

Social Networking Best Practices

Georgia State University recognizes the benefits of using electronic social networking media to promote the institution's goals and activities. In addition, the University also supports the First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and expression. Accordingly, the University does not place any explicit restrictions on the use of social networking sites (e.g. Facebook.com, Myspace.com, Friendster.com, Twitter.com, etc.) by its employees for official University business since these websites can be used in a beneficial, positive manner. However, it is important to keep in mind the privacy concerns inherent in using these websites. Any information posted on these websites can be made public, even in some cases, when such information has been previously deleted by the user. It can also be shared with others with the touch of a button. As such, the University expects its employees to exercise caution and responsibility when using social networking sites for official University business.

Please keep the following information in mind if your University unit utilizes social networking websites:

- University logos, service and other trademarks may only be used on official University websites and pages. Use of the University name and marks must comply with the University Identity Guide which is available online at <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwidg/repro.html>.
- Communications on official University pages may be friendly and informal but should always be professional. Keep this in mind when choosing the information, comments, photos, or other items posted on the unit's page.
- Consider using social networking sites to distribute information only, rather than allowing postings on the page by non-University individuals. While this restriction is not required, it does reduce the potential for inappropriate posting, etc. by others. If you do choose to allow students and others to post on University pages, setting clear topic parameters is recommended (e.g. having a departmental page on which only curriculum-related questions are permitted). If you choose to allow posts of any kind, please note that the University is a state entity and, as such, postings may not be censored on the basis of viewpoint.
- No material may be posted that would infringe on the intellectual property or privacy rights (copyright, trademark, etc.) of others.
- Personal information (addresses, phone numbers, date of birth, class schedules, whereabouts, or your daily activities) should not be included.
- Groups joined or associated with on social networking media reflect on the University and should be chosen with care.
- Consider with care who you add as a "friend" to the webpage.

Please remember that any use of these social networking websites is be subject to the same University policies, procedures and expectations as would apply offline