



OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

Integrated Marketing & Public Relations

Social Media Usage Policy

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES WHEN POSTING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

Oakwood University uses social media to supplement traditional press and marketing efforts. Employees are encouraged to share University news and events that 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 Oakwood University and build community.

When you are using social media for personal purposes and might be perceived as an agent/expert of Oakwood, you need to make sure it is clear to the audience that you are not representing the position of the University or Oakwood University policy. While the guidelines below apply to those instances where there is the potential for confusion about your role as an Oakwood 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:

Do No Harm

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

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 billboard tomorrow or 10 years from now?



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Be Aware of Liability

You are personally responsible for the content you publish on blogs, wikis, or any other form of user-generated content. 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 mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time—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 posting's content and potential audiences. Be honest about your identity. In personal posts, you may identify yourself as an Oakwood faculty or staff member. However, please be clear that you are sharing your views as an individual, not as a representative of Oakwood University. If you identify yourself as a member of the Oakwood community, ensure your profile and related content are consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues.

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 websites 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



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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. Only post pictures that you would be comfortable sharing with the general public (current and future peers, employers, etc.).

Take the High Ground

If you identify your affiliation with Oakwood 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.

Respect Your Audience

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

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.

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.



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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.

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 email address that is used only with social media sites.

Don't Use Pseudonyms

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

Use a Disclaimer

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

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, website] are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of Oakwood University." This is particularly important if you could be perceived to be in a leadership role at Oakwood.



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Don't Use the Oakwood Logo or Make Endorsements

Do not use the Oakwood shield, wordmark, or any other Oakwood marks or images on your personal online sites. Do not use Oakwood's name to promote or endorse any product, cause, or political party or candidate. Oakwood logo and trademark guidelines can be found [here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES WHEN POSTING ON BEHALF OF OAKWOOD UNIVERSITY

Online collaboration tools provide low-cost communication methods that 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, Oakwood policies and practices for sharing information remain the same. In addition to the individual guidelines discussed above, please follow these official guidelines when you create or post to a social media site on behalf of Oakwood:

Process for Creating an Oakwood Social Media Presence

To ensure that your social media efforts adhere to the design and policy standards of Oakwood University and that your efforts are not tied specifically to an Oakwood community member's personal account, all official Oakwood social media accounts must be created by Web Services within the Office of Integrated Marketing and Public Relations.

Web Services will then grant the appropriate person(s) administrative access to those accounts. To request an account, fill out the following [form](#).

Maintain Oakwood University Confidentiality

Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Oakwood University, its students, its alumni, or your fellow employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow the University's policies and federal requirements, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability



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Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Review Oakwood [policies](#) for more information on your responsibility as an Oakwood employee.

Maintain Privacy

Do not discuss a situation involving named or pictured Oakwood community members on a social media site without their permission. As a guideline, do not post anything that you would not present in any public forum. Additional information on the appropriate handling of student and employee information can be found [here](#).

Be Thoughtful

Before composing a message that might act as the “voice” or position of the University or a school/department, please discuss the content with your supervisor or the dean/chair of the school/department or his or her delegate. If you ever have any question about whether a message you are crafting is appropriate to post in your role as an Oakwood employee, talk with your supervisor before you post.

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.

Be Responsible

What you write is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social computing on behalf of Oakwood University is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. 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. What



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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 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.

Frequency

- Assign an **administrator** who regularly monitors postings and content.
- Create a **content calendar** with pre-planned content for slow periods. Aim for standard times for postings and updates.
- Consider managing your social platforms via **Hootsuite or Buffer** to communicate with multiple admins and monitor communications from students and/or the public.
- While the recommended minimum frequency is once to twice a week, be sure not to overload your followers with updates.

Stagnant Accounts

Web Services reserves the right to **disable or temporarily unpublish Oakwood University social media accounts that are dormant (no posts, no activity) for more than SIX months**, as such stagnancy reflects poorly on the University.



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Departed Admins

When page editors and administrators, especially students, have left the university and no longer require access to social media accounts, you must update/adjust your page roles immediately. Please contact [Web Services](#) and Integrated Marketing and Public Relations **any time an admin is removed or added.**

Proper Branding

Abide by the University [Identity Standards](#). For social media profile avatars, Web Services will provide a template upon request of a new page.

At Oakwood University, we understand that social media can be a fun, productive and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. As preachers of the gospel and employees of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we must assure that our comments, views and opinions are presented with professionalism, Christian love, and in harmony with Biblical teachings.

The influence of a Christian reaches to the heart of those who listen and are willing to follow their directives as they come from God. It is for this reason that as minister of the gospel, our public comments on social media outlets should reflect the love of Christ and be consistent with Biblical teachings expressed in our fundamental teachings as Seventh-day Adventists.

We are here to elevate those around us, engage them where needed, while reflecting Christ in the process. May God bless you as you continue to lift up His kingdom.