Do not use the University logo or any other marks or images on your personal online sites. Do not use UPES's name to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate.

Take the High Ground

If you identify your affiliation with UPES in your comments, readers may associate you with the university, even with the disclaimer that your views are your own. Remember that you're most likely to build a high-quality following if you discuss ideas and situations civilly. Don't pick fights online.

Don't Use Pseudonyms

Never pretend to be someone else. Tracking tools enable supposedly anonymous posts to be traced back to their authors.

Protect Your Identity

While you should be honest about yourself, don't provide personal information that scam artists or identity thieves could use. Don't list your home address or telephone number. It is a good idea to create a separate e-mail address that is used only with social media sites.

Does it Pass the Publicity Test

If the content of your message would not be acceptable for face-to-face conversation, over the telephone, or in another medium, it will not be acceptable for a social networking site. Ask yourself, would I want to see this published in the newspaper or posted on a hoarding tomorrow or ten years from now?

Respect Your Audience

Don't use slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the UPES community. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered sensitive — such as politics and religion.

Monitor Comments

Most people who maintain social media sites welcome comments — it builds credibility and community. However, you may be able to set your site so that you can review and approve comments before they appear. This allows you to respond in a timely way to comments. It also allows you to delete spam comments and to block any individuals who repeatedly post offensive or frivolous comments. A common practice among individuals who write about the industry in which they work is to include a disclaimer on their site, usually on their "About Me" page. If you discuss higher education on your own social media site, we suggest you include a sentence similar to this: "The views expressed on this [blog, Web site] are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University." This is particularly important if you could be perceived to be in a leadership role at UPES.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES WHEN POSTING ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES

Online collaboration tools provide low-cost communication methods which foster open exchanges and learning. While social media tools are changing the way we work and how we connect with the public and other higher education institutions , the UPES policies and practices for sharing information remain the same. In addition to the general guidelines discussed above, when you creating or posting to a social media site on behalf of UPES you need to:

Seek Approval

Any messages that might act as the "voice" or position of the university or a university entity must be approved by the university or the Dean/Director/Head of function of that entity or their delegate.

Be Accurate

Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible -- that's how you build community.

Be Transparent

If you participate in or maintain a social media site on behalf of the university, clearly state your role and goals. Keep in mind that if you are posting with a university username, other users do not know you personally. They view what you post as coming from the university. Be careful and be respectful. What you say directly reflects on the university. Discuss with your supervisor the circumstances in which you are empowered to respond directly to users and when you may need approval.

Be Timely

Assign an administrator who can regularly monitor postings and content. Aim for standard times for postings and updates. The recommended minimum frequency is once to twice a week. But be sure not to overload your updates. Followers will stop paying attention if you overload them with information.

Be Responsible

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social computing on behalf of UPES is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. If you want to participate on behalf of the university, be sure to abide by its standard practice guidelines.

Respect Others
Users are free to discuss topics and disagree with one another, but please be respectful of others' opinions. You are more likely to achieve your goals if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or disagreeing with a concept or person.

Be a Valued Member
If you join a social network like a Facebook group or comment on someone's blog, make sure you are contributing valuable insights. Post information about topics like UPES events or a book you've authored only when you are sure it will be of interest to readers. In some forums, self-promoting behavior is viewed negatively and can lead to you being banned from websites or groups.

SAFETY & PRIVACY TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING
The internet is open to a world-wide audience. When using social media channels, ask yourself:
1. Did I set my privacy setting to help control who can look at my profile, personal information and photos? You can limit access somewhat but not completely, and you have no control over what someone else may share.
2. How much information do I want strangers to know about me? If I give them my cell phone number, address, email, class schedule, a list of possessions (such as my CD collection) how might they use it? With whom will they share it? Not everyone will respect your personal or physical space.
3. Is the image I'm projecting by my materials and photos the one I want my current and future friends to know me by? What does my profile say to potential faculty members/advisors? Future graduate school/internship interviewers? Potential employers? Neighbors? Family? Parents? Which doors am I opening and which am I closing?
4. What if I change my mind about what I post? For instance, what if I want to remove something I posted as a joke or to make a point? Have I read the social networking site's privacy and caching statements? Removing material from network caches can be difficult. Posted material can remain accessible on the internet until you've completed the prescribed process for removing information from the caching technology of one or multiple (potentially unknown) search engines.
5. Have I asked permission to post someone else's image or information? Am I infringing on their privacy? Could I be hurting someone? Could I be subject to defamation suits? Am I violating network use policy?
6. Does my equipment have spyware and virus protections installed? Some sites collect profile information to SPAM you. Others contain links that can infect your equipment with viruses that potentially can destroy data and infect others with whom you communicate. Remember to back up your work on an external source in case of destructive attacks.

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