



Use of Social Media for Non-University Purposes
#1705.026

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE:	LAST REVISION DATE:	RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
December 19, 2025	December 19, 2025	Division of Human Resources

POLICY STATEMENT

Florida International University respects the First Amendment rights of its employees. However, First Amendment rights are not absolute. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for faculty, staff, and students choosing to use social media to communicate, collaborate, and interact with students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, and the general public on matters concerning or impacting the Florida International University (FIU).

FIU employees are expected to use good judgment in limiting personal activities, including social media use, during work hours to ensure that such use does not interfere with their job responsibilities or productivity. Use during breaks and meal period is permitted. In some circumstances, a vice president, or designee, may authorize use of personal social media sites and accounts that further University interests.

FIU equipment and resources, including in relation to social media activities, may only be used in accordance with the University's Social Media Used to Disseminate University Content Policy.

Prohibited Uses: Employees may not use social media in ways that violate federal, state, local and, when applicable, foreign laws.

Below is an illustrative chart of how Employees may or may not use social media.

PROHIBITED USE	STATUTE/ REGULATION PROHIBITING USE
Communications depicting child pornography	Florida Statutes Section 775.0847
Promotion of an altered sexual depiction	Florida Statute Section 836.13
Threats of violence or reasonably known or intended to cause severe emotional distress	Florida Statutes Section 836.10

False statements that could harm a person's reputation	Florida Statutes Section 836.05
Discriminatory communications based on a protected status (e.g., race, sex)	FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) & Sexual Misconduct FIU-106 Nondiscrimination, Harassment & Retaliation
Criminal activity	Florida Statutes Sections 775–896
Student and student applicant records except as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	FERPA FIU-108 Access to Student Records
Patient protected health information (PHI) even if de-identified	HIPAA FIU Policy#1660.020 Authorization for Uses & Disclosure of Patient Protected Health Insurance
Unpublished research data or unprotected intellectual property	FIU Policy#2370.006 Rights & Responsibilities for Research Data & Other Research Property
Trade secrets	Chapter 688 of the Florida Statutes
Copyrighted materials without authorization	See Florida Statutes Section 501.2041
Confidential invention/patent information	FIU Policy#2390.001 Inventions & Patents
Any other forms of legally restricted records, data, or information	FIU Policy#1710.070 Confidentiality Agreement Policy FIU Policy#2370.010 Records Policy FIU Policy#150.110 Export Control Policy
Social Security numbers	Florida Statutes Section 119.071
Financial information	See Florida Statutes Section 501.2041
Employee or student medical information	Florida Statutes Section 119.07 & 119.071
Limited access employee records (e.g., faculty evaluations)	Florida Statutes Section 1012.61

Employees may not portray themselves as acting for, or speaking on behalf of, the University or any part of the University or present a social media account as an official University account unless authorized in advance in writing by Division of Marketing and Strategic Communications (MarCom). When uncertain as to whether proposed actions would be construed as portraying, speaking, or acting on behalf of the University, consult with MarCom before posting. Even when acting in one's University capacity, Employees may not represent their own positions and opinions on social media as those of the University. While Employees are permitted to share or repost articles or postings posted by an official FIU social media account without further comment, Employees must take affirmative steps to avoid any



additional actions that may be reasonably construed as portraying, speaking, or acting on behalf of the University or University unit, without prior written authorization from MarCom.

When using social media in a personal capacity, reasonable precautions must be taken to indicate that the activity is being conducted as a private person and not as an employee, agent, or spokesperson of the University. Precautions include using heightened privacy settings and adding a disclaimer clarifying the views expressed are that of the individual. Note that, while Employees may not represent himself/herself as an institutional representative without prior written authorization, the mere identification on a social media posting as an FIU employee or by FIU title or rank is not considered a representation. It is strongly recommended that a caveat be included in such posts making it clear that the opinions on the post are that of the individual and not FIU.

Employees in a professional field or course of study in a field that is subject to professional or ethical standards (e.g., licensed physicians, nurses, pharmacists, mid-level providers, dentists, registered dietitians, attorneys, accountants, etc.) must comply with those standards in their University capacity. Such standards also apply to one's personal capacity if the standards generally apply at all times or if one's personal conduct would affect or reflect on his or her University role. Text, photos, videos, and other material posted on social media pages, including personal ones, should be in keeping with generally accepted professional and/or ethical standards for one's field(s) of work and/or study.

Failure to Comply with the Policy

Failure to comply with this policy could result in disciplinary action in accordance with university procedures.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all FIU faculty, staff, and students who are employed by FIU in any capacity. All persons to whom this policy applies shall be referred to collectively as the "Employees." This policy applies to all forms of social media or public online platforms, including but not limited to, Facebook, X (Twitter), TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, LinkedIn, Discord, Twitch, Reddit, YikYak, blogs, online comments, live streaming, etc. This policy may apply to posts made outside of work hours and to posts using personal accounts rather than FIU accounts when use of social media affects an individual's professional standards or responsibilities, violates applicable law, or constitutes a violation of FIU regulation or policy.



REASON FOR POLICY

FIU is committed to the highest standards of freedom of speech and expression. FIU recognizes the vital role that social media can play in both expressing free speech and also in communicating, collaborating, and interacting with students, faculty, staff, non-FIU colleagues, and the general public. FIU encourages the use of social media as a means to connect with the FIU community and foster thoughtful engagement and dialogue about the issues important to and impacting FIU and its communities. This policy intends to protect the appropriate use of social media, while prohibiting conduct through social media that may be unlawful, contrary to FIU regulations or policies, or violative of professional standards, when applicable.

DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITIONS
Employee	<i>Employee</i> is a term defined as current faculty, staff, and student employees.
Protected health information (PHI)	<i>Protected health information (PHI)</i> is a term defined within the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA compliance is required of covered entities, including health care providers. PHI is any information in a medical record that can be used to identify an individual, and that was created, used, or disclosed in the course of providing a health care service, such as a diagnosis or treatment. PHI includes photographs and videos of the patient, even if the patient asked for the photo/video to be made or consented to it being made. It is best to return such photos to the patient, as long as no other patients are in the photos.
Personally Identifiable Information (PII)	<i>Personally Identifiable Information (PII)</i> under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), is any information, directory and nondirectory, that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the University community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty. This may include the student's name, names of parents or family members, the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier such as the student's social security, FIU Panther ID number, or biometric record, information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the



identity of the student to whom the education record relates, a list of personal characteristics, or any other information that clearly distinguishes the student's identity.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees need to understand and conform to the requirements of this policy.

RELATED RESOURCES

FIU-105 Sexual Harassment (Title IX) and Sexual Misconduct
FIU-106 Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Retaliation
FIU-108 Access to Student Education Records
FIU Use of Social Media for Non-University Purposes #1705.027
FIU-2501: Student Conduct and Honor Code
FIU's Confidentiality Agreement Policy #1710.070
FIU Export Control Policy #2370.010
FIU Inventions and Patent Policy #2390.001
FIU Records Policy #150.110
Florida Statutes Section 1006.52
20 U.S.C. 1232g, Family educational and privacy rights
34 C.F.R. Part 99, Family educational and privacy rights

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HISTORY

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