

Policy

Use of Social Media

The rapid growth of social and new media technologies has made communication faster and easier than ever before. These same technologies, however, have raised a set of questions and concerns regarding communication behaviors while using these tools.

These policies and guidelines are intended to help you identify and assess potential issues related to the use of social and new media, including, but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, personal websites (including blogs), chat sites, etc. To assist in posting content and managing these sites, UW-River Falls has developed guidelines for official and personal use of social media. These guidelines apply to university faculty, staff and students, and should be used in connection with social media accounts associated with colleges, departments, programs, clubs, organizations, etc.

General Guidelines

Official institutional social media accounts:

- University Communications and Marketing (UCM) manages the official institutional social media accounts. UCM plans and schedules all content to be posted on these accounts, and will share content generated on other institutional social media accounts when appropriate. Employees and students are encouraged to suggest compelling content for posting on the official channels. UCM will prioritize posts that support communication of the goals and priorities of the institution's current strategic plan, Pathway to Distinction. UCM will also assist in promoting the initiatives and programs of UW-River Falls units or organizations when possible and as compatible with the institutional communications schedule.
- UWRF 's main social media accounts can be accessed through the university's home page and include:
 - Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/uwriverfalls>
 - Twitter: <http://twitter.com/uwriverfalls>
 - YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/uwriverfallsvideos>
 - Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/uwriverfalls>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uwriverfalls/>
 - LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/18912?pathWildcard=18912>
 - Snapchat:

Other institutional social media accounts:

- Use of any of these communication channels in any way officially associated with the institution (such as a college, department, club or student organization Facebook page or Twitter account) must be aligned with and in support of the university's mission, goals, programs, and sanctioned efforts.
- If you are interested in creating a social media account on behalf of a college, department or other recognized organization, prior to establishing any new social media presence affiliated with UW-River Falls, you must notify UCM, where you will find assistance with:

- selecting a naming convention that is consistent with other university accounts (beginning your account name with University of Wisconsin-River Falls or UW-River Falls is recommended),
- obtaining UW-River Falls branded images for your profile page,
- ensuring that your account is added to the university's [Social Media Directory](#).
- Follow these best practices for institutional social media accounts:
 - When using an officially recognized social media channel, remember and assume at all times that you are representing UWRF. What you post directly reflects on the university.
 - All content posted through social media channels affiliated with the institution is subject to review in accordance with UWRF's employee policies and editorial guidelines. Please proofread/edit your posts prior to posting for correct grammar and spelling.
 - Departments or units that assign students to develop or maintain social media sites are responsible for the content and should monitor the students' work. They should 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 inundate them with information.

Sharing on social media:

- Sharing news, events or promoting faculty and student work through social media tools, both on institutionally affiliated social media accounts and on personal social media accounts, is an excellent, low-cost way to engage the community and build our brand. Employees are encouraged to repost and share information with their family and friends that is available to the public (press releases, etc.). The best way to share university news is to link to the original source.

Confidentiality:

- Do not post confidential or proprietary information about UW-River Falls, its students, its alumni or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies and federal requirements, such as the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\)](#) and the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

Applicable polices and laws:

- You are responsible for being familiar with all applicable state and federal laws, and university and UW System policies when using social media tools. These include, but are not limited to:
 - [Wis. Stat. § 19.32\(2\)](#), which states that content posted by or on behalf of UW employees to social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, may be subject to public records law. Such content generally constitutes a "record" so long as the recorded information is created or kept in connection with official business.
 - UWRF logos and/or visual identity (including, the university wordmark, Freddy Falcon, university seal, etc.) cannot be used without permission: [Use of Marks/Logos](#)
 - [Acceptable Use of UW-River Falls IT Resources](#)
 - [Acceptable Use of UW System IT Resources](#)
 - [Copyright](#)
 - [Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures - UWS 14](#)
 - [Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures - UWS 17](#)
 - [Prizes, Awards and Gifts – UW System Administrative Policy 330](#)

Other important, general guidelines for use of social media:

- Let your social networking do no harm to UW-River Falls, other individuals, or to yourself.

- Be aware of liability: You are responsible for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Be sure that what you post today will not come back to haunt you.
- Exercise discretion, thoughtfulness and respect for your colleagues, associates and the university's supporters, alumni, community, and social media followers.
- Please refrain from posting in a disparaging or speculative manner on university employees, policies, operations, or sensitive or confidential issues. A healthy dialog with constructive criticism can be useful, but beware of dialogue that might be seen as belittling or ridiculing the institution, your colleagues or our students.
- Does it pass the publicity test? Before posting, ask yourself: Would I want to see this published on the front page of the newspaper? If not, it is probably not acceptable for social media.
- 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.
- 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.
- Maintain transparency: the line between professional and personal business is sometimes blurred. Be thoughtful about your posting's content and potential audiences. Be honest about your identity. In personal posts, you may identify yourself as a UW-River Falls faculty or staff member. However, please be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of UW-River Falls.
 - If you discuss higher education or issues related to UW-River Falls on your own social media account, we suggest you include a sentence similar to this: "The views expressed on this [blog, website, page] are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls." This is particularly important if you could be perceived to be in a leadership role at UW-River Falls.
 - If you publish content to any website or social media platform outside of UW-River Falls that is related to your work as a UWRF employee or discusses subjects associated with UW-River Falls, please use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and do not represent the positions, strategies or opinions of UW-River Falls."
- Follow best practices in security:
 - Do not allow someone else to create and manage accounts on your behalf unless you have total access to the logins, passwords and procedures for those accounts.
 - If an employee who managed your unit or organization's social media accounts leaves, remember to change your login credentials/password.
 - Never list your home address or telephone number.
 - Review your social media account's privacy settings and maintain control over functions such as timelines and tagging in Facebook.
 - Set up dual authentication on your social media accounts.
- If you have any questions or doubts about what is appropriate to post in your role as a UW-River Falls employee, ask your supervisor or contact UCM before you post.

Advertising

- Any purchased or contracted advertising campaigns must be coordinated with UCM.

Authority

The UW-River Falls Chancellor issues this policy in accordance with the Administrative Policy process.

The Assistant Chancellor for Business and Finance is responsible for the administration of this policy. Request an exception to this policy by writing to administrative-policy@uwrfl.edu.

Sanctions and Appeals Process

Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action as provided under existing procedures applicable to students, faculty, and staff, and/or civil or criminal prosecution.

University Responsibilities

Members of the university are responsible for adhering to this policy, following the official guidelines, and communicating with UCM if any questions or unique situations arise.

Department/Unit Responsibilities

Colleges, units and departments are responsible for complying with this policy.

Contact

Please direct questions about this policy to administrative-policy@uwrfl.edu.